

**City of North Saint Paul
December 7, 2021
Approved Regular City Council Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Thorsen
Council Member Petersen
Council Member Cole
Council Member Wong
Mayor Furlong

Staff: Interim City Manager Brian Frandle, Deputy Clerk Jennie Kloos, Police Chief Phil Baebenroth, City Engineer Morgan Dawley, Finance Director Daniel Winek, City Planner Brandy Howe, City Attorney Soren Mattick

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Mayor Furlong requested that City Business Item F be moved to City Business Item A to accommodate the presenter.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as amended.

V. PRESENTATIONS

- A. North Haven Church presents Cub Foods gift cards to North St. Paul Police Department to be distributed to those in need.

Adam Sidler, Pastor at North Haven Church, stated local faith organizations have discussed ways to mobilize and help meet the needs of people in the community, and in doing so, become more tangibly aware, involved and invested. He added Premier Bank and local churches – Christ Lutheran, St. Peter’s, North Haven, Redeeming Love and North Presbyterian – have all donated \$2,500 each in the form of Cub gift cards to be distributed by the City’s Police Officers to people in need.

Police Chief Phil Baebenroth thanked Mr. Sidler on behalf of the City’s Police Department for the donations. He added Police Officers meet many people from different walks of life, including those in the greatest need, and this will allow them to provide help and support.

Mayor Furlong asked Mr. Sidler how the donation effort was organized. Mr. Sidler stated leaders of local faith organizations came together to discuss tangible ways to address the needs of the local community. He added it is hoped that the group will begin discussions in February 2022 regarding how to further develop these relationships and be advocates for change by working together.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Thorsen requested that Consent Agenda Items I, J and K be pulled and added to the Regular Agenda.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, Resolution No. 2021-120 consisting of:

- A. November 16, 2021 workshop minutes
- B. November 16, 2021 regular meeting minutes
- C. November 16, 2021 HRA meeting minutes
- D. November 16, 2021 closed meeting minutes
- E. November 18, special meeting minutes
- F. General Claims \$916,469.89
- G. HRA Claims \$44,851.77
- H. City Manager Employment Agreement – Resolution No. 2021-121
- I. 2022 City Council Meeting Calendar – **Moved to City Business**
- J. North Suburban Access Professional and Technical Services Agreement – **Moved to City Business**
- K. Police Vehicle Replacement CIP Funds – **Moved to City Business**
- L. Notice to Declare Dog Non-Dangerous
- M. Records Management System Replacement & City Hall Amplifier for Emergency Communications – Resolution No. 2021-122
- N. Police Vehicle Agreement with Dakota County Technical College – Resolution No. 2021-123
- O. Approve the termination of the Financial Suite Software Services under the OpenGov Contract – Resolution No. 2021-124
- P. Building Permit Report – November 2021
- Q. Resolution Approving Acceptance of Donations Received November 2021 – Resolution No. 2021-125
- R. Towards Zero Death (TZD) Grant Agreement

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

R.T. Luczak expressed his thanks to City Staff for recent work that has been done at the Community Center, including fixing the ballasts and working on the roof. He added he looks forward to working with the committee, and thanked Council Member Thorsen for his support.

John Schmahl, 2750 Chisholm Avenue, stated he received a notification that tonight's meeting agenda has been amended, but there is no indication of what the amendment is.

Mayor Furlong stated City Staff is working on communication issues.

Mr. Schmahl stated the solid waste fund that is going to be used for the Community Center is not a levy, although it has been referred to as a levy.

Mr. Schmahl stated he received a City e-newsletter regarding underground service work in the northeast part of the City. He added a few years ago this same type of project was being done on Lake Boulevard, and the contractors told him a communications conduit was included in the work that was being done. He asked why a communications conduit is not being included in the current project. He noted the contractors told him electric service is still on the poles, and the poles will not be removed. He asked whether residents would have to pay for that service.

City Staff indicated that residents will not pay for the services.

Dave Nelson, 2574 4th Avenue E, encouraged the City to think about adding solar power. He added he has solar panels on his house, and he gets a good return every month. He noted he uses a battery-operated lawn mower, and these are things that people can consider.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Berwald Addition Preliminary and Final Plat

City Planner Brandy Howe reviewed a request from the City for a preliminary and final plat for Berwald Addition. She added this is a City-initiated project to clarify the ownership of property, as lot lines overlap existing structures, and Centennial Drive is not reflected accurately. She noted this proposed action would complete the platting process.

