

**CITY OF NORTH LAS VEGAS  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**AUGUST 2, 2006**

**CALL TO ORDER:** 4:32 P.M.

**VERIFICATION:** Karen L. Storms, CMC  
City Clerk

**ROLL CALL:** **COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Mayor Michael L. Montandon  
Mayor Pro Tempore William E. Robinson  
Councilman Robert L. Eliason  
Councilman Shari Buck  
Councilwoman Stephanie S. Smith

**STAFF PRESENT:**

City Manager Gregory Rose  
Assistant City Manager Sam Chambers  
Assistant City Manager Maryann Ustick  
City Attorney Sean McGowan  
City Clerk Karen Storms  
Director of Communications Brenda Johnson  
Planning and Zoning Director Jory Stewart  
Public Works Director Jim Bell  
Executive Assistant to the City Manager Kenny Young

**BUSINESS:**

**1. UPDATED PRESENTATION BY OFFICE OF HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES AND THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.**

Assistant City Manager Maryann Ustick presented the update along with Senior Executive to the City Manager, Kenny Young and Public Works Director, Jim Bell. Assistant City Manager Maryann Ustick also introduced Carlton Urban, the City's recently hired Transportation Administrator.

Assistant City Manager Ustick stated in January, City Staff identified the need for a Neighborhood Services Department and the necessity for a Beautification Program. City Council allocated resources for the Beautification Program and this presentation was to give Council an update as to what had been accomplished and how Staff intended to move

the program forward.

Assistant City Manager Ustick explained the presentation given to Council in January had highlighted a number of objectives. Further, that presentation focused on improving the condition of the City's rights-of-way. Responsibilities were divided between the Public Works Department and the Neighborhood Services Department. Public Works was responsible for the major arterial and collector streets in the City (340 shoulder miles) and Neighborhood Services had focused on the local streets in the interior of neighborhoods (630 shoulder miles, which included both sides of the streets).

Assistant City Manager Ustick pointed out the abatement of weeds was not a one time occurrence. To develop systematic maintenance control of weeds, there was a three treatment process that took place; pre-treatment, actual abatement, and a post-treatment to prevent regrowth. Public Works provided scheduling and tracking of routine maintenance that included the three step treatment process for all arterials and collectors in the City for a one year period. This provided a very basic level of service and, Assistant City Manager Ustick added it may or may not be sufficient to treat a street only once a year. There were some high profile streets in the City and if the level and quality of service was not satisfactory, this service would be considered for outsourcing.

Staff had made contact with vendors regarding the service and an estimate was given of \$630,000 for all arterial and collector streets in North Las Vegas on a one time basis. This service was only for the abatement of weeds as trash collection was not included in the estimate. Assistant City Manager Ustick expressed this estimate seemed high to her and in order to get a more precise price it could be sent out to bid or could just be carried out on the higher profile streets that continued to be a problem.

City Manager Gregory Rose interjected that one of the reasons for doing the supplemental work was because there had not been a program in the past and as a result maintenance had not occurred. He stated initially the need was to get the weeds under control and that could take 6 to 18 months. Once that process was concluded the level of work that would be needed would be reduced because then a maintenance program would be in place. Additional resources may or may not be asked for in the future to contract out an additional treatment, as it was unknown if they would be needed until the first cycle was completed.

Mayor Pro Tempore William E. Robinson felt the \$630,000 was high. Assistant City Manager Ustick answered the estimate was just for the abatement of weeds and that she, too, thought that the estimate was high.

Councilman Robert L. Eliason asked for clarification on how many times there would be treatment of the weeds. City Manager Rose answered the proposed contracting of services would be the same approach taken with Staff. The Staff would apply the weed abatement chemicals and then the contracted workers would come back and do the actual removal. If treatment was needed a second time, contracted workers would be used. A

complete cycle would take one year and then the process would begin again but there could potentially still be some existing weeds that needed to be removed.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson asked if the \$630,000 would cover everything done in the year. City Manager Rose answered it would include a second cycle where the chemicals would be applied, then the contracted workers would come back and do the actual removal. With the present Staff this could only be done once each year, and City Manager Rose believed there was a need to do it more than just once each year. The alternative would be to increase Staff so it could be done more than once a year, but after the weeds were under control the new Staff hired would continue to be on the payroll, so that option was not recommended. Contracting was recommended because once the weeds were under control the present Staff would be adequate for the entire City. City Manager Rose pointed out it was necessary to complete an entire cycle to get the weeds under control initially.

Assistant City Manager Ustick said the proposed spraying would be in the spring and abatement in the summer and then in the fall. She stressed this was for just the major arterials and collectors.

