

INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: August 8, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Chad Henke, Lou Larson, Michael Martens, Sarah Watson, Tom Neal (arrived at 5:20 pm)

Also Present: Mayor Diny, Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, TJ Niksich, Jillian Kurtzhals, Solomon King, Dustin Kraege, Randy Fifrick, Gary Gisselman, Jared Thompson, Jessa Bokhoven, Lori Wunsch, Matt Graun – Becher Hoppe, Sean Jergens – SRF, Eric Jones – CIP

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and received by the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

Noting the presence of a quorum, at approximately 5:15 p.m. Chair Henke called the meeting to order.

Approval of minutes of the July 11, 2024 meeting

Watson moved to approve the minutes of the July 11th meeting. Seconded by Martens and the motion passed 4-0.

Update/Presentation by Becher Hoppe on the street and utility portion of the Wausau Mall Redevelopment Project

Matt Graun from Becher Hoppe and Sean Jergens from SRF provided an update on the Wausau Mall Redevelopment Project regarding streets, sidewalk, landscaping design, and street scaping. The entire presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWwZZXXhIyY>.

Regarding the meeting place, Watson suggested working with the Arts Commission to get a local artist to do something in the space. Graun mentioned the idea of the Boy with the Boot statue, which would tie into the history of the mall. At this point, they are open for ideas. Watson noted there is a lot of old wood in storage from a structure that was torn down. She asked if that could be incorporated into the design. The last Neal had heard, a lot of the wood was not in good shape.

Wesolowski stated this will move forward to finalize plans with the intent to bid in January for early 2025 construction. Henke would like the plans brought through this committee and Council. Wesolowski noted that there will be coordination with the downtown businesses and organizations. Specifications will be based around accommodations to the downtown businesses.

Watson suggested having a plan/banner posted on the construction fence showing where the project will start and what it will look like. Staff will look into this.

Update on construction of the Lead Service Line Replacements

Eric Jones, CIP, stated the first challenge of the project was to inventory private lines. They started going into basements in October, mostly through appointments. In January they did more canvassing. They have canvassed all of the GD Jones neighborhood, the southeast side and Track 7, which is between Townline and Franklin. They have identified 483 as lead so far and have almost 100% of the Right of Entry (ROE) forms signed. The goal for this year is 553. They have been encouraged over the last couple of weeks. People have been coming out of their homes when they are doing their neighbor's house and asking to be signed up. They have gotten 4 signed up this way the last couple of days. On the southeast side, they have replaced a little over 120 lines as of today. They replace 3 to 5 a day and the project is going well. The bigger challenge has been getting the word out. Canvassing is one effort. Most have heard of the program because of the knock on the door. Over the past month they have tried different techniques. They held a community day at John Marshall Elementary School on July 27th. There were a lot of people that attended from the neighborhood and a few signed up. There were a few that were apprehensive but they were able to talk them through the process.

Jones has attended 4 neighborhood meetings over the last month, which has been an excellent opportunity to talk with residents. They may try to do more community days as they move into different neighborhoods. They have

been at the Community Partners Campus during their food bank. Another part of their program is to try to employ local residents and put them through a training program. He believes that Community Partners Campus is a good opportunity for that. They are almost done with the southeast side and will be moving to Track 7, which is Townline Road to Franklin Street then into GD Jones and the Werle Park area.

Watson suggested setting up a booth during events and mentioned the Artrageous weekend. Jones stated they tried booths at a few places; events that are specific to Wausau are a better chance for them. At the fair they had some people interested, but a lot of people were not from Wausau.

Henke got a knock on his door and is scheduled for mid-October. It was a 5-minute process where they went in the basement, verified the lines, and got him scheduled. Watson did the online form, which was really easy. Jones indicated they have been trying to highlight that residents have the option to send in a photo and have had good success. Being able to schedule online has gone really well. This can be done at <https://www.leadfreewausau.com/>. Watson mentioned the Water Works website where residents can check if their line has been verified already.

Henke would like monthly updates before this committee.

Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions on North 4th Avenue between Bridge Street and Oak Street

Watson moved to approve as recommended. Seconded by Larson.

