



**CITY OF NEWPORT
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
NEWPORT CITY HALL**

March 3, 2022 – IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

MAYOR:	Laurie Elliott	City Administrator:	Deb Hill
COUNCIL:	Kevin Chapdelaine	Supt. of Public Works:	Bruce Hanson
	Tom Ingemann	Fire Chief:	Steven Wiley
	Marvin Taylor	Asst. to the City Admin:	Travis Brierley
	Rozlyn Johnson	Law Enforcement (WCSO):	Bill Harrell

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN MONIES
 - A. LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER HVAC
 - B. I&I and INFRASTRUCTURE
4. PIONEER PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT
5. STAFFING UPDATE
6. CITY NEWSLETTER
7. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS
8. ADJOURNMENT

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
Ms. Deb Hill, City Administrator

From: Jon Herdegen, P.E. City Engineer

Subject: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding

Date: February 24, 2022

Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) recently updated their report (see helpful links below) summarizing the distribution of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allotment for communities throughout the State. The City of Newport is slated to receive a total \$196,053 in ARPA funding. The first half of the allotment was distributed in November 2021 and the second half will be distributed later this summer. The deadline for spending the ARPA funds is Dec. 31, 2026.

Capital investment projects that are eligible for ARPA funds include investments in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. Staff has identified several potential projects and would like to solicit feedback to prioritize these projects, as well as other projects identified by Council. After our top priorities have been identified, we will further refine project scope, costs and report back to the Council with our detailed findings:

- **SCADA Upgrades:** The communication networks for the City's critical infrastructure are serviceable, but faces challenges with latency particularly within the multi-zone water system. Improving the system's communication network connectivity and speed will help Public Works staff identify, troubleshoot and course-correct issues in a timely manner. Budgetary Cost: \$50K-\$75K
- **Stormwater Treatment:** The shallow bedrock throughout the City creates significant challenges with meeting the South Washington Watershed District (SWWD) requirements for Total Phosphorus limits on new development sites. The City Hall/Public Safety Building site and Wilson Lines are examples of projects that could not achieve the treatment requirement onsite and currently have agreements in place with SWWD to construct an offsite BMP to account for the deficiency. SWWD is planning to construct two (2) BMP's within the City of Newport in the next couple years and would be interested in expanding the capacity of the system to account for the two (2) sites mentioned and potentially other future development sites. Budgetary Cost: \$20K-\$30K
- **Well Removal/Inspection:** The MN Department of Health recently identified elevated levels of cadmium in Well No. 1 through routine water sampling. The source of the cadmium is unknown at this time. MDH has recommended that the City conduct testing of the well pump and casing to see if the well materials are the source of the cadmium. This will require the well pump and associated piping is removed from the casing. Budgetary Cost: \$30K (plus the cost of repairs/replacement)
- **Street Sweeper:** The City's street sweeper is 14 years old (2007). The sweeper is suitable for the City's needs and is not nearing the end of its service life. However, there are newer sweeper models available that use a vacuum process for a dust-free application. Budgetary Cost: \$150,000 (less salvage value)
- **Vac-Trailer:** Uses for this item are numerous including removing debris from gate valves, sanitary manholes, storm sewer manholes/catchbasins/outfalls, lift stations and exposing buried utilities in the right-of-way. A vac-truck has been a long standing item on the Public Works Department wish-list. Budgetary Cost: \$100k-\$125K

MEMO

February 24, 2022

- **HVAC Upgrades at Library:** The HVAC system at the library is nearing the end of its service life. Given the age of the building and the type of construction (lath & plaster, limited crawl spaces) exchanging air throughout the building is very challenging. In addition to replacing the existing HVAC system, additional ductwork could be installed to improve air circulation. Budgetary Cost: \$20K
- **Sewer Televising Equipment:** The costs of I/I in the City are well documented. Televising equipment would give staff the ability to televise critical portions of the sanitary collection system at critical times following rain events to isolate problem areas and promote targeted repair efforts. Budgetary Cost: \$100K
- **Manhole Sealing:** As part of the sanitary sewer lateral lining project, we plan to seal approximately 120 manholes in the areas most susceptible to I/I. Manhole sealing vendors are generally willing to demonstrate their products on a single manhole for a reduced cost (usually the cost of materials). Staff is considering identifying 4-5 different vendors, negotiating a demo and monitoring the installation over a year to document performance. This study will assist staff in determining the appropriate manhole sealing technology for the given condition. Budgetary Cost: \$10,000
- **Expand Broadband Services:** Lumen (formerly CenturyLink) has started extending broadband fiber through the main transportation corridors with the City. Staff has recently reached out to Lumen to gauge their willingness to expand their services to more Newport residents. Our initial conversations were promising, and Lumen will meet internally review options and associated costs. Budgetary Cost: Unknown Pending Lumen Response.

This should not be considered an exhaustive list and we are excited to hear about other projects that Council is interested in pursuing. We look forward to discussing the potential uses for the ARPA funds and identifying the City top priorities.

Helpful Links

League of MN City ARPA FAQ:

<https://www.lmc.org/resources/american-rescue-plan-act-of-2021-info-for-cities/>

MMB – Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Distribution Report:

<https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/crao/ARP-Local-Fiscal-Recovery-Fund-Distribution-Report-December-8.pdf>

EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Eligibility Handbook: (See pages 10-13 for eligible project examples)

https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/documents/dwsrf_eligibility_handbook_june_13_2017_updated_508_versioni.pdf



MEMO

TO: Mayor Elliott and Newport City Council

FROM: Public Works Superintendent Bruce Hanson and Assistant Matt Yokiel

DATE: March 3, 2022

SUBJECT: Pioneer Park Playground Equipment Replacement

Background: The first priority for playground replacement is at Pioneer Park. The current playground equipment was installed in 1996 and is need of more immediate improvements when compared to other Newport parks.

