



Public Works Committee
Tuesday, January 10, 2023
6:00 p.m.
Cravath Conference Room
Municipal Building - 2nd Floor
312 W Whitewater St
Whitewater, WI 53190

MINUTES

1. Call to order and roll call.

The Public Works Committee Meeting was called to order by Allen at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Municipal Building in the Cravath Conference Room on the 2nd floor.

Present: Gerber, McCormick, Allen
Others: Brad Marquardt

2. Approval of minutes from December 13, 2022

A motion to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2022, meeting was made by McCormick and seconded by Gerber.

AYES: All via voice vote (3)
NOES: None

3. Hearing of Citizen Comments

There were no citizens comments at that time.

4. New Business

a. Discussion and Possible Action regarding the Final Starin Park Water Tower Structural Analysis Report.

Marquardt reported at the last meeting the report was reviewed and comments were recorded. This information was taken back to McEnroe Consulting Engineers (MCE). These recommendations were incorporated into the final report. The Final Report outlines a possible phased approach to the suggested maintenance, a cost for demolition, and expected life extension with additional maintenance. As mentioned at the December 2022 meeting, the water tower is generally in good to fair condition and structurally stable.

The overall maintenance cost, in 2023 dollars, is estimated between \$950,000 and \$1,100,000. A phased approach is estimated to cost \$1,500,000, or an additional 30%, or higher if more deterioration has taken place. Also, to be noted is the continuation of ongoing maintenance, mainly with repointing of mortar joints. An estimated cost to repoint 5% of the joints is \$110,000, which would be maintenance on the tower. An estimate of \$610,000 was included in the final report for demolition. According to the PSC, this is money the Water Utility could put toward this project. This estimate is important in that the PSC has indicated the Water Utility rate payer funds can only be used for maintenance up to the estimated cost of demolition. The remaining costs must be covered using different funding sources. This phasing was centered around the demolition money with Phase 1 work, concentrating on the two

top tiers. Phase 2 would consist of the remainder of the exterior work. Phase 3 would consist of the interior work (repointing of the mortar joints.) The phase work would be every two years raising the cost of the project to about \$1,500,000.

James Olm, 1180 Bloomingfield Dr., #304, stated he hoped when people are deciding what to do with the structure they would definitely weigh the historical importance of it being a landmark in Whitewater. He firmly believes it is important to many people in the town of Whitewater. He would encourage, before there would ever be a hasty decision made just to save money, there be an investigative process regarding what possibilities would exist to create funding to preserve the landmark.

Kori Oberle, 688 Waters Edge Dr., stated she was at the meeting to get a sense of where the three Council members are at with this tower. She commented it's a huge amount of money, a very community valued icon, while in a very difficult time in our economy. Therefore, it's a very difficult question to answer, or decision to make.

Pat Blackmer, 445 W. Center St., stated she was also attending the meeting to listen. She hopes the members weigh every possible aspect of this project. It is a very important icon to Whitewater, and there are other possibilities if they are considering demolition that could save the water tower.

Carol McCormick asked Ms. Oberle if there were any grants available for this type of preservation? McCormick thought Fort Atkinson had preserved their water tower. Ms. Oberle stated it was started 15 - 20 years ago and the cost was still a \$1,000,000. She thinks the majority of that money was raised privately. Ms. Oberle stated there are a few state and federal funds for restoration at a municipal level. The best chance is to figure out a new exciting use for the tower and approach the Jeffris Family Foundation in Janesville. It was mentioned this foundation only does matching grants.

McCormick asked if it was possible to add an informational question to the ballot at the next voting time? Would the citizen be in favor of keeping the tower or not? It would be a non-binding question. It would be a way to get more opinions as she hears comments from citizens both ways. Marquardt stated he would ask Smith about this option and if the deadline has already passed to get it on the spring ballot.

Pat Blackmer commented to Marquardt, according to the MCE report, it seems as if there really is no true immediate need to decide right now. She stated it's not going to fall down tomorrow. Marquardt stated the report stated it's in a safe condition. The report did indicate the longer the City waits, the possibility of more extensive and expensive work exists. Blackmer asked Marquardt what his recommendation would be at the next Council meeting. Allen stated that is what is being discussed right now.

