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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE AFTON CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF AFTON  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**APPROVED** City Council Work Session Minutes  
October 21, 2019  
5:00 P.M.

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1. **THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER** at 5:04 P.M. by Mayor Palmquist.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Council Members Nelson, Ross, Wroblewski and Perkins, and Mayor Palmquist. **Quorum Present.**  
**ALSO PRESENT:** City Administrator Ron Moorse
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**  
**Motion/Second: Ross/Nelson. To approve the agenda. Motion carried 5-0-0.**
4. **CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS**

A. Putnam Bridge/Trail

Moorse explained that the Council has had discussions regarding reopening the bridge and Putnam Boulevard to pedestrian traffic. The main obstacle to that has been the requirement to bring the bridge up to current Mn/DOT bridge standards, which would be prohibitively expensive. In researching this issue, the City Engineer has found that the bridge could be re-opened at minimal cost if it was removed from the Mn/DOT bridge list and if its use was limited to pedestrian use only. The bridge improvements needed to reopen the bridge to pedestrian traffic are safety barriers between the trail and the creek, re-grading of the surface of the bridge - which is gravel, and installation of bollards, or use of jersey barriers, to keep motorized vehicles off the bridge. The safety barriers are needed because the existing guardrails are in poor condition and would be expensive to repair or replace. The safety barrier needs to be 42 inches in height. This could be accomplished most cost effectively by the installation of a chain link fence on both sides of the bridge.

The Council directed staff to obtain a price quote from Tri County Services for the fence, regrading the surface of the bridge and relocating the jersey barriers.

Mayor Palmquist questioned whether there was a cost-effective solution that would have a better appearance than a chain link fence. He also pointed out that signage is needed to indicate "Motorized Vehicles Prohibited".

It was also discussed that, if the Putnam Boulevard trail is shown on the Parks Plan as an official trail, the costs could be funded from the Park Dedication Fund.

B. Short Term Rentals

Moorse provided information regarding regulations for short term rentals.

Mayor Palmquist clarified that there is a Department of Revenue rule change that provides direction regarding how to tax-classify a property that is not owner occupied and is being used exclusively for short term rentals. Such a property could be classified as commercial.

The Council discussed short term rental regulations, including requiring a residential property that is being used for short term rentals to be homesteaded, requiring documentation of the compliance and capacity of the septic system, and placing a limit on the number of people allowed. The Council also discussed the enforcement of these types of regulations, as well as existing regulations and prohibitions.

55 C. Construction Hours

56 Moore explained that, although the City generally restricts construction hours for City projects and for  
57 projects over which the City has some authority to Monday to Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., the  
58 City’s noise ordinance allows motorized construction equipment to be used from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
59 and does not restrict the use from any day of the week. Moore suggested the Council may want to  
60 consider more restrictive hours and days for the use of motorized equipment for construction activities.  
61

62 The Council identified pros and cons of restricting the construction hours, and directed staff to compare  
63 Afton’s construction hours to regulations in other cities for further discussion.  
64

65 D. Septic System Non-Compliance

66 Moore explained that a key element of protecting groundwater is ensuring private septic systems are  
67 properly treating wastewater before it reaches the groundwater. Neither Afton nor Washington County  
68 currently have a program of periodic septic system compliance inspections. While there are triggers for  
69 septic system compliance inspections, the triggers may not occur for many years. Moore also explained  
70 that the County has a model that can identify properties with higher relative risk and no septic system  
71 information. This model could be used to guide an inspection program to identify non-compliant septic  
72 systems.  
73

74 The Council agreed that the City should ensure that required septic system compliance inspections are  
75 actually performed, i.e. at the time of transfer of property ownership, and that failing systems get replaced  
76 in a timely manner.  
77

78 5. ADJOURN –

79  
80 **Motion/Second: Nelson/Ross. To adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. Motion carried 5-0-0.**

81 Respectfully submitted by:

82 \_\_\_\_\_  
83  
84  
85 Ronald J. Moore, City Administrator

86  
87 **Approved by Council on November 19, 2019 as (check one): Presented: \_\_\_\_\_ Amended: \_\_\_\_\_**

88  
89 **Signed by Mayor Bill Palmquist \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**