DPW noticed the parking restrictions on North 4th Avenue between Bridge Street and Oak Street were not in ordinance. Staff sent out mailings to the residents and reached out to the School District. The School District agreed that no parking should remain on the school side of the street from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Wesolowski had recommend removing the 2-hour parking on the east side of 4th Avenue. He heard from the resident at 507 North 4th Ave who asked for the 2-hour parking to remain. She said there is not enough parking for school staff and if that 2-hour parking was removed staff would park in front of her house all day.

Watson asked if this aligns with recommendations from the Safe Routes to School report. Wesolowski does not know if that report recommends parking. He thinks anytime parking is eliminated it does make it safer for children. The resident from 4th Avenue indicated people do wait there to pick up kids.

Watson amended her motion to restrict parking on the west side during school hours and 2-hour parking on the east side during school hours. Larson agreed with the amendment and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on installing Suicide Hotline signs on the Bridge Street Bridge

Jared Thompson, EMS Division Chief, was joined by Jessa Bokhoven of the Marathon County Health Department. Thompson stated the Suicide Death Review Team meets every other month to review the recent suicide deaths from different angles. At their July meeting there was another death that involved an individual in crisis that used the Bridge Street Bridge to successfully end their life. In his career dating back to 2003, he has been on a number of calls whether it was the removal, retrieval, or resuscitation of an individual that has jumped off the Bridge Street Bridge. All the individuals he has been involved with have successfully ended their life by use of the bridge. The last one he was on was a young man that jumped off the bridge during peak hours by WOW. A number of people witnessed the jump and he successfully ended his life. Their goal is to place signage on both sides of the bridge that offers an individual in crisis some sort of hope to reconsider the act before they follow through with it.

Watson feels this is a great idea and asked how many signs would be placed. Per Thompson, individuals that have chosen to use the bridge, have used the side that has the sidewalk. He would like one on each end, another sign halfway up, and one at the peak.

Martens said this is a great idea and has seen this on the Leo Frigo Bridge in Green Bay. He assumes the signs have been successful but knows there are still people who jump. If it saves one person it is a good thing. He asked if the success rate is known. That would be a guesstimate for Thompson. For overdoses in Wausau, they leave behind Narcan kits for individuals choosing to use opioids, which is also hard to measure the success.

Martens can see the potential of the signs giving enough of a doubt for an individual not to carry it out. Neal believes this might also be a good idea for the Scott Street Bridge, the Washington Street Bridge, and the downtown parking ramps. He asked if there has been any thought to multiple languages on the signs. Thompson thinks it would be a wonderful option to have signs in Hmong and Spanish. There are plans and discussions of other locations for signs. He mentioned acts that took place at the Jefferson Street Ramp, the Scott Street Bridge, and the conservation tower on Rib Mountain.

Larson moved to approve installing the appropriate signage on the Bridge Street Bridge and to look at other locations in the future. Seconded by Martens and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on preliminary resolution to vacate certain right-of-way along East Thomas Street abutting a portion of 700 Grand Avenue, and vacating a portion of right-of-way formerly known as 804-806 Grand Avenue, 810 Grand Avenue, 814 Grand Avenue, and 816 Grand Avenue

A map included in the packet shows the areas proposed for vacation. This is a preliminary resolution to set the public hearing. If the resolution goes to Council on August 19th, the public hearing would be held before this committee on October 10th.

Watson moved to approve setting the public hearing. Seconded by Neal and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion on potential property for the DPW Fleet Maintenance Facility at 901 Cherry Street

Lindman explained that staff continues to look for property for the proposed Fleet Maintenance Facility. The property at 901 Cherry Street is for sale. It is unique in that there are 2 separate properties owned by two different owners. One is a parking lot and the other housed Marathon Box. The properties together are close to 8 acres. We are looking for something with at least 6 acres. An environmental Phase 2 was done in the early 90's, which showed some contamination, but nothing out of the ordinary that we would not be able to manage. He has been in touch with the realtor but does not have a cost at this point.

Larson asked if Cherry Street goes through the 2 properties. Lindman stated that Cherry Street would not be affected. Larson is excited that a property has come up again. We spent time on the other property and came up empty handed. He asked if the concept Barrientos did would fit on this property. Lindman explained it might need a different configuration, but the buildings would fit on this property.

Larson moved to have the Engineering Department further pursue the property. Seconded by Watson.

