

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 21, 2016, City of Cottage Grove Council meeting

Update on PFCs by Minnesota Department of Health

City Council heard a presentation from Jim Kelly with the Minnesota Department of Health on an update on the PFCs and information on a public meeting scheduled for Monday, Sept. 26, from 6 to 9 p.m. On August 23, MDH Issued a press release that announced additional actions with regards to PFCs, mainly issuing a new health based guidance values based on work done by the EPA. The release also advised how the new values were going to be applied to private wells and what various actions being would be taken by the state agencies to address the situation. The EPA's new health advisory levels were set based on the latest peer-reviewed studies of the effects of PFOA and PFOS on laboratory animals (rats and mice). These studies indicate that exposure to PFOA and PFOS over certain levels may result in adverse health effects.

South Washington County residents who live in or near areas where groundwater has been contaminated with PFCs were invited to attend the public meeting is to have their questions answered on a one-on-one basis from representatives from Minnesota Department of Health, Pollution Agency, Washington County and City.

CSAH 19 Roundabout & East Point Douglas Road Improvements Projects

A public hearing was held for the County Road 19 and East Point Douglas Road improvements project. The total project cost for the roundabout and utility work is \$3,112,034 with the City's portion of work estimated at \$1,719,734. After the hearing City Council ordered the project and authorized the preparation of the plans and specs.

County Road 19 and the East Point Douglas Road intersection is currently a two-way stop with stop control on East Point Douglas Road. This project proposes the construction of a six-leg roundabout which will incorporate the on and off ramps for northbound Highway 61/10. Trail improvements would include crosswalks for all six legs of the roundabout and tie into the trail along East Point Douglas Road. Stormwater management requirements will be met by the construction of two infiltration basins along the north side of East Point Douglas Road, both east and west of County Road 19. Street lighting would be constructed within the roundabout, along with landscaping in the roundabout center island and East Point Douglas Road median to the west. Finally, water main and sanitary sewer would be constructed along the western leg of the East Point Douglas Road and underneath County Road 19 for future use.

Preliminary 2017 Property Tax Levy

City Council set the preliminary 2017 property tax levy at \$14,722,900 or 4.99 percent more than the 2016 levy. The City's estimated tax capacity value will increase by 4.3% in 2016; from \$30,777,490 (2016) to \$32,101,448 (2017). The 4.99% increase in the levy, combined with the valuation increase will result in a slight decrease of the tax extension rate from 43.14% in 2016 to 42.72% in 2017.

A Cottage Grove home with a 2017 market value of \$212,400 would see an increase of about 10 cents for the City portion of their taxes.

General Fund revenues, including increased property taxes are proposed to increase by 5.7% and expenditures are proposed to increase by 4% for 2017 over 2016. Items included in the 2017 General Fund include: Contractual salary increases and steps –budgeted cost of living increase for salaries is 2.75%; Other Personnel Costs - benefits include a 5% increase in health insurance rates and slight increase to the City's contribution to employee H.S.A accounts. Statutorily determined PERA rates for 2017 remain at 2016 levels; Commodity reductions - reductions from the 2016 budget in salt, asphalt and fuel costs; Staffing – adding a full time Assistant City Engineer, a Police Officer, and three (3) full time Firefighter/Paramedics. Other added positions include a seasonal building inspector, a planning intern and a summer intern in the administration department. The Assistant City Engineer position will be covered with expected revenue from Washington County recycling grant; Transfer to the Equipment Replacement Fund - the General fund transfer for capital equipment in 2017 is \$300,000 to assist in purchasing \$521,300 of vehicles and equipment.

Proposed Assessments for Removal of Hazardous Property

The City Council approved costs of \$3,884.96 to be assessed for the removal of hazardous conditions from two private properties. The City incurred the costs to remove health and safety nuisance conditions and invoices sent to the property owners have not been paid. The City Council called for hearing on the proposed assessment on Oct. 5, 2016.

Tall Weed Abatement Assessments

In 2016, 101 property owners were notified that they were in violation of the City's Noxious Weeds and Plants; height restrictions ordinance. Ten of those property owners did not fix the conditions within the ten days allowed. The City did the mowing and removal of the tall weeds at a cost of \$3,325.00. The City Council declared costs to be assessed and called for a hearing on the proposed assessment on Oct. 5, 2016.

Peddler, Solicitor, and Transient Merchant Ordinance Revision

The City Council approved the revised Ordinance 969 replacing Title 2, Chapter 4 of the City Code regulating the conduct of peddlers, solicitors, and transient merchants. Most of the changes made were to simplify the code and to create an appeal process for license or registration denials. The revised ordinance removes temporary sales licensing and adds transient merchant licensing; removes the regulation of vendors from this chapter of the code; and removes the contradictions and allows for immediate revocation by the City Clerk while providing the licensee or registrant with the right to appeal the revocation to the City Council.

Firefighter Retirement Plan Bylaw Change

City Council passed a resolution opting to join the Voluntary Statewide Lump-Sum Volunteer Firefighter Retirement Plan. Cottage Grove's paid on call firefighters are members of the Cottage Grove Firefighter Relief Association and this resolution approved a change to the bylaws at a lump sum benefit of \$6,000 per year of service as provided in appendix C of the bylaws effective Jan. 1, 2017.

Temporary Liquor License for Zywiec's Haunted Halloween

City Council approved a temporary "On Sale" 3.2 beer liquor license to be held at Zywiec's Landscape and Garden Center for Oct. 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 and 29. The application was submitted by The Cottage Grove Lions Club. Cottage Grove Public Safety conducted a police investigation of the applicant and found no reason to deny the application.

River Oaks Management Update

City Council approved the appointment of Tyler Olsen as River Oaks Golf Manager. This appointment is subject to a one year probationary period and contingent upon Olsen achieving full PGA Certification within 24 months of Sept. 19, 2016. Olsen has been the Interim Golf Manager since spring 2016.

City Council authorize the placement of River Oaks Golf and Golf Maintenance operations under the direction of the Parks and Recreation Department. Since spring 2016, golf course operations have been operating under City Council as acting Board of Director with Councilmember Steve Dennis serving as General Manager. By placing the golf course operation under Parks and Recreation, the Board can focus efforts on a successful implementation of the Eagles Bar and Grill business plan.

Call for Sale of General Obligation Improvement Bonds 2016B

City Council approved a resolution authorizing the sale \$4,400,000 in general obligation improvement bonds to finance the 2016 and 2017 pavement management improvement projects. Ehlers & Associates, Inc. was authorized to assist the City with the sale of the bonds and will meet at 7 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2016 to consider proposals for and award the sale of the bonds.