

**MINUTES
ST. CLAIR SHORES CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
MAY 29, 2021**

City Council Workshop Meeting was held at the St. Clair Shores Country Club Golf Course, 22185 Masonic Blvd., St. Clair Shores, Michigan.

Present: Mayor Kip C. Walby, Council Members Peter Accica, John Caron, Ronald Frederick, David Rubello, Candice Rusie and Chris Vitale

Also Present: City Manager Matthew Coppler, Assistant City Manager William Gambill, City Clerk Mary Kotowski and City Attorney Robert Ihrle

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Walby called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m., and there was a quorum present.

1. DISCUSSION OF AMERICAN RECOVERY PROGRAM ACT FUNDING

Mayor Walby stated that this workshop meeting was called for a discussion on the use of the American Recovery Program Act (ARPA) funding. This is an opportunity to use these funds to transform the City. There are concerns regarding inflation of project costs and the availability of the contractors to perform this work knowing that all municipalities are receiving these funds. The committed funds must be dedicated to a project by 2024 with a signed contract.

Mr. Coppler noted that the City has received our first payment, and the rules for use of this funding is in a draft plan. He noted that these interim rules are not going to get any stricter and may be more liberal. The overall intent is to get the money spent. The CARES Act money spending would be a good rule of hand to use on spending and centering around lost revenues. There is a Summary of Interim Final Rules of Spending under the ARPA.

Mr. Caron suggested using a portion of these funds to benefit all residents by paying the water rate increases from the GLWA which would freeze the increase for the upcoming fiscal year. This increase would be offset by the completion of the lead water line replacements and infrastructure maintenance repairs in the fiscal year.

There was concern by Mr. Vitale that two years from now residents would see a greater increase. It was noted that the completion of the proposed capital projects would offset this.

Staff was asked to check if the \$765,000 for the sanitary account is reflected in the upcoming fiscal year budget.

Mr. Vitale asked that the ideas discussed have a cost estimate assigned to each project for Council review.

Ms. Rusie noted that use of these funds should not include the residents only parks as this could require these parks to then be open to non-residents.

There was discussion to remove the residents only parks from the ARPA spending options and spend the funds in other areas. This would allow consideration of the use of general fund money at the residents only parks.

Mr. Coppler provided a listing of "projects that have been kicking around" categorized as Public Safety Projects, Economic Development Projects, General City Operational Improvements, Infrastructure Projects and Quality of Life Projects which were discussed as follows:

PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS

Police Department Renovation/ New Construction

Concerns were raised with paying Covid inflated costs as all municipalities are receiving these funds.

There was discussion on the Police Department expansion noting that the addition could be built first so staff could be relocated to the addition while the existing building structure was then renovated. The building can be expanded south along Jefferson with a second story renovation including the shooting range.

The consensus was to renovate and expand the Police Department and forward to City Council the old building renovation study.

PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS (Cont'd):

Fire Stations Renovations/ New Construction

Discussion was held on the three stations. It was noted that the north and south stations could be renovated, and Central Fire would benefit most by reconstruction.

Ms. Rusie said that we need review and input on the projects from a specialist in public service buildings.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Parking – Downtown and Nautical Mile

Options were discussed regarding the City needing more parking for events in the Downtown St. Clair Shores District and the Nautical Mile.

Dark Fiber/ Broadband

Mr. Coppler spoke about using these funds for the City to have its own fiber optic networking coming into City buildings. Currently there is a limit to the fiber optics coming into the City logistically due to the freeway coming from the west. It was noted that we pay higher rates than Oakland County as direct result of this.

When looking at the map to connect all the City buildings, starting at City Hall, the route is up 11 Mile Road then north and south on Harper. This fiber optic in ground cables along the corridor would allow for a split off to businesses and residential areas to tie into these services. We would have the fiber, and a carrier such as WOW would be able to tie into our fiber and provide the services.

Most commercial and industrial businesses want cable with wireless solutions. The real cost is getting into our neighborhoods.

Mr. Coppler recommended doing a request for qualifications and bring in a partner in the field to work with us.

This, and other uses of these funds such as the creation of a revolving fund with low interest loans, could be incentives for business landlords to improve their businesses.

Ms. Rusie asked how revolving business improvement loans impact the use of these funds.

