

CITY OF SHOREWOOD
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023

5755 COUNTRY CLUB ROAD
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

1. CONVENE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Mayor Labadie called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

A. Roll Call

Present. Mayor Labadie; Councilmembers Labadie, Callies, Maddy, and Sanschagrín; City Attorney Shepherd; City Administrator Nevinski; Finance Director Rigdon; Planning Director Darling; Director of Public Works Morreim; Park and Recreation Director Crossfield, and City Engineer Budde

Absent: Councilmember Johnson

B. Review Agenda

Sanschagrín moved, Callies seconded, approving the agenda as presented. Motion passed 4/0.

2. INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

City Administrator Nevinski gave an overview of the process that City has followed in creation of an Integrated Pest Management Plan and noted that the workplan documents that were created to help guide the City are available on the City's website. He stated that following discussion at a recent work session, the plan is at the point where it needs to be started to be implemented. He noted that this will be a large undertaking and reminded the Council that the goal is to try to balance the parks, fields, community interests, and budget considerations. He stated that they have put together somewhat of a 'pilot program' that has been laid out in the draft workplan. He stated that staff is looking for feedback on the plan and an idea of what the Council sees as their priorities. He stated that staff has put together an estimated budget, but has not gone to market, so they are not sure if they will be able to hit the dollar amounts as projected. He noted that staff's intent is to hold some sort of public Open House in order to get feedback on this proposed plan and then by the end of April have a formalized work plan for the remainder of the year. He explained that they would then use the results of this year in the work plan for the following year. He stated that one of things that will need to be determined is the community's tolerance for things like weeds, but also to determine what financial resources the City will have to work with.

Ryan Anderson, Sustainable Communities Manager, IPM Institute of North America, introduced himself.

Councilmember Callies stated that at the recent work session the Council had talked about what would be implemented because the entire plan would not be implemented at this time. She stated that she didn't think 'avoiding chemicals' for the fields provides clear direction for staff in terms of what they are supposed to do. She stated that the resolution says that the City will 'gradually

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reduce the use of systemic pesticides' and feels there should be something more clearly outlined for staff.

Mayor Labadie asked Public Works Morreim to address this and asked if the word 'avoid' would give his crew clear enough direction.

Public Works Director Morreim stated that the language for this part is really guiding the contractors. He stated that Public Works is not licensed to apply chemicals and stated that they are hopeful that they can avoid those chemicals as much as possible to get a desired level of service, especially on the ball fields because they are high traffic and high impact areas within the parks.

Councilmember Callies asked if the word 'avoid' would make it clear to the contractors what the expectations would be.

Public Works Director Morreim stated that to him 'avoid' means that chemicals would not be used.

Councilmember Callies stated that she did not think that was what the true intent was within the most recent resolution. She stated that she does think the City needs to work towards reducing use of the ones that say 'danger'. She stated that she also feels that there may be some disagreement about what chemicals this is referring to, for example Round Up vs. Weed B Gone.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that on page six it talks about some of the different chemicals and how they are rated, which may be something that Mr. Anderson could review more thoroughly. He believes the plan says it will avoid chemicals with the word 'danger' which would be the guidance that Public Works director Morreim would then give to a contractor.

Councilmember Callies stated that she realizes that this sounds good, but her recollection was that almost everything had a warning, including Weed B Gone.

Mr. Anderson stated that the herbicide that the City has been using is called ArmorTech, which is a three-way herbicide that is typically used in turf grass management. He explained that normally the warning label on this type of product either says 'danger' or 'warning' and the least toxic is labeled 'caution'. He stated that they usually typically see the three way herbicides used as a broadcast which means applying across the entire landscape, so that would not be in line with the plan that is trying to reduce their use. He explained that their recommendation is to really focus on the fertilization aspect of it as well as soil and overseeding which has not been a focus in the City for those elements.

Councilmember Sanschagrín asked if he was recommending that the City use the phrasing 'don't use chemicals that are labeled – 'danger'.