Next, Assistant City Manager Ustick presented the Neighborhood Services' challenge and what was being done to meet that challenge. A pilot program was proposed for the local streets, which contained a tremendous number of shoulder miles. The challenge on local street conditions varied tremendously from weeds in one area, to rock in another, and/or concrete and cement. Every lot was different so abatement could not be done by just the use of a truck and spraying equipment. Staff must actually walk the neighborhoods being assisted by trucks and other equipment, so it was a very tedious and unique process that didn't lend itself to routine maintenance. A sense was needed of exactly what resources were needed to accomplish the project. Assistant City Manager Ustick said what was proposed to Council and what had commenced was to first address 136 shoulder miles of local streets which were south of Carey Avenue, and focus on that area over the next year concentrating on the initial clean-up inside the neighborhoods, in the interior local streets, on the areas thought to need it the most.

Assistant City Manager Ustick also stated components of the pilot program would be to dedicate some of the Staff to work with the courts and Code Enforcement program one week per month assisting seniors and other disabled persons to correct code violations on their property, and also implement the Volunteer Program. Once the initial basic clean-up was done in the neighborhoods, work would be needed to develop associations to encourage volunteers to help maintain the neighborhoods. Maintenance once a year was not going to be enough to maintain the neighborhoods to established standards.

Also being negotiated was a contract with the Neighborhood Housing Services to operate a tool lending program to assist with neighborhood clean-ups. A physical survey of the neighborhoods was needed to determine the conditions and what would be needed to develop a long term program for the local streets. In the meantime, experience would be

gathered from the pilot program from all the neighborhoods south of Carey Avenue. The College Park area was completed and work had commenced in Section 2 just to the west of that neighborhood. These were the neighborhoods covered under the pilot program. Public Works and Neighborhood Services were implementing the program and would continue on course over the next year.

Assistant City Manager Ustick also stated the City had dedicated the Staff Council had approved to do routine scheduled maintenance. Calls continued to come in from citizens asking the City to still clean up problem trash areas, and Public Works Staff was not able to respond in a timely manner to their complaints. Public Works was able to give a time when they would be able to respond but it was three or four months out. She noted citizens should not have to wait several weeks for their complaints to be addressed.

Assistant City Manager Ustick pointed out the use of community service workers for routine maintenance was not effective because of inconsistent attendance, especially in the summer time, making it very inefficient. She thought it would best be done with regular Staff. She suggested a better way to use the community service workers would be on special projects like neighborhood clean-ups and working with seniors. She also proposed Council consider a rapid response program which would address citizens' concerns about trash or problem areas immediately. This would consist of a crew leader with the equipment that would use the community service workers to attend to the "hot spots" and areas that were constantly deluged with trash. She felt if the City could tell a citizen that a problem area would be resolved within a week, that would be considered a reasonable amount of time and she thought with the rapid response initiative it could be accomplished. The focus of the rapid response program would be to try and fill the gap in routine maintenance which would be a higher cost initially but the second year would have limited capital costs.

In summary, it was proposed under the present plan to move ahead and treat all collector and arterial streets once during this fiscal year, and then a neighborhood clean-up and maintenance would be conducted in all residential areas south of Carey Avenue. After that, special project services would continue to be provided three to five days a month with the staff Neighborhood Services had available.

Assistant City Manager Ustick asked for direction regarding moving ahead with the rapid response program. She pointed out that when there had been some very intense complaints, Public Works' Staff had to be pulled off of routine scheduled maintenance to go back and redo a street they had already done, mainly for trash. It was going to be very difficult to adhere to the schedule without some other way to respond to citizens.

City Manager Rose said some City streets had been addressed using this new approach. Assistant City Manager Ustick interjected that those streets Public Works had completed so far were Owens Avenue, Tonopah Avenue, Las Vegas Boulevard, (although it was a State route it was still included as a visible street in the City), North Fifth Street, and

Camino Al Norte. Cheyenne Avenue was to be next and work would commence on August 3, 2006. Assistant City Manager Ustick noted some streets were taken out of order because there were special requests.

Councilman Eliason commented it was difficult to determine if a parcel was privately owned or belonged to the City. A decision needed to be made as to whether the City would continue to maintain these areas or turn over maintenance to the residents. Senior Executive Young replied the conditions Councilman Eliason referred to were currently being evaluated to bring recommendations to the Council on how those areas could be maintained better. Some areas might require permanent cementing to reduce maintenance. The issue of whether or not to dedicate particular areas back to residents may not solve the problem because in many cases a wall or structure was already in place. A comprehensive analysis was needed to determine the best method to reduce ongoing maintenance costs and each situation was different creating a number of anomalies. There were also a few areas where power easements were an issue and Nevada Power would need to decide if they were going to maintain or landscape those areas.