The consensus was to proceed with these projects.

GENERAL CITY OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

City Hall Basement Improvements for Election Security

The cost estimate is \$50,000 to create a secured election storage area for the voting system. The consensus was to proceed with this.

Library Renovation/Maker Space

Mr. Frederick noted the Library renovation of the second floor should have an auditorium feel and include expansion of space and room usage.

Mr. Vitale said he prefers using funds for the preservation of the City's historical records over additional meeting space.

The consensus was to proceed with these projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

CSO Separations

Use of these funds to start projects like the Martin Drain and Frazho area gets us out of the County Drainage concerns with separation of the services issues. We need a feasibility study on this.

The cost for the 8 ½ Mile Drain is estimated at \$150,000 and the Martin Drain is \$100,000.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS (Cont'd):

Mr. Coppler stated we will get engineering projects ready for the \$500 million, the state is pushing forward.

Stormwater Pump Stations

The cost for pump stations is estimated at \$200,000 to keep from flooding residents' basements at Masonic and Jefferson, and Benjamin. Final design plans are in, and both are in the FY22 budgeted projects.

Lead Service Line Replacements

Lead service line replacements will continue.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Blossom Heath Pier Project

There is \$6.6 million budgeted. Any funding above this along with road improvements and seawalls would be a good use for these funds.

Floating Dock at Lagoon

The consensus is NO for use of these funds.

Coast Guard Road Culvert

This project would improve the waterflow. Staff is estimating the cost to be between \$5,000 and \$10,000. We hope to earmark future federal money for this project. Staff was asked to look for federal funding or Great Lakes Restoration grants as this would improve the water quality.

The consensus is NO for use of these funds.

There was consensus for a new dinosaur playscape at Blossom Heath Park. Another possible option is to change up the funding source for the TIFA portion of the pier project and then TIFA could fund the playscape.

The consensus was security cameras are needed at Blossom Heath Park to provide pictures of vehicles entering the area as vandalism is occurring and to change up the gate guard duties to pay attention to these concerns.

New Waterslide for Pool

Discussion was held regarding the slide and a structure to convert the pool to full-year use.

Splash Zone for Swimming Pool

There was not a consensus on this. Discussion included keeping the kiddie pool and adding a water feature.

Play Structures for Parks

It was requested that administration look for options to fund an ADA sensory park and playscape at one park.

The batting cage areas were discussed as well as parking.

Mr. Rubello and Mr. Frederick both raised the issue of the need for parking at Frederick Park.

Mr. Frederick noted that every time a parking lot is redone electric charging stations need to be included in the project.

He stated there is work to be done at Kyte Monroe including ballfield storage areas for equipment, new fences for pickleball, a Bobcat tractor so the grass does not get wrecked and the ability to televise games from Kyte Monroe.

QUALITY OF LIFE (Cont'd):

He also noted there are alleys that need paving.

Mr. Frederick stated that advertising and changeable signage is needed throughout the City to publicize our events; controlled by the Communications Department via fiber optic connections.

Golf Course Improvements

Improvement ideas included a driving range at the golf course by the first tee, cart path improvements, the water tower needs to be repaired or removed after a structure evaluation for soundness, and there should be a Golf Course halfway house staffed to sell drinks, hotdogs etc.

The consensus is to use these funds for some of these improvements.

Civic Arena Parking Lot Improvements

Discussion was held and it was noted that parking and parking structures are also needed at Blossom Heath and Kyte Monroe.

Other Council suggestions for the use of these funds were a bike lane on Jefferson, half mile road decals and a façade grant for the Shores Madrid Theater.

Mayor Walby commented that he would like the money to be used where residents see the benefit such as at the parks, the library infrastructure, elections and business loans, to name some areas.

2. UPDATE/OPEN ITEMS

Mayor Walby suggested that Mr. Ihrie put together a policy and procedure for proclamations, and there was consensus to have him proceed.

3. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (5 MINUTE TIME LIMIT) – None

4. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Council Member Caron, supported by Council Member Rusie to adjourn at 10:05 a.m.

Ayes: All – 7

KIP C. WALBY, MAYOR

MARY A. KOTOWSKI, CITY CLERK

(THE PRECEDING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF A CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND DO NOT REPRESENT A VERBATIM RECORD).