

**MEDINA CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES OF**  
**OCTOBER 20, 2020**

The City Council of Medina, Minnesota met in work session on October 20, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. at the Medina City Hall, 2052 County Road 24, Medina, MN.

**I. Call to Order**

**Members present:** Martin, Anderson, Albers, DesLauriers, Pederson

**Members absent:**

**Also present:** City Administrator Scott Johnson, Assistant City Administrator Jodi Gallup, Finance Director Erin Barnhart, Public Safety Director Jason Nelson, and Planning Director Dusty Finke

**II. Second Draft Comprehensive Fire Service Study Discussion**

Robert Finn from Matrix Consulting Group provided a presentation to the City Council on the second draft preliminary Comprehensive Fire Service Study for the City of Medina. Mr. Finn discussed how the draft joint powers agreement (JPA) expenditures were divided over the different cities; the draft assumed all four current contracts for fire service would be terminated simultaneously, and further expense would need to be added if overlapping fire service contracts were still needed for some time into the future. The City Council directed Mr. Finn to put together a spreadsheet showing current fire costs, expected future fire costs, and joint powers agreement costs. Council also requested footnotes on allocation of costs.

Robert Finn stated that population and call volumes were the fairest way to split costs amongst cities in a fire service district/JPA scenario. Mr. Finn did not think property values were a good way to split costs for fire services. He also explained that more apparatus is needed with a volunteer model. The number of apparatus could be reduced with future consolidation of services and facilities. Mr. Finn thought a reduction would be possible for the area by using the two Long Lake fire stations and a reduction to three stations by using one new station to replace the current Hamel and Loretto stations. Mr. Finn also discussed the apparatus for the Hamel Fire Department. He recommended Medina taking over payment of the notes owed on the new apparatus for the Hamel Fire Department. Medina would be able to bring these assets to a fire service district/JPA. Finally, Robert Finn explained that he thought an 8 to 12-month timeline would be sufficient to create a fire service district/JPA.

Council agreed that the first step is to resolve the fire contracts. Mr. Finn agreed and informed Council about the different timelines/notices in each fire contract. He also reminded Council that Medina has no ownership rights in the Maple Plain and Loretto Fire Departments. Mr. Finn explained that the goal of a fire service district/JPA is to look at fire services on a wider basis and utilize personnel/assets more regionally. He also further explained that the Hamel Fire Department had been willing to donate its assets if Medina absorbed the department as a municipal department and this has not been offered under a fire services district/JPA option. Mr. Finn recommended Medina pay the

balance of the notes on the apparatus and assume ownership of the Hamel assets under a fire services district/JPA option.

City Administrator Scott Johnson informed Council that the Hamel Fire Department has the first option on the equipment to purchase the City's ownership portion and Medina has the second option to purchase Hamel Fire's ownership portion for equipment.

Mr. Finn further explained the proposed cost estimate of \$2.5 to \$5 million for a new fire station. The costs include possible land acquisition, site preparation depend on, type of construction materials, and the large differences in building codes. Robert Finn informed Council that most fire service districts/JPAs have each participating City pay their proportionate share of the costs for new buildings and the fire service district/JPA usually floats the bond. This is due to the new fire facility being an asset as part of the regional response system for fire services. New partners who join the fire service district/JPA in the future would pay a pro rata share to buy into the organization.

Scott Johnson informed the City Council that the proposed fire station location in the Matrix study on Mohawk Drive was chosen because it was a central location in the City. The future location of the station will need to be studied and discussed further during discussions for the fire service district/JPA.

Council provided comments and changes for the draft report. Mr. Finn was directed to incorporate the changes into the final report. Mr. Finn informed Council that he had reached out to Chief Jeff Ruchti from the Hamel Fire Department to address questions on the study from Hamel FD. He has traded voicemails and has not been able to speak to him about the study. Mr. Finn also encouraged the four fire chiefs to reach out to him if they had any questions on the CAD information or the study in general.

Council also requested information comparing current expenditures under the four fire contracts over five years with five years of expenditures under a fire service district/JPA. Specifically, additional future expenditures, upfront investment, and equipment investment. It is important to share this information with the public, to have the options laid out for comparisons, and ask what the risk is if we do not change the current fire system.

Mr. Finn agreed to put together a cost benefit analysis page for the study.

Council provided further input on the draft report to be incorporated. Also, Mayor Martin asked if we should be looking at providing EMS more efficiently for Medina. Mr. Finn explained that EMS quick response vehicles are more common today, but it is difficult to staff and sustain this model.

Council asked about continued fire service contracts for fire departments that serve communities outside the fire service district. Mr. Finn informed Council that the contracts can be renegotiated with the fire service district/JPA and not the original fire department. Council Member Anderson asked about looking into contracting only with

Long Lake and Loretto for providing fire services covering the City and utilizing the current fire funding formula whereby all of the contracted cities, that utilize these two departments, would proportionately share in the building of a third station. Mr. Finn said Matrix did not look at this option because it included other cities outside the scope of service.

Mayor Martin requested public comment on the study. There were no public comments.

The next steps will be for staff to work with Mayor Martin and Council Member DesLauriers to put together the contract letters for the fire departments. A meeting will be held on November 12, 2020 with Tate Mills from the State Fire Marshal's office to discuss creating a framework to move forward with a fire service district/JPA.

Staff will work with Robert Finn to complete the final report per Council direction. The final report will be provided to the City Council. Staff was directed not to bring the report back to Council for further action.

Staff informed Council that Russell's Security will be installing a security camera on the front of City Hall and another camera will be installed for the brush pile behind City Hall.

**Adjourn**

*Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m. Albers seconded the motion.*

*Pederson      Aye*  
*Anderson      Aye*  
*DesLauriers   Aye*  
*Albers          Aye*  
*Martin          Aye*

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Kathleen Martin, Mayor

Attest:

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Jodi M. Gallup, City Clerk