The Hiawatha City Council met in a Work Session on April 18, 2017. Mayor Bill Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Council members present: Marty Bruns, Bob Rampulla, Dick Olson, and Dennis Norton. Aime Wichtendahl was absent. Staff present: City Administrator Kim Downs, Finance Director Cindy Kudrna, Public Works Superintendent Rod Jasa, and City Engineer John Bender. Guest: Daniel Hoffmann.

Olson moved the approval of the agenda, seconded by Bruns. Motion carried.

Edgewood Road Reconstruction-Linn County Secondary Road additions

City Engineer Bender explained Hiawatha staff had discussions with the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) about the project to reconstruct Tower Terrace Interchange and funding was in the draft Iowa DOT five (5) year plan. Bender said the project could be funded in 2020.

Bender said there are three (3) options for the project:

1. Build bridge south of the current bridge and connect in.
2. Build bridge north which would impact more property.
3. Build in same location and close Tower Terrace Road for approximately two (2) years. This option is the cheapest and quickest. Many detours would be required and staff is in favor of closing Tower Terrace Road. Most logical detour is Edgewood Road to County Home Road.

Bender stated Hiawatha staff is working with Linn County to come up with a plan for white topping as a portion of the project is in Linn County territory. Bender said $150,000 was the cost estimate to replace culverts; additionally, there is an issue with three (3) rolling hills. Speed limit is currently posted at 45 mph; would recommend lowering to 35 mph when project is complete. Bender explained the reason behind the reduction in speed limit is a safety issue with sight distance. Bender also noted the project may necessitate lowering a water main in the area of the rolling hills.

Bender continued to explain there are several culverts to replace in the area of Dell Ridge Estates and one (1) hill must be cut down. Bender said there is also a water line to check to see if it is deep enough; therefore, project got a lot bigger than previously planned.

Bender explained plans for the project include eight (8) inch thick concrete slipped over top of the current surface, with no rolled edge as a curb may be added someday. When the project is complete the road is very thick; 30 feet wide with a 4 foot bike trail and walking trail with the reduced speed limit. Bender said project will be shared with the County.

Bender stated culvers and grading will begin in 2017 and paving will begin in 2018. The phase I project is now approximately $350,000. Bender explained the original total cost estimate for the phase I and phase II project was approximately $600,000 and it is now approaching $1 million; therefore, need to identify the funding source for the additional cost.

Finance Director Kudrna said she asked Speer Financial to increase the current bonding issue to cover the extra cost; $250,000 added to project for a total of $450,000 and a $3,780,000 bonding issue, originally at $3,450,000.

Bender explained the current road would not survive the detour traffic projected for the Tower Terrace Road Interchange if Tower Terrace Road is closed for a two (2) year period unless it is improved. Bender said a lot of the traffic is construction vehicles as this is their shortcut.

Council Member Olson asked for a traffic count. Bender stated the most current traffic data is from 2013 where the count was approximately 3,000 cars per day just on Tower Terrace Road. Bender added the Department of Transportation (DOT) is responsible for the road closure and announcement. Bender said he plans to add an item to the May 3 City Council Agenda to approve a 28E with Linn County to begin the first phase of the project.

Road Diet

Bender discussed Center Point Road south of Boyson Road designed as a four (4) lane roadway. The new Emmons intersection as a three (3) lane section all the way to Parson's Drive. Bender explained communities do not build four (4) lanes anymore; they either build three (3) or five (5) lanes. Communities and the DOT are looking at road diets to reduce traffic lanes on existing streets.

Bender proposed converting Center Point Road to three (3) lanes with bike trails on each side of the street. This is a safer method and a new approach to looking at roadways. Bender said north of the railroad tracks on Center Point Road there is no bike trail. Bender added the new Center Point Road intersection will have an island by Fisher Street there will be another island south of Emmons Street.

Bender said it is necessary to conduct a study and put together a plan on how to handle the bike trail on Center Point Road at the intersection of Boyson Road. Bender stated traffic counts are higher at Blairs Ferry Road; three (3) lanes will carry up to 15,000 cars.

Council Member Olson stated one (1) of the biggest complaints is cars trying to get out of the post office area from Willman Street on to Center Point Road. City Administrator Down said this area will be part of the study. Bender added the plan is to lower the speed limit by the intersection.

Downs added if the study is less than the $5,000 threshold, staff will not bring the item to City Council for approval. Downs said next step is to move forward with a proposal for study preparation. City Council members agreed this is appropriate.

City boundary line realignment

City Administrator Downs spoke of the potential of working with Cedar Rapids to realign Hiawatha's boarders to the west. Downs said the reason this matter came to the forefront is due to commercial business in the area of Miller Road/Edgewood Road asking for water. Past policy has been to provide water upon annexation to Hiawatha. Downs added Hiawatha police officers are the ones working Tower Terrace Road in this area for events causing increased traffic.

Downs said Hiawatha staff would like to meet with Cedar Rapids City Council members to see what their intentions are for this area so Hiawatha can move forward with realigning boarders to the west. Downs said Dick Ransom of Hall and Hall Engineers previously spoke with individuals on Miller Road and Tower Terrace Road to the west; individuals signed annexation applications eight (8) years ago. There was one (1) property owner at the time who would not sign an annexation agreement and this would have created an island. Downs stated the area to the west is still the best option for Hiawatha annexation and Cedar Rapids has said they will not provide service in this area as they are going south. Downs said water service to the west is not in Cedar Rapids' plan; Cedar Rapids does not anticipate this area to develop. Downs asked for City Council input on reopening discussions with Cedar Rapids.

Council Member Olson said before having discussions with Cedar Rapids, staff should speak with the property owner who did not want to sign the annexation application eight (8) years ago. Olson added staff should look into the cost to develop the area. City Council members agreed it is appropriate to move forward with the necessary steps to reopen annexation discussions with Cedar Rapids.

Other Discussion

City Administrator Downs announced the DOT allocated funding to widen the Boyson Road northbound off-ramp and the project will bid in July. The DOT will close the ramp at night while they are working on the project. Detour during project will be at Blairs Ferry Road directing traffic to get off. Bender said a majority of the work for the Boyson Road Improvements project will be done at night so the road can be open during rush hour. Bids for the project will be awarded in July with construction in August.

Council Member Bruns inquired about a plan for autonomous vehicles and their impact on the roads. Bruns asked staff to put these vehicles on the radar; in 2020 it is projected a good percentage of vehicles will be autonomous.

There being no further discussion, Rampulla moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 P.M., seconded by Norton. Motion carried.

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Bill Bennett, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Kelly Kornegor, City Clerk