Ms. Howe stated there is no subdivision involved and no new buildings or public infrastructure proposed with this plat, and the City Attorney confirmed that variances are not required. She added the public hearing was posted in the newspaper and property owners within 350 feet received notification. She noted the Planning Commission and City Staff recommend City Council approval of this request.

Mayor Furlong opened the public hearing at 7:06 p.m.

There were no comments.

Mayor Furlong closed the public hearing at 7:07 p.m.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-126 to Approve the Berwald Addition Preliminary and Final Plat.

B. Truth-in-Taxation Hearing – 2022 Tax Levy and Budget

Finance Director Daniel Winek reviewed the annual Truth in Taxation process, through which residents have an opportunity to ask questions regarding the upcoming City budget and tax levy. He reviewed proposed property tax changes payable in 2022, increased to \$237,150 from \$230,000 for a 3.1% increase. He noted a County-wide increase of 3.5%.

Mr. Winek reviewed levy highlights, including 5.99% for the levy amount, an increase of 5.99% for 2022 as the City had a 0% increase in 2021. He added the average for cities in Ramsey County was 4.09%. Since 2009, the City's average annual levy increase has been 5.40%.

Mr. Winek reviewed the overall general Fund Budget increase of 5.86%, which includes investment in infrastructure, and continuation of a balanced budget. He reviewed the 2022 General Fund Budget with revenue by category.

Mr. Winek stated Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and Economic Development Authority (EDA) levies proposed to be set at the statutory maximum.

Mr. Winek stated, as of November 25, 2021, no calls have been received from the public regarding Truth in Taxation notices. He added questions can be directed to Ramsey County Assessor's Office. He noted residents can request information regarding programs that can help residents reduce property taxes, including refunds through the State of Minnesota and Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral.

Mayor Furlong thanked Mr. Winek, for his hard work and efforts on the budget. He thanked City Staff for their support.

Mayor Furlong opened public hearing at 7:30 p.m.

There were no comments.

Mayor Furlong closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with Mayor Furlong and Council Members Petersen, Cole and Wong voting aye, and Council Member Thorsen voting nay (4-1), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-127 Adopting Final 2022 General Fund Budget and Setting Final 2022 General Purpose and Debt Service Levy.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Wong, with Mayor Furlong and Council Members Petersen, Cole and Wong voting aye, and Council Member Thorsen voting nay (4-1), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-128 Adopting Final 2022 Tax Levy for North St. Paul Economic Development Authority.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Cole, with Mayor Furlong and Council Members Petersen, Cole and Wong voting aye, and Council Member Thorsen voting nay (4-1), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-129 Adopting Final 2022 Tax Levy for North St. Paul Housing And Redevelopment Authority

Mr. Winek thanked the City Council for their support. He thanked Mr. Frandle for his work as Interim City Manager. He added Mr. Frandle has been a good leader and a good coach for him. He noted he looks forward to working with the new City Manager.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. TIF Note Assignment related to Contract for Private Development with M/I Homes and Tax Increment Financing District No. 4-7.

Mikaela Huot, Baker Tilly, reviewed the contract for private development entered by the City of North St. Paul in 2018 for Anchor Block South, allowing construction of new housing units. The City established TIF District 4-7 to facilitate a portion of those costs and tax increments were pledged to the developer to finance the project. M/I Homes intends to sell their interest in the TIF note to the buyer, NSP TIF LLC, and has notified the City of its intentions in a November 17, 2022 letter. The lender for the project is Tradition Bank.

Steve Schweinke, representing Inland Development Partners, stated his company does development work for M/I Homes. He added this has been a very successful project, and M/I Homes and the developer are pleased and excited about the development. He noted it will take approximately 1 year to complete.

Mr. Schweinke stated, on behalf of M/I Homes, it has been a real pleasure to work with City Staff all the way through the process. He thanked the City Council and City Staff for their support for this project.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-130 Approving Assignment of Tax Increment Revenue Note.

B. 2022 City Council Meeting Calendar

Councilmember Council Member Thorsen expressed concern that the meeting calendar indicates that the HRA will meet as needed, but not on a regular schedule. He stated the agreement was that the HRA would meet quarterly, and the first meeting should be scheduled on March 1 or March 15, 2022. City Staff agreed.

Mayor Furlong stated the calendar should note that the HRA can also meet as needed.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-133 adopting the 2022 City Council Meeting Schedule as amended.

