

1 PROCEEDINGS OF THE AFTON CITY COUNCIL
2 CITY OF AFTON
3 WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
4

5 **APPROVED** City Council Work Session Minutes
6 September 16, 2016
7 Afton City Hall
8 3033 St. Croix Trail
9 Afton, MN 55001
10 1:00 p.m.

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12 1. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 1:00 P.M. by Mayor Bend.
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14 2. ROLL CALL: Council Members Nelson, Ross, Richter, Palmquist and Mayor Bend. Quorum Present.

15 ALSO PRESENT: City Accountant Tom Niedzwiecki and City Administrator Ron Moorse

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18 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

19 A. Agenda for the City Council Work Session Meeting of September 16t 29, 2016 -

20 Motion/Second: Bend/Ross. To approve the agenda of the September 16, 2016 City Council Work Session Meeting
21 as presented. Motion carried 5-0-0.

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25 4. CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS –

26 A. 2017 Preliminary Budget and Tax Levy

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29 Moorse indicated the Council previously reviewed a proposed preliminary 2017 budget and tax levy, and agreed the
30 key determinant of the final tax levy is the amount of funding needed to address priority street improvement needs.
31 The Council met with the Public Works Committee on Wednesday, September 14 to review and discuss the Public
32 Works Committee's recommendations regarding priority street improvement needs as part of the process of
33 developing a multi-year street improvement plan that reflects the prioritization of street improvement needs and the
34 timing of meeting those needs, as well as funding options to meet those needs. The results of the joint work session
35 can provide direction for determining the 2017 budget and tax levy.

36
37 The street improvement timing and funding scenarios showed that in order to position the city to meet priority street
38 improvement needs within a reasonable time frame, whether using a pay-as-you –go funding plan or using bond
39 financing, substantial increases in the tax levy are needed in 2017 and in future years.

40
41 The Council agreed that, for purposes of providing a proposed 2017 preliminary budget and tax levy for Council
42 consideration at its September 20 regular meeting, staff should use the 9.86% tax levy increase reflected in the street
43 improvement planning scenario.

44
45 B. Upper 34th Street maintenance

46 Moorse indicated the residents at the top of the hill on Upper 34th Street have historically maintained the roadway.
47 They contract with a private contractor for snow removal and one of the residents does grading of the roadway as
48 needed. A review of this maintenance arrangement by the City Attorney resulted in the opinion that there is
49 potential liability for those who maintain the roadway. While this has been the case over the years, because the
50 residents are now aware of the potential liability they are reluctant to perform the maintenance. The roadway is
51 currently in need of maintenance – adding lime rock and grading ruts. This maintenance needs to be done in the
52 near future. The roadway will also require snow plowing in the winter.

53
54 The Council discussed the maintenance needs and the City's responsibility vs. the property owners' responsibility.
55 The Council agreed that the September 20 Council meeting agenda should include an agreement with the property

56 owners indicating the City will pay the cost of the immediate maintenance needs, as well as similar annual
57 maintenance needs, and the property owners will pay the cost of snow and ice control.

58
59 Richter suggested a policy is needed to limit the amount of public access to the Mt. Hope Cemetery.

60
61 The Council agreed that two signs need to be placed on the road – one indicating “Minimum Maintenance Road,
62 Use At Own Risk” and one indicating the Cemetery is closed during the winter months.

63
64 C. Fire Pension Benefit Increase Request

65 Moose indicated the Lower St. Croix Fire Relief Association has requested the City to approve a firefighter
66 pension benefit increase from \$ 3,250 per year of service to \$3,400 per year of service. The Relief Association’s
67 pension fund currently has a surplus of assets over liabilities of 123%. The pension increase would reduce the
68 surplus to 113%. The Relief Association believes the 113% surplus is a sufficient funding level to enable the
69 requested benefit increase. A 13% surplus provides a minimal level of assurance against a funding deficit. If
70 there was a funding deficit, the city would be obligated to contribute to the pension fund until the deficit was
71 eliminated.

72
73 The Council agreed the 113% surplus was of concern.

74
75 D. State of the City Letter

76 Moose indicated that Mayor Bend would like to send a State of the City letter to all residents and businesses in the
77 city to update them on the City’s accomplishments over the past year as well as the challenges and opportunities of
78 2017 and beyond. The Council was supportive of such a letter.

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80 5. ADJOURNMENT

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82 Motion/Second: Palmquist/Richter. To adjourn the meeting at 3:42 P.M. Motion carried 5-0-0.

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85 Respectfully submitted by:

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88 _____
89 Ron Moose, City Administrator

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92 Approved by Council on October 18, 2016 as (check one): Presented: X Amended: _____

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95 Signed by Mayor Richard Bend: _____ Date: _____