Mayor Montandon stated he thought it was an important subject that Councilman Eliason brought up. He stated a plan was needed for doing a fairly quick and easy analysis, starting with GIS land ownership, and then a check on easements so each piece could be identified case-by-case. Each situation was different and each needed to be identified as to who would take responsibility. Mayor Montandon also stated he wanted those working on the project to take responsibility for a complete street and do what was necessary to get the job done, even if it was not in their job description. Assistant City Manager Ustick assured him that was not the case with City Staff or the roadway operators. It was in their job description to do both the weeds, the treatment, abatement and trash collection. She clarified by stating the estimate done for outsourcing the weed abatement did not include trash in the estimate.

Councilman Smith stated she was excited about the project. She commented if it was desired to change the future of the City, the image must be changed as well. She knew the residents appreciated having a beautiful City, as did everyone. She thought it was wonderful this was finally being tackled even though it seemed overwhelming. She also expressed she knew it was expensive but the City had these issues because it had not been done for decades and it was coupled with growing too fast. Even though the cost was high, she agreed it was important to develop a rapid response program because citizens expected a timely response from the City.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson asked if the crew was already in place for the crew leader. He added with gas prices hovering around \$4/gallon the City needed to watch the money spent on the program. Everybody wanted to see the City beautiful but taxpayers would object if the City was excessive with the program. Senior Executive Young replied that the crew was in place. Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson asked if three months from now more crew would be asked for. City Manager Rose answered the intention was to complete the

pilot program to determine what resources were going to be needed in order to have an effective program throughout the entire City. Staff would have a better sense of that once the survey was completed.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson asked how many crew members were in place now. Senior Executive Young answered three crew members were in place and a fourth was in the process of being hired. Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson also questioned why the crew leader was being paid \$78,150 to lead only three people. Senior Executive Young, answered the crew leader also supervised the Court appointed community service workers which were as many as six people at any given time. One of the major parts of this program was coordinating with the courts, Code Enforcement, and the residents that wanted to help, to make sure that the right equipment was available, and mobilized, for whatever need was being addressed. Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson advised staff to keep the taxpayers' pocket book in mind on whatever was decided.

City Manager Rose addressed Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson and said his comments were appreciated and the City would keep the taxpayers in mind as they moved forward to draft a proposal that was reasonable to present to Council. Once the survey was completed there would be a good determination on what processes were needed, how many treatments were needed to be effective for weed abatement, and how much trash and debris were being found.

Assistant City Manager Ustick said there were preventative steps that could be taken when looking at some of the problem areas, in terms of rights-of-way and giving them back to the residents, or looking at other treatments and as the cycle was completed this first year they hoped to look at some ways to reduce the costs.

Councilman Eliason asked Assistant City Manager Ustick to notify him if any of the problem areas were Nevada Power easements.

**Dean Leavitt, 918 Dawn Valley Drive, North Las Vegas, 89031**, expressed he was excited about the Beautification Program but had concerns on the length of time it had taken just to beautify the medians on Civic Center Drive, let alone start a beautification project for the whole City. He said he had not seen any progress and has seen no one working during the day or at night on the project. Jim Bell, Public Works Director, responded having crews working at night had slowed the process. He said he would find out the status and give Council an update.

On another subject, Mr. Leavitt stated both Nevada Power and the School District were negligent in their responsibilities for maintaining a weed free environment specifically for a parcel of land on Clayton Street, just north of Carey Avenue (the paving just outside the field at Gilbert) that had never been paved in 15-20 years. He cited the example that the School District put up a brand new fence on Revere Street, north of Brooks Avenue, and they had not been required to put up any kind of landscaping, yet they continued to ask for waivers

from Council. Mr. Leavitt expressed it was time to recognize that the City had the ability to ask for nothing more than what was happening in other municipalities around this valley and in the State.

Mayor Montandon answered Mr. Leavitt regarding the case concerning the School District and said it was a fairly old case. The School District threatened they would not build a ball field for that school on donated land unless the requirement to build a street there was waived. Mayor Montandon noted this particular case was an example of a case-by-case location that needed to be identified and addressed.

The Mayor thanked the participants for the presentation, expressed his appreciation and stated he looked forward to additional data as it came back as to both the speed and cost of the project.

ACTION: PRESENTATION GIVEN.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

THERE WAS NO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**ADJOURNMENT**

ACTION: THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:01 P.M.

MOTION: Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson

SECOND: Mayor Montandon

AYES: Mayor Montandon, Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson, Council Members  
Smith and Buck

NAYS: None

ABSTAINS: None

**APPROVED: OCTOBER 4, 2006**

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Mayor Michael L. Montandon

**ATTEST:**

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Karen L. Storms, CMC  
CityClerk