



**City of Newport
City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2015**

1. ROLL CALL -

Council Present – Tim Geraghty, Tom Ingemann, Bill Sumner, Tracy Rahm, Dan Lund

Council Absent –

Staff Present – Deb Hill, City Administrator; Bruce Hanson, Superintendent of Public Works; Fritz Knaak, City Attorney; Jon Herdegen, City Engineer

Staff Absent - Curt Montgomery, Police Chief; Steve Wiley, Fire Chief; Renee Eisenbeisz, Executive Analyst;

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING CHAPTER 10 ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Engineer Herdegen, Doug Borglund (MSA), and Supt. Hanson presented on this item as outlined in the March 5, 2015 City Council Workshop packet.

Councilman Rahm - The subsurface sewage treatment would regulate septic systems too? My concern is that we're referencing the County ordinance but do we really know what's changing?

Mr. Borglund - You'll be made aware of the changes. For the most part, septic systems are regulated across the board with the State and County.

Councilman Rahm - I would like to have the most local control I can on some of these things so we know what's changing. I don't want to have the entire County ordinance in our codes but I'm concerned that things change and my septic system is now outlawed along with other homeowners. I worry about the government changing rules over time.

Mr. Borglund - There is a point of sale in Washington County so if you were to sell it you do need to update your septic system at that time.

Councilman Rahm - They changed the rules on repairs. It used to be that you could do repairs and it wasn't a big deal and now it is. That's changed and it concerns me.

Councilman Lund - That's a good point. I think we should talk about if we're going to lose some financial flexibility and the ability to give assessments to repairs to the sewer line if we define it as private property. Can we fix private property with a special assessment? Does that hurt our bonding or do we have to send them a bill?

Attorney Knaak - If there's a benefit. I see that usually with repaving. In order to allow people the benefit of the City's contract, that's added into the assessment.

Councilman Lund - Like the driveway apron?

Attorney Knaak - Yes.

Councilman Lund - Do they have the opportunity to get the financing like a special assessment?

Attorney Knaak - Yes.

Councilman Lund - If we want to run these liners up our service lines and now we're saying people have to repair/maintain it themselves. What type of timeline do we have to give them before we fix it for them?

Supt. Hanson - The sewer language hasn't changed, it was the property owner's responsibility before. The ones we just repaired was their cost and was deferred to their assessment.

Councilman Lund - If it's their property, they have to fix it, if they decline to fix it, at what point can we make them fix it or fix it for them?

Attorney Knaak - When it becomes a public nuisance or health hazard.

Mayor Geraghty - We'd have to give notice for an assessment.

Councilman Lund - For the apron, you can use the special assessment as well?

Attorney Knaak - I've seen it done.

Engineer Herdegen - That would be part of the City standard.

Councilman Lund - I'm not in favor of taking away our flexibility at this point. The way it was explained to me is that we can do an assessment for a public property improvement but now we're talking about private properties and that means we have no opportunity to use any other option than sticking them with a bill.

Mayor Geraghty - We've allowed them to put it on their assessment before.

Councilman Lund - This is an expense for all of the houses in the City and by making it an assessment and removing any option of paying for it..

Mayor Geraghty - They always have a choice to pay it.

Councilman Lund - Either way, it's not a deductible expense anymore and if everyone has to pay this we would save them 30% by adding it to the property taxes and having it be a deductible expense.

Admin. Hill - That's a different discussion.

Councilman Lund - No, we're calling it private property which takes that option away. I think it's ambiguous where the public property stops and the private property starts.

Mayor Geraghty - It's not benefiting everybody though.

Councilman Lund - That's true, they would be subsidizing it, but 30% is significant.

Mayor Geraghty - We use to do that and we decided to stop it.

Councilman Lund - I would be in favor of re-examining that.

Councilman Sumner - The section on water rates, it's talking about sprinkler systems, is that for buildings or landscaping?

Supt. Hanson - It's for a building.

Councilman Sumner - Should we clarify that?

Mr. Borglund - We could add language clarifying that.

Councilman Rahm - With regulating grass clippings, that happens a lot on Century Avenue. Could we think about signage for along the road?

Supt. Hanson - We do have signs on Cedar Lane.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING I & I

Engineer Herdegen and Supt. Hanson presented on this item as outlined in the March 5, 2015 City Council Workshop packet. The City recently reviewed over 26,000 feet of televised sanitary sewer mains, including approximately 530 sewer connections. The City found that about 70% of those connections have a major root intrusion that could potentially cause blockages. In the coming weeks, Staff will be working on a plan to address the sewer mains and services for Council consideration. Until a repair plan can be developed, the City will be contacting the homeowners to notify them that there is a potential issue with their service lines. Staff will be working to develop a list of those properties affected and mail a notice to the property owners in the coming month.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Signed: _____
Tim Geraghty, Mayor

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee Eisenbeisz
Executive Analyst