Gerber commented MCE stated on #1 for recommendations to engage a tank inspector to review the conditions as the water has been emptied. She asked if that was included in the price. Marquardt stated it is an additional cost and he already reached out to a company who has inspected our tank before for DNR reports. He has not received the written report yet. Verbally it was said the steel was in very good condition. Gerber stated we would not have to do this again for an additional charge and Marquardt agreed. Gerber also had a question on repointing of mortar joints, page 34, and the estimated 5% added to the cost. How often does this need to be done? Marquardt stated the way he is reading it is that with the work done now, it wouldn't need to be done for another 30 to 40 years. Some maintenance, the mortar joints (5% of them), may need some maintenance work by 2040 at a potential cost of \$250,000. Gerber continued with another question - under page 33, Phase 1, it was mentioned the Water Utility could cover \$600,000 max - meaning that would be the demolition costs? Marquardt stated we do not

have that money right now. We would have to budget or borrow for that cost. Gerber asked what projects were coming up on the years that are listed: 2024, 2026, 2028? The question asked of Gerber is can we fit in \$1,500,000? Gerber stated there is a \$3,000,000 library project coming up, the integration of the Fire Department and EMS (with the possibility of more capital costs), which she is not sure if the referendum covered those costs. In addition, the City garage and Marquardt stated we are obligated to the upgraded radios for police, fire and DPW. Gerber stated with the referendum being approved, there is already an increase, every year, going forward until the City has enough to cover the Fire and EMS departments. It may or may not cause an increase next year. Marquardt stated the only money the City has obligated is for the library and the City told the County to go ahead and put in for the upgraded radios. Beyond that Marquardt stated, they have department budget items proposed in the next five years, but nothing that has been acted upon. Gerber stated listening to the people at the meeting, which the Council appreciates them coming, the common theme was for historic value (and the only theme) for keeping the tower. As for use of the City, it is not holding water and it's not serving any other purpose besides a historic value. You have to weigh that with the money and everything else. Gerber stated because the report stated it is in safe condition, and no decision needs to be made right away, she would be in favor of postponing any decision being made right now. Hopefully, during that time maybe grants or other things would surface.

Allen asked if besides the age of the water tower, is there any other historical significance about it? Allen directed the question to Ms. Oberle. Ms. Oberle stated it is one of the oldest water towers in the state, but its value is more locally received. It is the best example of masonry construction in Whitewater. It does have an economic value as well at the time of the spirit tour and cultural heritage tour in Wisconsin. Allen stated he thinks the committee should pass this on to the Council and let them know it's okay for thirty to forty years. In addition, letting the Council know they need to find some kind of a significant use for the tower that benefits the entire community, if the City is going to keep it up. Marquardt made a correction to Allen's statement. Marquardt stated the water tower would only be good for 30 to 40 years with the \$1,000,000 work done to it. He also stated a non-binding question on a ballot might be a good idea.

Marquardt stated he will bring this item to the second Council meeting in February.

Kori Oberle asked when the City decides to either tear it down or fix it, rather than putting the entire burden on the tax payers, there may be other ways to go forward. There are a lot of models out there in other communities our size and in our situation. It would be creating a campaign committee with a number of people that would raise private donations and seek grants. They would then work with the City to determine what the City contribution would be for tax dollars.

b. Discussion and Possible Action regarding UTV/ATV use on all city streets in the City of Whitewater.

Under the current ordinance, All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV) are permitted to operate on City owned streets within Jefferson County. According to the ordinance, the Public Works Committee is to monitor Jefferson County's review process and provide the City Council with a report on Jefferson County's findings and actions no later than March 1, 2023.

Marquardt stated the Jefferson County Highway Committee recently met and made a recommendation to leave the ordinance in place without any adjustment. Additionally, it has been requested with the review of the current City ordinance that the Council consider allowing UTV/ATVs on all City streets that are in Walworth County also. Therefore, Marquardt requested the Public Works Committee review the current ordinance to see if they want to adjust the current ordinance to include Walworth County.

Allen asked about the use of golf carts on streets. Marquardt stated there are two separate ordinances regarding UTV/ATV and golf carts. The golf cart ordinance was recently passed through the Common Council.

McCormick commented when she requested the ordinance from Jefferson County it was very vague. She asked if Jefferson County allows UTVs and ATVs on all City streets or are there designated routes? Marquardt stated to his understanding it is only on county highways, and it would be up to the cities to designate routes if they wanted to.

After concerns from the committee members regarding this item, Marquardt recommended this ordinance of UTVs/ATVs be brought to Council, in a non-ordinance format, for more discussion. It was suggested to contact the DNR for representation at a Council meeting as well.

c. Discussion and Possible Action regarding Verizon's inquiry to lease ground and water tank space for telecommunications equipment.

In December 2022, City staff received a request from Mountain, LTD on behalf of Verizon Wireless inquiring about the possibility of leasing ground and water tank space for the installation of new telecommunication equipment at the new Southwest Elevated Tank. They are proposing monthly rent payments of \$2,500 in exchange for a 100' x 100' ground space area. The request is for an initial lease term of five years with nine additional five-year renewal terms. The rent escalator includes 10% per term (term being five years).

