



**CITY OF NEWPORT
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
NEWPORT CITY HALL
March 3, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Elliott called the City Council Workshop to order at 6:23 p.m. on March 3, 2022.

2. ROLL CALL

Present (5): Mayor Laurie Elliott, Council Member Kevin Chapdelaine, Council Member Tom Ingemann, Council Member Marvin Taylor, and Council Member Rozlyn Johnson.

Not Present (0): None.

3. AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN MONIES

A. LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER HVAC

B. I&I and INFRASTRUCTURE

Mayor Elliott stated the city will received around \$400,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The city received half the money in November and will received the 2nd half of the money later this summer. Superintendent of Public Works Bruce Hanson presented a list of potential projects the city could complete using the ARPA money. These projects include SCADA Upgrades, Stormwater Treatment, Wall Removal/Inspections, Street Sweeper, Vac-Trailer, HVAC Upgrades at the Library, Sewer Televising Equipment, Manhole Sealing, and Expanded Broadband Services. City Administrator Deb Hill stated the total estimated costs of these project, excluding the street sweeper, is approximately \$390,000. Mayor Elliott requested staff put these items on the capital improvement plan (CIP) so we can get started with some of these projects.

4. PIONEER PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Superintendent Hanson stated St. Croix Recreation created a concept plan for Pioneer Park back in 2018. These plans were updated and brought to the Park Board for their feedback. Chris Johnson, with St. Croix Recreation, presented the preliminary design of the updated equipment and safe surface to Council. Mr. Johnson stated the playground equipment was designed with a section geared for ages 2-5 and another section geared for ages 5-12. This playground was designed with a theme of the cities history in mind and includes a trading post store front, paddle boat, the Mississippi river along the safe surface, etc. There is various spinning equipment included in the design that is good for childhood development. Council discussed a few changes they would like to see incorporated. The goal would be to complete this park by late August or early September.

5. STAFFING UPDATE

Mayor Elliott stated Superintendent Hanson is planning to offer his letter of resignation with his last day being April 29th, 2022. The Council needs to determine if they want to backfill the Superintendent position with an internal-only job posting or if they want to go with an external job posting for the hiring process. Council discussed and agreed to do an internal posting. Mayor Elliott stated the internal candidate(s) would need to fill out an application and be interviewed by Council. From there, the Council can have a discussion and decide if they want to promote internally. By promoting an internal candidate, that would in turn create another opening within the Public Works department. Staff believes there are interested and qualified candidates that could also fill an Assistant Superintendent position. Mayor Elliott will review the job posting and a Special Council Meeting will be held on March 14th for interviews.

6. CITY NEWSLETTER

Mayor Elliott stated with the community survey we learned that the website and the city newsletter are the top two ways that residents learn what is going on within our city. Mayor Elliott would like Council to take another look at the Newport newsletter. Mayor Elliott would like the Council to discuss if Newport should publish six issues of the newsletter instead of four and consider going to a full-color newsletter. Mayor Elliott brought sample newsletters from other communities for Council to review and discuss. Assistant to the City Administrator Travis Brierley stated our new website will have an information section and the ability to communicate important items to our residents. Council discussed photos would be helpful in drawing in readers. Mayor Elliott would like staff to attend a newsletter seminar and see if there are ideas for improving our current newsletter.

7. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

City Administrator Deb Hill stated upcoming agenda items include the 10th Avenue Storm Pond, Parking Ordinance, Retail Business for Imperial Camper, and a Parcel Combination.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Elliott adjourned the City Council Workshop at 8:26 p.m. on March 3, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted:
Jill Thiesfeld,
Administrative Assistant II

Signed: _____
Laurie Elliott, Mayor