



This has been a brutally long winter!

I heard from one of the local stations we had around 1" of snow through January 11th, after that we've had around 40". I know we are all tired of this long winter. Hopefully turning the calendar to March can signal some better weather for all of us. Now let's get you caught up on the month!

First off, council continued discussion of the State Street and Vavra Drive resurfacing project. Scott with MMS presented updated information including adding a sidewalk from Northgate Drive down to Solon State Bank. Council also discussed adding a sidewalk along Vavra Drive and a small parking area at Vavra Park. Council requested when bids are taken to make the sidewalk along Vavra and the parking area alternate bids on the project. Once the bids are in council will decide if those two alternates will be included in the project. Council voted unanimously to authorize MMS to post the project for bid. Scott said bids should be available for the March city council meeting. A public meeting was also set for the resurfacing project on 3/11 during the city council meeting.

Next, council discussed the compost site. During the December council meeting a group of citizens raised concerns about the current location of the compost pile along with the city managing the excess waste on site. Council requested that staff look into a variety of solutions to improve the compost site. Denise presented five possible solutions to improve the current set-up. Council ultimately decided to keep the compost pile in its current location at the water tower, however staff will monitor the area daily and remove compost as the bunker gets full to a staging area at the WWTP. Periodically throughout the year a hauling service will remove the compost. A public campaign will also be implemented to promote residents to mulch their lawns instead of bagging to help reduce the amount of compost. Lastly, a row of fast-growing trees will also be planted along the north end of the property to create a buffer between residential and city property.

Third, a public hearing was held on the proposal to enter into a general obligation loan agreement and to borrow money in the principal amount not to exceed \$3,200,000. Hearing no comments the public meeting was closed. Council then moved to adopt a resolution authorizing the loan agreement approving the future issuance of general obligation bonds and providing for the levy to taxes to pay the same.

Fourth, council discussed at length the FY2020 preliminary budget. The finance committee recommended the library receive a 3-5% increase rather than the 10% requested and that an equipment reserve be established using any surplus funds from the overall budget. The equipment reserve fund would ensure that there is money set aside to replace equipment as needed based on a replacement schedule provided by staff. The council did not make any final decisions regarding the finance committee's recommendations, but asked instead that the library board look into the possibility of reducing their budget request. A special meeting was set for 2/21 to finalize the budget. On 2/21 council met again after the library board had a chance to meet and review their budget per the request of council. The library board submitted a revised budget that reflected a 6.75% increase. Council directed staff to move forward with the revised request and also establish the equipment fund.

Lastly, council determined that the annual junk clean-up day would be Saturday, May 18. More details will be posted in the upcoming months.

Thanks for taking the time to get caught up. I do want to take a moment to thank our Public Works staff. This winter has been one of the more challenging years for snow removal in recent memory. The city staff has only 4 public works employees and they have been putting in a lot of overtime including working many late or early hours to keep our streets clear. We have to also remember in a small town the equipment we provide them to clear the snow is generally not the most up-to-date equipment thus there has also been many days they have had to work on the equipment to get it ready for the next round. Thank you Public Works,! Your hard work is greatly appreciated!

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