Discussion during the motion: Council Member Wong asked whether the calendar aligns with the schedule of the new City Manager, who indicated he had two dates that he is unable to attend.

The new City Manager addressed the City Council. He stated he is excited about the opportunity to serve the community of North St. Paul. He added, after reviewing the 2022 City Council meeting schedule, he has conflicts with two City Council meetings, and he plans to designate an Acting City Manager in his absence. He noted, in the future, he will do his best to plan his schedule around City Council meetings.

C. North Suburban Access Professional and Technical Service Agreement.

Council Member Thorsen stated the City Council has had some discussion regarding this issue. He added the agreement only includes City Council workshops and meetings, and Planning Commission meetings. He noted he supports a City policy that EDA, Parks & Recreation Commission, Arts & Culture Commission, and any other public meeting should be televised and broadcast, in the spirit of transparency and to offer residents the opportunity to participate

remotely. He noted he hopes that this can be discussed next year, and potentially add those items onto this contract.

Council Member Thorsen stated the agreement states that HRA meetings will be covered “as they occur”. He added there are generally four scheduled HRA meetings every year. He noted these meetings should be included in the contract, although he understands there will be an increase in cost.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the North Suburban Access Professional and Technical Services Agreement.

D. Police Vehicle Replacement Agreement

Council Member Thorsen requested clarification regarding the vehicle replacement agreement, as he was absent at the last City Council meeting when this issue was discussed. He added the original approval was for purchase of four hybrid Ford Explorer PPV vehicles. He asked why there is an F-150 and a Dodge Challenger in the proposed agreement.

Police Chief Phil Baebenroth stated a Dodge Charger sedan will replace the Ford Taurus sedan, which is no longer available to purchase. He added the Ford F150 is proposed as it is a bigger vehicle and will provide more options and flexibility for the Officers.

Council Member Thorsen stated the City purchased vehicles a few years ago that did not have 4-wheel drive, and they were not good in winter weather. He added he hopes the new F-150 has 4-wheel drive. Chief Baebenroth confirmed this, adding the F-150 was actually a less expensive option than a Ford Explorer.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-134 Approving Request Purchase of Four New 2022 Police Patrol Vehicles.

E. 2022 Budget and Levy Overview

Mr. Winek stated the budget and levy were adopted at tonight’s meeting after the Truth in Taxation hearing.

F. Adopt the Revised 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Winek reviewed a proposed adjustment to the 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan, which has already been approved. He added the cost of police vehicles that were budgeted at \$65,000 have been increased to \$77,500, and the CIP has been adjusted to reflect that increase.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-132 Approving the Revised 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan.

G. Adopt the 2022 City Non-Levy Budgets

Mr. Winek reviewed the 2022 non-levy budgets including enterprise funds, internal service funds, and special revenue funds.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-131 Approving the 2022 Non-Levy Budgets.

H. 2022 Municipal Fee Schedule and Utility Rate Schedule, Ordinance No. 803

Mr. Winek stated the City's 2022 fee schedule was reviewed by the City Council at tonight's workshop. He noted the following amendments:

- under "Park Building", correct resident vs. non-resident
- page 21, spelling of "release"

City Attorney Soren Mattick stated the fee schedule can be amended now and go into effect January 1, 2022. He added there was a question about one of the fees. Mr. Winek agreed to look into it.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Mayor Furlong, with Mayor Furlong and Council Members Cole and Wong voting aye, and Council Members Petersen and Thorsen voting nay (3-2), motion carried to Adopt Fee Schedule as Noted and with Changes.

I. Park & Recreation Budget Spending

Council Member Cole stated it is his recommendation that this item be tabled until the Parks Improvement Plan is approved. He added the Parks Improvement Plan has not been discussed by the City Council, and he is unsure why this item is on tonight's agenda. He added a separate resolution could be added for anything that the Parks Commission wants to move forward now.

Mr. Mattick stated this item can be tabled to a date certain, and City Staff directed to forward to the Parks Commission for further review. He added no action is required.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Frandle stated there have been many changes this year, and he is looking forward to the new City Manager coming in. He wished everyone a Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

Mayor Furlong thanked Mr. Winek and Mr. Frandle for stepping into their roles, and for showing professionalism and respect.

Mayor Furlong requested consideration of cancelling the City Council's 2nd meeting in December. Mr. Winek agreed.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to cancel the City Council Workshop and Meeting for December 21, 2021.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Cole stated the Silver Lake Improvement Association met last night and will meet February 7, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. He added the Association asked about the status of the Silver Lake aerator and expressed concerns.