Watson asked how staff feels about the contamination. Per Lindman, it is a good base line. Once we get pricing, we would ask to do further investigation. If the committee thinks this is a good option to move forward with, we will continue to pursue it. Watson feels it is valuable to loop in Finance when we get to the cost. Lindman stated a joint meeting could be held when we get to that point.

Henke asked if this was the property we looked at for economic development about a year ago and Lindman confirmed. Larson asked if any others were looking at this property. Lindman believes the realtor has had some inquiries but nothing with numbers. The realtor is working on it with both property owners.

There being a motion and a second, motion to have the Engineering Department further pursue the property passed 5-0.

Presentation on CIP Infrastructure Project Summary to be submitted for the 2025 budget

Wesolowski outlined the projects that will be submitted for the 2025 budget. He noted that the asphalt paving budget was increased last year to \$600,000, which really helped the streets. He has requested the same amount for 2025.

Traditionally, the sidewalk replacement budget has been \$150,000. We are falling behind and this year we could not complete all the complaints we have received. He is proposing to increase that budget to \$200,000.

Wesolowski noted the storm sewer budget and a large project on Randolph Street. There is a failing storm sewer and we have had road collapses. This storm sewer is 20' deep and large and adds a lot of cost to the budget. The majority of the storm sewer budget is the replacement of this large structure.

The Concrete Pavement Repair (CPR) Project has been a great success and we have caught up on a lot of streets. TID 8 has contributed \$350,000 the last several years and per Groat that can continue into 2025. In the coming years we may be able to reduce this budget now that we are catching up.

The total request for 2025 is approximately \$16.5 million; in 2024 it was \$15.4 million. The general fund budget was \$4.6 million in 2024 and the ask for 2025 is about \$4.7 million. He's requesting to move this forward to Finance to see if we can move these projects forward.

Henke feels this is a good first draft. He loves that the TID funding is shown as citizens are not as aware where TID money goes. This is a great illustration of what the TIDs are doing for us.

Watson mentioned the streets that were recently approved to be redone with ARPA funding. Wesolowski confirmed that an Asphalt Paving Project was bid out and that work is anticipated to be done in September.

Larson moved to forward the proposed CIP Infrastructure Project Summary to Finance. Seconded by Watson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on the closing of 28th Avenue from Madonna Drive to Mary Ann Lane

At the June meeting, this committee talked about closing 28th Avenue before winter; however, Mother Nature threw a wrench into that. On July 13th there was a large rainstorm that lifted sections of the pavement on 28th Avenue and carried some of that pavement down the hill. DPW has not made any repairs yet and 28th Avenue has been closed since. Staff is questioning if we should keep it closed; otherwise, we would have to make significant repairs. If kept closed, we would do public outreach, boost up signage, and have more permanent barricades.

Larson is in favor and noted this is due for repair in 2026. Wesolowski explained it is in the budget for 2026. If we closed the road and did not reconstruct in 2026, there would be a cost savings. Eventually we would have to make permanent cul-de-sacs, but that would not be proposed until 2026. Larson feels it does not make sense putting money into it. The road is unsafe and the rains have confirmed this. He believes it is in the best interest of the neighborhood and the City to leave it closed.

Larson moved to leave 28th Avenue closed. Seconded by Neal.

Martens asked if any complaints have been received. Wesolowski received one call from a resident on 27th Avenue. Road closed ahead signs are at West Wausau Ave and 28th Ave. Some people do not believe the road is closed and try to go down. When they get to the closure at Mary Ann Lane, they turn down Mary Ann and go back on 27th Ave. The caller's complaint was that she is seeing increased traffic on 27th Ave. Wesolowski feels that when someone does it once, they will not try it again. He plans to increase the signage as well.

Wesolowski spoke with Aspirus and they did not object to the closing. Henke received an email from a resident saying traffic has increased on 29th Avenue. He responded to the resident saying he believes there was more

traffic on 29th because Maple Creek Drive is open to 28th Ave. With the future plan, Henke feels more traffic will use 32nd Ave. The resident felt better knowing there is a long-term plan that does not have traffic using 29th Ave.

There being a motion and a second, motion to leave 28th Avenue closed passed 5-0.

Adjourn

Watson moved to adjourn the meeting. Neal seconded and the motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:25 p.m.