

City of Muscatine
In-Depth City Council Minutes
7:00 p.m. – July 8, 2021

Mayor Broderson called the City Council In-Depth meeting for Thursday, September 9, 2021, to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers present were Froelich, Malcolm, Gordon, Brockert, Jindrich, Brackett and Hopkins.

Lt. Ryan Buss from the Muscatine Police Department was present to share information with City Council regarding the “Code Blue Project”. Lt. Buss stated this program is in place to help Muscatine citizens that have gone through a traumatic event such as; an unexpected family member death, house fire, death of a child or other devastating event.

Lt. Buss states the families are contacted to give them the option to participate and if they choose to, they will be given a gift certificate to a local restaurant for their family.

Lt. Buss stated they had served 7 families in the last year.

Public Works Director, Brian Stineman was present to give City Council members an update on the major construction projects going on within the City.

Park Avenue 4 to 3 Lane Conversion Project

Mr. Stineman stated this goes from Mad Creek to Colorado/Clay Streets on Park Avenue. This project is changing lane configurations, upgrading signals as well as major repairs to the streets. This project has been funded by multiple state grants, MPW, and City Bonds for a cost of approximately 2.5 million. This project should be completed by the end of September 2021.

2nd Street Streetscape

Mr. Stineman stated this project is on 2nd Street from Mulberry to Pine Street. This project includes new sidewalks, aesthetic features to match Mississippi Drive, additional parking, upgraded water and sewer infrastructure. This project is being funded with TIF funds of a cost of approximately 3.4 million. This project is scheduled to be completed in October 2021.

Grandview Reconstruction Project

Mr. Stineman stated this is a 2 year project to upgrade storm sewers/ sanitary sewer, new lane configurations, new sidewalks, aesthetic features to match Mississippi Drive as well as major street repairs. This project is being funded by transfer of jurisdiction funds, Mpw Funding and bond proceeds for a cost of approximately 10.2 million. This project is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2022.

West Hill Sewer Separation Project Phase 5

Mr. Stineman stated this is a mandated project to separate storm water and sanitary sewer. This is Phase 5 of a 6 Phase Project. Mr. Stineman stated that roads have had to be closed to complete this project but the benefits of this include street and sidewalk

improvements. This project has been funded by local option sales tax in the amount of 6.9 million. Phase 5 is scheduled to be completed by the fall of 2022.

Mr. Stineman also gave a brief update on the ongoing pavement management programs.

Finance Director Nancy Lueck was present to share information regarding the Utility Franchise Fee. Ms. Lueck gave an overview of the History of the Franchise Fee as well as when and why fee increases have occurred.

Councilmembers had questions regarding the original intended use for the franchise fee including being for an emergency source of income for unexpected circumstances, and that it now has become an ongoing part of the City's budgeted funds.

City Councilmembers stated they would like staff to evaluate if the fee may be reduced at this time in order to have the opportunity to use it in the future for an emergency. Council stated that with the fee at 5% it cannot be raised any higher which gives us no room to add revenue for an emergency.

There were questions from City Council regarding where the unspent franchise fee funds are located and how they are spent that were addressed by Finance Director Nancy Lueck and City Administrator Carol Webb.

City Council requested that staff look at the effects of reducing the franchise fee before year-end and bring the results back at a later meeting. Council also asked that staff look at how the franchise fee may be further reduced during the 2022-2023 budget.

Councilmember Hopkins moved the meeting be adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Diana Broderson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Carol Webb, City Administrator