City Engineer Morgan Dawley stated agencies are working to formally define the agreement. He added Ramsey County will ensure that the aerator goes in after the lake ices over. He noted this is a collaborative arrangement between Maplewood, Valley Branch Watershed District, the City of North St. Paul, and Ramsey County.

Council Member Cole stated the next Economic Development Authority is scheduled to meet on December 14, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. in the Sandburg Room.

Council Member Cole stated the Parks & Recreation Commission is scheduled to meet December 13, 2021 in the Sandburg Room to discuss the Parks Improvement Plan for review by the EDA and City Council in January or early February 2022.

Council Member Wong stated the Arts and Culture Commission met on the first Tuesday of December and are reviewing potential processes for intake of projects. She added the Veterans Park Organization presented a potential project in which there is great interest.

Council Member Wong stated there was discussion at the last Parks Commission meeting about the cancellation of the Fire & Ice event.

Council Member Wong stated she was unable to attend the recent Planning Commission meeting. She added the Commission reviewed the Sign Ordinance, and parking on 7th Street.

Mayor Furlong stated there was discussion at the last EDA/Planning Commission Joint Meeting regarding whether the Planning Commission would take over the downtown seating areas efforts.

Council Member Wong stated the Planning Commission is including that issue in their upcoming discussions.

Council Member Petersen stated she attended her last League of Minnesota Cities meeting at which she dressed up as the St. Paul Snowman and held a snowman drawing contest. She added the League has asked her to continue to serve as an Ambassador, and she is excited about the opportunity.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Redevelopment Master Plan Committee met recently and continued discussion regarding potential updates to the Plan, including guiding principles. He added the next meeting is scheduled for the last Monday in January 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Mayor Furlong stated the Veterans Committee met with Arts Commission to discuss a potential project at Veteran's Park, a Freedom Rock, to be placed within the Park.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Cole confirmed the Fire and Ice event has been cancelled for this year due to Covid.

Council Member Cole thanked Mr. Winek for stepping into his job in the middle of budget season. He thanked Mr. Frandle for stepping into the Interim City Manager Role and doing a great job.

Council Member Wong stated the committee for the Community Center met recently and a short-term lease is being considered. She added this issue will be reviewed by the City Council in January.

Council Member Wong stated reviving the Environmental Commission in 2022 would be a good discussion for the City Council.

Council Member Wong thanked City Staff for all their hard work this year. She added it has been incredible to see City Staff come together and work fluidly and have great morale and trust in each other. She wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council Member Petersen stated Rachel Thompson has adopted 20 families for this year's Project Christmas Tree initiative. She added this is Ms. Thompson's second year of the project, and she expressed her appreciation for Ms. Thompson's efforts.

Council Member Petersen stated Jo Emerson, Mayor of White Bear Lake is retiring after 12 years. She added Mayor Emerson has been a mentor to her.

Council Member Petersen stated the ribbon cutting at the Sentinel Residence was a great event, and it is a beautiful building, and a great addition to the City's main street. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and happy, healthy New Year.

Council Member Thorsen stated he echoes the City Council's messages of thanks to Mr. Frandle for stepping into the City Manager's role, as well as Sergeant Ray Rozales for serving as Interim Police Chief. He thanked all City Staff and contracted staff for all the work they do for the City of North St. Paul. He thanked City Staff who were present: Daniel Winek, Ron Ritchie, Kari Erpenbach, and Jennie Kloos.

Mayor Furlong stated he concurs and expressed his thanks for City Staff's support during a difficult year. He welcomed the new City Manager, who will be starting on January 3, 2022. He thanked City Attorney Soren Mattick.

Mayor Furlong stated he attended Holiday Hop last week with the new City Manager and Council Member Cole. He added it was a good turnout, and the Historical Society had a record number of visitors.

Mayor Furlong stated his goals for next year are for the City Council to work together as a team, beginning with a workshop or retreat in January 2022. He added he would like to have the City Attorney work with the City Council, new City Manager, and Commission Chairs regarding their roles and how the process works, and how issues are communicated to the City Council.

Mr. Mattick stated it is a good idea to clarify the City Council's expectations for the City's Commissions. He added he would contact City Staff regarding new requirements for Zoom meetings.

Mayor Furlong wished everyone a Merry Christmas, happy holidays, and a Happy New Year.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Thorsen, Seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Brian Frandle, Interim City Manager / Clerk