- In 2018 the parks master plan was updated and staff asked St. Croix Recreation to create concept drawings of playground equipment for replacement of existing structures.
- A phone survey was completed the fall of 2021 which showed 91% of Newport residents either strongly support or somewhat support the use of City funds to update playground equipment and increase ADA accessibility of the playgrounds.
- Staff asked St. Croix Recreation to have the Pioneer Park playground drawings and estimated cost as a result of the 2021 survey. The revised drawings and costs were presented to the Park Board during the Park Board meeting on February 22, 2022.

Discussion: The playground equipment was designed for children up to 12 years old and has a user capacity of 207. The Park Board provided their feedback and included the following:

1. Extend the “blue river” to the edge of the fall surface.
2. Add “Mississippi River” to the blue river.
3. Remove beard from the trapper featured on the trading post to stay gender neutral.
4. Change trading post text and window color to yellow to stand out better.
5. See if games such as hopscotch can be added to fall protection area.
6. Work with vendor to add City logo and more games on playground panels.

Budget- The estimated cost of the playground equipment is \$318,000. The pour in place fall protection is \$152,000 of the total price. There is \$150,000 in the CIP scheduled for Pioneer Park playground equipment and \$250,000 in the CIP for Lions Park playground equipment. The CIP monies include the Park Dedication funds that have been collected by development.

Recommendation: Staff requests comments from the Mayor and City Council regarding the design of the playground equipment. This information, in addition to Park Board comments, will be sent to St. Croix Recreation so a final design and contract can be presented to the City Council for consideration.



COLOR KEY

- NAVY
- LEMON
- LIME
- LIME/BLACK







MEMORANDUM

Date: March 3, 2022
To: Newport City Council
From: Mayor Laurie Elliott
Re: Council Workshop - Staff Resignation

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Our Superintendent of Public Works Bruce Hanson is planning to offer his letter of resignation to City Administrator Deb Hill on Thursday, March 3rd. His last day of work will be April 29, 2022.

DISCUSSION

As a department head, this position is interviewed and hired directly by the City Council typically with input from the City Administrator. In this situation feedback from Superintendent Hanson would also be appropriate. Superintendent Hanson has stated that we have at least one qualified internal staff member for this position. The Council needs to provide staff direction on whether we want an internal only hiring process or if we want to open the position to external (non-employee) applicants.

- a) Internal applicants only - This means the position would only be posted for current City of Newport employees to apply. If the Council is comfortable with this process for this position, staff should be directed to prepare an internal job posting for the Council, or a Council subcommittee, to review. Typically an internal posting is open for about five days, although Newport does not have a formal requirement for how long an opening needs to be posted.

An internal hiring process would create another opening within the department so a fuller discussion of how position openings could cascade is also needed should this be our chosen process. Time is of the essence because of the potential for more than one position needing to be filled. It would be helpful for the Council to anticipate this possibility and provide more comprehensive direction.

Note: The Council needs to approve all personnel appointments which means some Special Council meetings may need to be scheduled in order to keep the hiring process moving.

- b) Open recruiting process - If we believe a hiring process that is also open to the public should be used, then direction should be given to staff to prepare recruiting materials for the Council to review and approve. Again, a Special Council meeting or a Council subcommittee may be needed under this scenario in order to manage the filling of the position in a timely manner.

Memorandum

Date: March 3, 2022
To: Newport City Council
From: Mayor Laurie Elliott
Re: Council Workshop - City Newsletter

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The City publishes and mails a City newsletter four times a year to each household. Typically they're mailed in February, May, August and November, but the mailing dates have some flexibility so important items can be included in a more timely manner.

The newsletter is a four-page (8.5" x 11") document. It's printed in a two color format with black text and a second color (such as green) is used as an accent color.

DISCUSSION

Newport is an active and vibrant community with a lot happening. Staff has done a good job of fitting a number of different articles on a variety of topics into limited space. For example, the Winter 2021 issue had 16 different articles in it, plus the standard information that goes into every issue (hours, contact info, etc.). They've also selected helpful topics of community interest to be included in the newsletter. Overall, it's a well-done document and staff should be complimented for their good work on this.

I've looked at a number of other City's newsletters. Their production value is quite high (glossy paper, full color, lots of pictures) and it's obvious that they have staff with more time to write and publish newsletters, and are investing considerable money and resources into this communication tool.

Four newsletter issues per year does have its limitations, and there are probably newsworthy items that don't get published simply because of the timing of the event. I'd like the Council to discuss whether we should:

1. Publish the newsletter six times per year instead of four

- ✓ The current four-issue schedule means that the typeface (font) is quite small to fit in all of the articles and information. It also limits the use of photos (for visual interest), white space (for easier reading), and other layout options because there is so much information that needs to be included in each issue.

- ✓ The cost to print and mail a newsletter is about \$1200 per issue, which is currently covered by a grant from the Recycling and Energy Center. This grant also pays for the New Resident Guide and some of Deb Schulz's time. Adding two more newsletters would cost about \$2400 per year.
- ✓ If this change is supported by the Council, then Council should discuss whether we would expect more photos and graphics to be included in the newsletters. If so, it may be helpful for staff to attend a "Fundamentals of Layout and Design" or "Layout and Design Basics" as offered by Fred Pryor Training. Or the "Graphic Design Basics for Non-designers" offered by Skill Path. These are a half-day or full-day programs offered online.

2. Consider changing to a full color newsletter

- ✓ The cost to change to a full color newsletter using the same paper we currently have would be about \$225 per issue, or \$900 (4 issues) or \$1350 (6 issues) annually.
- ✓ A full color newsletter would make photos and graphics more engaging to the reader, although cost and budget considerations are important in making this decision.