Mr. Anderson stated that this was correct and would also recommend that they do not use chemicals that are labeled 'warning' and to use those labeled as 'caution' as a last resort. He noted that within their report they discussed weed tolerance thresholds. He noted that three way herbicides will not kill grass but will kill broadleaf weeds.

Councilmember Callies stated that she feels the use of the word 'don't' makes things more clear, but does not agree with the premise for the City at this point in time. She stated that she thought the Council had decided for the last resolution that the City should be working towards this, but

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cannot say that this spring the City will never use these chemicals. She stated that she felt the City could say that they will not do the broadcast type of application.

Mayor Labadie reminded the Council that the most recent Bee Safe resolution had been distributed to the dais.

Councilmember Sanschagrín asked if there could be an approval process with the intent of ultimately meeting the Bee Safe standards of eventually not using them at all. He stated that he feels that in order to reach the goal of not using it there needs to be some kind of system in place of approvals for using it and measurements. He gave the example of asking when it can be used, how much can be used and then having specific goals that outline, here is how much we used this year and next year the City will reduce that by fifty percent.

Councilmember Callies stated that she does not think the City has data about what was being done before in terms of quantity.

Public Works Director Morreim stated that he did not have first hand knowledge but has asked other staff members and the City did treat these areas one or two times per year, but did not know the actual quantity of material that was used.

Mayor Labadie stated that the outside contractor that the City uses is not hired to infinity and if they cannot follow the guidelines set forth by the City, they could be let go. She stated that providing clear guidance to staff who can then pass it along to the independent contractors and letting it be known that their performance would be reviewed would be a double safeguard moving forward. She stated that she likes the way the memo was laid out with the fields listed first.

Councilmember Maddy asked Mr. Anderson what the consequences would be if the City just said no to chemicals labeled 'danger' and how many chemicals would take off the table for possible use.

Mr. Anderson gave an overview of various products, their active ingredients and the inert ingredients that go alongside them. He noted that the active ingredient is not the only factor in determining a label of 'danger'.

Councilmember Callies stated that she is wondering if the City should reverse things and state, 'these are the chemicals that may be used'.

Councilmember Sanschagrín agreed and stated that he would also like to be specific about having a list of chemicals that will not be used because they are too toxic or dangers, such as the ones that cause cancer.

Councilmember Callies stated that she wants to make sure that there is enough clarity provided for staff and contractors to know exactly what they can and cannot do. She gave the example of the City treating weeds 'no more than twice per year', for example.

Councilmember Maddy stated that this is regulating with words, that are kind of general, when the original intent was removal of systemic insecticides. He asked if they would be more specific and explained that he was not as worried about a systemic pesticide, like a one-time use buckthorn killer that metabolizes in the soil and seemingly just goes away. He stated that the systemic insecticides which have been used, he would like to see that specifically noted. He

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stated that, in his opinion, he would like to see it just not be used and see what happens. He stated that they want to make sure that the ecosystem is not damaged in the long-term. He stated that he believes the easiest approach may be to direct the contractors not to use any chemicals that contain the word 'danger' or 'warning' and to come talk to the City if a need arises.

Mayor Labadie stated that she agreed and was not sure that the City wanted to get into micro-managing the chemicals.

Councilmember Callies stated that she felt it would be important for the Council to know what chemicals the City has been using and whether they were labeled as 'danger' or 'warning', so they can direct them to know what to change for future use.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that there are standard databases that categorize chemicals into these types of categories that have are put together by OSHA. He stated that using those trigger words, as discussed, the City can go to the database and see what falls under there, so he feels there will be sufficient guidance. He stated that he will verify that this information is correct as they prepare a more finalized work plan.

Councilmember Callies stated that she hopes this is the base because she feels that Mr. Anderson's group has a more stringent definition of those words than perhaps, OSHA.

Mr. Anderson explained that there are two different types of signal words and noted that the label would relate to the EPA and the safety data sheet would be from OSHA. He stated that there could be a product that on OSHA's safety data sheet could say 'danger' and on a label from the EPA could just say 'warning'. He explained that OSHA relates more to the worker handling the item and not necessarily the acute toxicity that they would be talking about with the EPA.

