

Present: President Downey; President Pro-Tem Domzal; Members: Lison, Mooney, Pfeifer, Stearn and Woodrow

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Manager, Murphy

Downey called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road. The topic of this study session is to discuss Council goals and objectives and to continue a review of the proposed 2002/03 budget.

Coryell Estates paving

Downey acknowledged four residents present in the audience from Coryell Estates Subdivision: Ray Lacroix of 20285 Coryell, Mike Wilke of 20221 Plantation, Sharon Weisswasser of 30247 Embassy, and Lance Heilbrun of 30272 Embassy. Heilbrun distributed a list of questions generated at a neighborhood meeting held last Saturday to discuss drainage and road conditions in the Coryell Estates area.

Lacroix reported that an informational meeting was held in the Council chambers on Saturday, April 20 with about 40 people in attendance representing 24-28 of the 64 homes in Coryell Estates Subdivision. He mentioned that many of the residents were displeased with the way the streets in the area have been maintained over the years. Lacroix attempted to set a tone of moving forward to address current problems.

The results of the Hubbell, Roth & Clark drainage study were shared with the residents along with the fact that Coryell Estates is the first on the list of priority projects to benefit by drainage work. The alternative methods recommended by HRC were explained to area residents. Lacroix believes that the Village is proposing the swale method as opposed to ditching or curb and gutter.

Answers to the questions posed by area residents regarding drainage and paving will help to clarify what is being proposed and who is going to pay for it. Lacroix stated that Wilke, Weisswasser, Heilbrun and he are organizing the neighborhood to petition for paving.

The time frame of the petition for paving was discussed. It was noted that an implementation plan will be submitted to Council for its May 6 meeting based on the Roadside Drainage Study. Heilbrun hopes to have the residents' questions to the Village answered no later than next Monday so that the information will be available for the next subdivision meeting scheduled for Saturday, May 4. The organizers cannot formulate a petition nor begin the door-to-door campaign for a special assessment for road paving until the questions are answered so they will know how to respond to citizens' concerns. Heilbrun stated that the organizers hope to go door-to-door the weekend of May 4 and come back to council on May 6 with the results of the canvassing.

Murphy stated that he will prepare a written response to the engineering questions but will need direction from Council on a number of questions with policy implications.

Council is in receipt of proposed petition language to establish a special assessment district for paving and an accompanying proposal for Coryell Estates road improvements. Downey asked Council members for feedback on a policy and contribution from the Village that they would support if there is a successful petition received from Coryell residents.

Council discussed the wording of the petition, the proposal specific to Coryell Estates paving, and the Village's policy for gravel road improvements. Downey noted that the policy before Council for gravel road improvements reflects what the Village has been doing for years. The intent is to clarify existing policy. It was suggested that Council decide on the policy before drafting wording for a petition based on policy.

There was concern that costs are needed before residents or Council can commit to the project. Estimated costs for the Coryell road paving and drainage by means of open ditches or swale with under drains were discussed, as well as how the proposed policy clarification likely impacts the Coryell project.

MOTION by Stearn, seconded by Pfeifer, that Council adopt a policy for road improvements such that the Village will pay up to 20% of costs for improving gravel streets following successful petition of residents including engineering costs, legal costs, asphalt road installation, and incremental storm water system improvements, and the Village will continue to bear 100% of the cost of maintaining existing open cut ditch systems.

Council discussed the motion. It was indicated that this motion does not differ significantly from current policy.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (7 – 0).

Council concurred that the wording of the petition to establish a special assessment district for paving should be rewritten by administration consistent with the approved policy. The residents organizing the paving effort will have a revised petition and answers to those questions Murphy can address by the end of the week.

Domzal clarified that a policy was adopted that indicates what the Village is willing to fund. Council needs a decision in terms of the petition for road paving because it will effect the type of drainage system to be engineered. If area residents decide not to improve their roads, Council will have to determine what type of special assessment may be required to upgrade the culvert system. Stearn suggested that consideration be given to the necessity for a special assessment to improve the road system in that area with aggregate or limestone.

Wilke remarked that most of the people who were against paving the roads were in favor of bringing them up to a gravel road standard. He was informed that this would be considered an improvement.

Domzal suggested that Council discussion is needed relative to when a maintenance item becomes an improvement and what level of improvements could be made.

Council discussed asking administration to prepare a cost estimate for improving the dirt roads in terms of bringing them up to gravel road standards.

Murphy commented that he views the ditch implementation plan separate from road improvements. Administration is prioritizing the Roadside Drainage study by system and cost for that system without allocating a year in which it will happen. Funding for the ditching program is a Council issue. Recommendations from administration will be forthcoming as part of the capital improvement plan discussion.