Verizon's proposal of \$2,500/month would equal \$30,000/year for the first five years. With the escalator per term and a full 10 terms (50 years), the total payment to the Water Utility would be \$2,390,613.69. For comparison, the City's current lease with T-Mobile (formerly Sprint) on the Cravath Elevated Tank is currently yielding \$18,662/year. The Sprint lease is in the final renewal term of an overall 25-year period. The lease ends in July 2024. Whitewater Wideband is also located on the Cravath Tower. This rate escalates two percent every year. Their current payments are as follows:

2021: \$7,416.00
2022: \$7,638.48
2023: \$7,867.63
2024: \$8,103.66
2025: \$8,346.77

Strand reviewed the initial inquiry letter and provided some comments. In general, the lease term is fairly typical, but is open to negotiations, the proposed leased area seems to be more than what would be needed, and the escalator of 10% is fairly typical. The rent amount is within the range they have seen, but is very dependent on site and location availability.

Staff recommends the Public Works Committee approve moving forward with leasing space to Verizon and send to the full Council to discuss negotiation terms in closed session, if warranted.

Dave Stone, 303 W. Ann St., asked where the money goes from the use of the City's towers? Marquardt stated the monies go to the Water Utility Fund. Allen thought it went to the general fund. Marquardt stated he will check with Hatton to see where this money actually goes.

d. Discussion and Possible Action regarding Tank Asset Management Program for the new Southwest Water Tower.

Marquardt stated with the new Southwest Elevated Tank now in service, City staff reached out to Veolia (the City's current provider) to inquire about a Tank Asset Management Program, similar to the one in place for the Cravath Elevated Tank. The Program covers 10 years with preprogrammed annual payments. The Program covers annual tank inspections with reports, necessary cleanings/disinfections and repairs, emergency services, and power-washing. Renovation after the 10 years would include bringing the condition of the tower and coatings to like new conditions. Items included are overcoat painting of the exterior with appropriate surface preparation, blast and recoat the interior of the tank, and any damage to the tank is repaired, and any appurtenances would be brought up to the current standards.

The 10-year total of \$360,763 is broken into 10 approximately equal payments. The Year 1 payment was reduced to be able to fit the payment into the 2023 budget. Additional money was added to Years 2 – 6 to make up the difference. The proposed costs are in line with the current costs associated with the Cravath Elevated Tank.

Marquardt stated by implementing a program such as this, the Water Utility can incorporate the costs on an annual basis rather than waiting for a one-time bigger cost where borrowing would more than likely need to occur. The current program with the Cravath Street elevated tank has been in service since at least 2009 and works very well.

Gerber made a motion to recommend the approval of the Tank Asset Management Program to the full Council and seconded by McCormick.

AYES: McCormick, Allen, Gerber. NOES: None. ABSENT: None.

e. Update on Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) awarded streets: Walworth Avenue, Innovation Drive, Howard Road.

The City submitted a number of applications for both Surface Transportation Program (STP) – Urban, and STP – Local projects through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The City was notified in September 2022 that Walworth Avenue from Janesville Street west to the County line was selected as a STP – Urban project and Innovation Drive from Howard Road to Technology Drive was selected as a STP – Local project. The City also teamed with the Town of Cold Spring to submit an application, on the Town's behalf, for Howard Road from State Highway 59 south to the County line. This project was also approved as a County STP – Local project.

Staff recently reached out to the State and found out all three projects are tentatively scheduled for construction in 2025. The City should be receiving the State Municipal Agreement with more information in 2023. Action will be required at that time to proceed with the projects.

f. Discussion and Possible Action regarding Strand Task Order for the design of a Water Storage Building adjacent to 308 N. Fremont Street.

Marquardt stated included in the 2022-2023 CIP budget was the construction of a new storage building for the Water Department. Staff investigated designing and bidding this project in-house, but after discussions with Strand and our Building Inspectors, staff decided it would be best to have it designed by a professional. City staff does not have the knowledge to navigate state building codes and produce state approved plans. Additionally, change orders during the construction phase could be much costlier than hiring a professional upfront to develop the plans.

The estimated cost from Strand is \$90,000 based on an hourly rate. This will also include looking at a parking lot that needs to be paved and a driveway that goes to the new building. Therefore, there were

some additional design costs associated with this amount. McCormick asked if the garages were coming down. Marquardt stated that is part of the construction project.

Dave Stone, 303 W. Ann St., commented the City does spend a lot on consulting fees. At some point, he wishes this body would look at various consultants, so they would know if they are getting a good deal or not. Allen stated they have looked at various consultants in the past and the problem is that Strands knows our City, which is a cost benefit to us.

After much discussion about the high price of Strand, Allen moved to approve the Strand Task Order for the design of a Water Storage Building adjacent to 308 N. Fremont St. and seconded by McCormick.

AYES: Allen McCormick. NOES: Gerber. ABSENT: None.

5. Future Agenda Items

Marquardt stated he had one future agenda item that came in regarding business owners/employees. They would like to have parking spaces in the downtown area, more so in front of their businesses rather than where they are designated at this time.

6. Adjournment

McCormick moved to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting at 7:08 p.m. and seconded by Gerber.

AYES: All via voice (3)

NOES: None

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Stoll, Administrative Assistant
Department of Public Works