

# CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

## City Council Meeting of June 1, 2020

Councilmembers –

Your agenda for Monday night is as follows:

**NOTE:** the June 1, 2020 City Council meeting will be held remotely utilizing video conferencing technology in compliance with Stay Home, Stay Safe requirements restricting public gatherings, including civic activities. However, this is still an open public meeting as defined by the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). The City will be using Microsoft Teams to livestream the council meeting. Members of the public do not need to download anything to view the proceedings. Click on this [link](#) to join the live event at 5pm Monday, June 1st.

**Item A, Public Comment:** In compliance with Stay Home, Stay Safe restrictions, and consistent with new guidelines established for public meetings through the OPMA, in-person public comment has been cancelled until further notice. However, the public may still submit comments by emailing City Clerk Susan Duncan at [susanduncan@cityofferndale.org](mailto:susanduncan@cityofferndale.org). Comments received prior to 4:30pm Monday, June 1st will be included in the meeting record.

**Item B, Consent Agenda,** including approval of May 18, 2020 Council meeting minutes, authorization of May 20, 2020 payroll, bid award: Nordic to Scout Water Main Extension, FEMA Resolution: designation of agent for FEMA funding.

- Bid Award: Nordic to Scout Water Main Extension: The Public Works and Utilities Committee has recommended that the City award a contract for the completion of the Nordic Way to Scout Place water main extension to Tiger Construction, LTD. Tiger Construction was the lowest bidder, with a bid of \$304,326.09. Including the standard 10% contingency, the total amount of the contract and contingency is \$335,000, which is less than the City's Engineer's estimate of \$381,438.08. The project would extend a water line from Nordic Way to Scout place in order to provide a "looped" water system that allows for more stabilized pressures and redundancy in the City's utility.
- Designation of Agent for FEMA Funding: The City is required to identify an authorized representative for potential FEMA reimbursement for COVID-related expenditures. The resolution, which the Finance and Administration Committee recommended be placed on the consent agenda, would identify the City Administrator as that representative.

**Item C, Private Developments Update:** Assistant Planner Jesse Ashbaugh will provide an update on ongoing and upcoming private development projects.

**Item D, Discussion – COVID-19 Economic Impacts, Strategies, and Options:** Mayor Hansen and City Administrator Burnett will provide a brief review of potential FEMA and CARES Act funding options, including any updates since the Wednesday Finance and Administration Committee. No action is required.

**Item E, Discussion** – Upcoming Budget Workshop (2021 Budget): In advance of a discussion to be held by the full Council on 2021 funding priorities to be held on June 10<sup>th</sup>, Staff will provide additional background information and discuss procedural steps.

**Item F-I: Mayor, Council, Department, and Committee Reports.**

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**Final Thoughts.**

Councilmembers -

At your next committee meeting you will begin the process of determining the City’s spending priorities for 2021 and beyond. This will be the first time that many of you have had this opportunity, which is really the distillation of the fundamental role of all of our jobs, and the role of government: how best to spend money that is not our own, but money that has been entrusted to us by our community - to spend for the greatest possible good.

This budget process is in some ways combined with a unique situation in which the Federal and State governments have provided additional potential resources to combat COVID-19 and its impacts on society. These additional funds, provided through the CARES Act, bring with them a number of choices.

The distribution of funds to local governments through the CARES Act reflects a perspective that local government is best suited to determine the best allocation of these resources to the community. The CARES Act funds are explicitly not intended to be used to keep the wheels moving at City Hall; instead, they are intended to help society at large.

As a result, there are opportunities to create or expand programs that assist the community: economic and business response; food, housing, and human services response; public health emergency response; and more. Historically, the City of Ferndale has not always been a direct participant in these endeavors; while the City does typically contribute to, or assists, organizations that do this work, it has not necessarily played a lead role.

Similarly, the City has not always played a lead role in community celebrations, nor has it lead the way in creating a sense of place or play for the community. Although in recent years there has been a move towards an increase in recreational, cultural, and artistic initiatives, these initiatives have often been hotly debated – and are the first to be cut in a tight budget.

Although the City has made significant headway in developing infrastructure necessary to support the current population and future growth (a new deep water well, construction of the Thornton Street Extension, the expanded Wastewater and Water Treatment Plants), we are still faced with a number of “essential government” issues that have yet to be solved. Overall street maintenance, conservation of scarce resources, inferior City facility buildings, growth in general, industrial uncertainty, costs to the taxpayer, transportation issues, Downtown struggles, and more remain a topic for conversation and potential City action.

Especially in light of the COVID pandemic, there are certain choices that must be made now, prior to the adoption of a 2021 budget. And there are other decisions/projects that simply cannot be completed – or even initiated – by 2021.

Discussions of how best to spend the public's money are always sobering. There is never enough money to do everything that objectively needs to be done, and there will always be good arguments that the money that is available could be better spent elsewhere, or by others. The discussion this Council will have, with each other, with Staff, and with the public over the next several months will result in a financial plan for 2021. This discussion will also inform subsequent financial plans and the overall direction of the City. Now, more than ever, we must all take these responsibilities seriously.

See you Monday - Jori