



## *City Council Memorandum*

**To: Mayor Fasbender & City Councilmembers**  
**From: City Administrator Dan Wietecha**  
**Date: March 20, 2023**  
**Item: Public Works Director**

### **Council Action Requested:**

Approve appointment of Ryan Stempiski as Public Works Director

### **Background Information:**

Following the resignation of Public Works Director Nick Egger in summer 2021, we advertised the position, conducted direct recruiting, and performed initial interviews of 5 candidates meeting the qualifications. Unfortunately, those candidates did not pan out. In speaking with several other municipalities recently/currently hiring for similar positions, it is a very difficult hiring environment for a specialized position.

Thereafter, we amended our contract with Focus Engineering to name Ryan Stempiski as Interim Public Works Director through December 2022. This was later extended through March 2023.

One concern of the Operations Committee and the City Council at that time was whether rolling the City Engineer and Public Works Director duties into a single person might be too great a workload. Throughout 2022, experience has proven this to be manageable. Additionally, we have deliberately maintained budget capacity to supplement the department with contract engineering support (for example: CAD, GIS, research, and construction oversight) as needed. We utilized services of Focus and WSB in this manner last year.

The City has contracted with Focus for City Engineer service for 6 years. This has been an “embedded” position with Mr. Stempiski part of the Department’s hierarchy and operations to the point that some may not even realize that he is not actually a City employee. He has experience with our Department, with several ongoing and major projects (for example: PFAS, Hwy 61, WWTP, several housing developments), and with our partner organizations (for example: Met

Council, MNDOT, Dakota County). He is respected for his expertise and has built strong professional relationships.

Naming him as Public Works Director will maintain stability to the Department. And it enables continued staff development following recent promotions and hiring. Mr. Stempski has staff support in the Department and from our Management Team.

Under our Charter and City Code, the City Council approves/authorizes the appointment of the Public Works Director (and other Department Heads) by the City Administrator. With City Council approval, I intend to appoint Ryan Stempski as Public Works Director.

**Financial Impact:**

Within budget

**Committee Discussion:**

Operations Committee met March 15 and supported the appointment

**Attachments:**

None