Councilmember Callies stated that is a good point because some of the cautions apply to the applicator versus the environment, so she questioned which the City should be following.

Mr. Anderson stated that they follow both, but noted that if one were to trump the other, he would say that would be the EPA.

Councilmember Callies asked about the possibility of doing this for two years and then taking another look to see what happens to the fields afterwards.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he felt the City could update the process as it moves along. He suggested that the Council plan for a meeting in the fall to review the effectiveness of the program and the changes and discuss what can be done differently next year.

Mayor Labadie stated that the Council will do that and noted that the Parks Commission also conducts Park Tours that the Council is invited to attend. She stated that this would be a great opportunity to see the fields and parks first hand.

Public Works Director Morreim stated that he feels staff has gotten direction and noted that he did not feel this would be the last time the Council has this type of discussion. He stated that they intend to have fairly significant conversations with the athletic associations and will be getting feedback from them on the fields.

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Councilmember Callies stated that number seven relates to weed abatement and stated that her recollection of discussion at the retreat was that they talked about being able to use weed killers on the cracks in the sidewalk because the City won't be paying someone to hand pull those weeds every other week.

Public Works Director Morreim stated that he had discussed this with staff and noted that he has a lot of experience, from his past job, doing more mechanical removal and not using chemicals. He stated that their plans is to basically see how it goes with mechanical removal and noted that even if you put weed killer on things, weeds will still come back.

Councilmember Callies noted that Smithtown Trail has an immediate need for this work.

Public Works Director Morreim stated that area was specifically discussed and the hope is that this area will look different this year.

Mayor Labadie asked what guidance the Council would like to give on Manor Pond. She noted that staff is recommending contracting for the treatment of the pond with the recommendations from IPM. She stated that she is fine, moving ahead with this recommendation.

Councilmember Callies stated that she does not like the language where it says the City will 'seek to contract' and would like it clearly stated that the City will contract. She stated that she believes that the treatment that City was doing in the past does not fall within the parameters of what IPM is recommending.

Public Works Director Morreim explained that there were parts of the treatment where IPM gave different recommendations for, but believes the alum treatments were considered acceptable.

Mayor Labadie noted that the City has worked on Manor Pond for about ten years and what they have done worked, left the neighborhood happy, and also the wildlife has started to come back. She stated that she does not want the City to lose the progress that has been made on the pond. She noted that the City had received a grant for buckthorn removal a few years ago and had received many complaints about the buckthorn in Freeman Park because the City decided not to proceed with this method, which is the DNR 'best practice' method because it included daubing the stumps. She asked if the Council felt comfortable directing staff to proceed with following the DNR best practices for Buckthorn removal in Freeman Park. She stated that she would like to see the City utilize this grant money and get a good start on the buckthorn.

Councilmember Maddy stated that he was comfortable with that because it is a one time use.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he would also be comfortable with it if it could be done during a time when it was not wet.

Mayor Labadie noted that she would assume that the contractor would know what the DNR best practices would be, but was not sure if there were restrictions on the time of the year.

Councilmember Callies asked about the goats.

Planning Director Darling stated that is a follow up item to make sure that the buckthorn does not come back.

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Mayor Labadie noted that the Council was almost out of meeting time and suggested that they revisit item number four related to Badger Park and number five related to Emerald Ash Borer at a future meeting.

Public Works Director Morreim noted that discussing those two items at a later date would not hinder their ability to start the others this spring.

Councilmember Maddy noted that he was okay letting some weeds grow erring on the side of fewer chemicals.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he agreed.

Mayor Labadie stated that she is on the same side, however, last year no one applied for the two seasonal positions. She stated that if the City does not have the manpower, things will not look as pristine.


3. ADJOURN

Maddy moved, Sanschagrín seconded, Adjourning the City Council Work Session Meeting of March 27, 2023, at 6:49 P.M. Motion passed 4/0.

ATTEST:



Sandie Thone, City Clerk


Jennifer Labadie, Mayor