The issue of aggregate versus asphalt may be a separate issue, and data may not be available until the second meeting in June. Murphy mentioned that information is also being collected on the pathways system and a number of construction projects that are commencing at this time, including park improvements, culverts on Evergreen Road, and street resurfacing. Murphy suggested that, if it is highly unlikely that residents will petition for a paving special assessment, administration can begin approaching the alternatives.

In response to an inquiry, both Heilbrun and Lacroix were confident that there would be a majority support for a special assessment for road paving. Lacroix noted that the 75% who indicated that they wanted the roads paved based their support on a parameter of \$9,000-\$12,000 per resident assessment assuming that the Village would pay for drainage. Residents were encouraged by the under drain and swale method of drainage because it addressed the topography area of their subdivision.

Downey stated that answers to their questions will be provided to Coryell residents. He concluded the discussion by asking Coryell representatives to inform Council regarding the interest of area residents for a special assessment district for road paving

Council policy issues.

Council members have compiled a list of policy issues that they would like to address this year. Downey asked that each member choose five priority items that take precedence in their view. Council went through an exercise that identified the top five policy issues as follows: Rental property inspection, Coryell Estates, Charter update, board and committee structure, and Southfield Road corridor plan.

It was mentioned that action is already planned with regard to Coryell Estates and a rental property inspection ordinance.

Downey stated that Council can start bringing priority issues forward during regular Council meetings. He proposed discussing a work plan for these topics this evening.

Stearn left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Budget review

Council addressed the proposed 2002/03 budget. Murphy highlighted information on new and revised budget pages distributed to Council. Some of the pages include revised figures or narratives and others represent additional information and/or material requested by Council.

Murphy explained that the number for fund balance appropriations to the general operating revenue dropped from \$300,000 to \$250,000 because the Village picked up \$42,000 more in property tax revenues due to higher than expected construction improvements. The transfer out from the general fund to other funds totals \$372,180. There is general fund operating millage of \$122,180 plus \$250,000 from the fund balance transferring over to other funds. Of the \$372,180, an amount of \$172,180 will be transferred to the Water and Sewer Fund for the water main replacement program. Local Roads will receive \$200,000 for concrete replacement.

In answer to an inquiry, Murphy indicated that there is \$500,000 being allocated for the water main replacement program in 2002/03. The \$172,180 from the general fund balance plus an additional \$257,000 from the Water and Sewer Fund fund balance will cover about \$430,000 of that \$500,000 capital expenditure.

Council comments and questions on the budget document were addressed by Murphy. The Council and Manager discussed the budget presentation for the May 6 public hearing.

Bob Walsh of 20655 Smallwood Court asked a question about the effect of the Headlee Amendment on the millage rate. Murphy stated that the 11 mill cap will drop to 9.9914 this year from the 10.1054 last year.

Walsh thinks it is appropriate to spend down the fund balances to address necessary capital expenses in the Village, particularly infrastructure problems. He suggests that the taxpayers be reminded that the Village is using its existing fund balances, which will require at least a renewal of the 11 mill cap in approximately two years.

Charter Amendments

Pfeifer presented a proposal to Council for updating the Village Charter. It is proposed to revise the sections and chapters of the Charter that need updating. The Charter should be in compliance with State and Federal law. Pfeifer distributed and reviewed a sheet she compiled containing Charter Revision Financial Statistics to emphasize changes from 1960 to 2001.

Pfeifer suggests that Council charge Village Attorney Tom Ryan with review of the Charter. He has the expertise in state and federal law to note items that should be brought up to date. Ryan would provide advice on how to proceed, whether by committee or council as a whole.

Council members discussed Pfeifer's proposal at some length and suggested an alternate approach for Charter revisions. It was the consensus of the majority of Council members that the work plan should involve individual members bringing forth sections of the Charter that they think need revision in a Council study session to review and prioritize Charter revisions. It was suggested that this exercise be done by the end of July, 2002. Ryan will be asked to spend not more than two hours listing what he considers to be the most significant issues in the Charter requiring revision.

It was clarified that Ryan will review Council's priority items and draft the wording of Charter amendments to be placed on the ballot.

Domzal expressed the view that there should be several levels of review beginning with citizen input before review of Council as a whole.

Phil Schmitt of 18103 Riverside suggested looking at the entire document as a whole and propose the adoption of a new Charter.

Rental Property Inspection

Murphy reviewed that Attorney Tom Ryan has been authorized by Council to draft a rental property inspection ordinance. Murphy proposes that the Village bring in a contractor to take on its rental inspection program. He noted that State statute indicates that a municipality cannot charge more for its services than it costs to provide them.

Murphy affirmed that there has been discussion about stepping up code enforcement. Suggestions include inspection either through the public safety department to some extent or through increased efforts of the Village building official. Administration has been directed by Council to be more rigorous in its enforcement of existing codes.

Downey concluded that he will update the policy list reflective of tonight's discussion and distribute it to Council.

MOTION by Lison, seconded by Mooney, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Motion passed (7 – 0).

Doyle Downey
Council President

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk