

**City of North Saint Paul
February 1, 2022
Approved Special 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

Mayor Furlong recognized the attendance of two high school students and invited them to lead all present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

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

Staff: City Manager John Stark, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk Jennie Kloos.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

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

V. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, Resolution No. 2022-019 consisting of:

- A. January 18, 2022 regular meeting minutes
- B. General Claims \$1,263,645.87
- C. HRA Claims \$1,106.74
- D. EDA Claims \$6,404.50
- E. Well #2 Rehab
- F. 2022 Street and Utility Improvement Project – Pay Voucher No. 15

VI. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl referenced and stated his objection to a recent article in the North St. Paul Newsletter and also addressed the issue of having website access to only one year of the City's archived records.

R.T. Luczak, Kokoro Volleyball, reported on heating issues at the community center and thanked Public Works Director Ron Ritchie who addressed facility issues including getting the heat running.

Mr. Luczak explained that due to a delay in construction parts and material availability, there is also a delay in the construction schedule. He asked the Council to address options should the building not be available to move into as scheduled so there is a plan in place.

There were no other comments.

VII. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Community Center Lease Agreement – Kokoro Volleyball

City Attorney Soren Mattick stated he has been working with Council Members Wong and Cole to draft the Kokoro Volleyball lease. As drafted, it is a one-year short-term lease with Kokoro Volleyball while they are waiting to move into their new facility and terminates at the end of 2022. The lease indicates it is the City's responsibility to fix HVAC equipment including providing temporary measures to heat the space. The rent will stay the same at \$1,250 a month with taxes of \$55,000 being the responsibility of Kokoro Volleyball. He advised that a hold-over period of time is not addressed in the lease as currently drafted but it could be added, if desired. This lease is acceptable to Kokoro Volleyball.

Mayor Furlong asked if the lease could be amended in September or October if the City is not able to find another tenant and Kokoro Volleyball needs additional time. Mr. Mattick advised the lease term could be extended with a two-page lease amendment should a new tenant not be identified and Kokoro Volleyball makes the request.

Council Member Thorsen noted this ad-hoc committee was formed in June of 2021 and asked why it has taken this long to present a lease. Mr. Mattick noted in June of 2021 the City was dealing with many issues besides this lease, including personnel issues. He stated the committee met two times to review lease terms and discussed the desire for a longer-term lease but that did not work with Kokoro Volleyball so it was determined the solution was a one-year term.

Mayor Furlong stated if a new tenant has not been identified, he would support an amendment to extend the lease.

R.T. Luczak, Kokoro Volleyball, stated if the Council is open to consider an extension, he would not be opposed to the Council's original proposal to consider Year Two instead of just Year One and provide more security. He stated he will provide an update in three to six months.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve a one-year lease with Kokoro Volleyball.

VIII. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

A. City Manager Update – Police Staffing

Mr. Stark discussed Police Department staffing, noting the budget included two part-time community service officers (CSOs) but at this time these employees are difficult to recruit. He explained the Police Department has one newly hired part-time CSO and while Police Chief Phil Baebenroth opened the other part-time CSO position for recruitment, he has been very dissatisfied with the qualifications of applicants. As a result, it was decided to ask the newly hired part-time CSO to go full-time.

Mr. Stark stated he had asked Fire Chief Mallinger to defer his report to an upcoming meeting.

IX. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Cole reported on the January 26, 2022, Parks & Recreation Commission meeting and their discussion of Planning Commission recommendations to align City documentation related to park sizes and terminology. A WSB representative attended, acted as liaison between the two Commissions, and some of her recommendations were implemented. The Improvement Plan will be finalized by WSB and it is anticipated the Commissions will vote on it at their February meetings prior to Council consideration at an early-March Workshop Meeting.

Council Member Cole invited all to attend the Silver Lake Improvement Association meeting on February 7, 2022, via Zoom, and make contributions to this Association, noting information is on the City website. Their next meeting will be April 11, 2022.

Council Member Wong stated the Planning Commission will meet on February 3, 2022, to discuss the Sign Ordinance, revisit the issue of street cafés and parklet design, and elect a new Chair. It was noted the Planning Commission application process will be closing soon.

Council Member Wong stated the Arts and Culture Commission attorney has reviewed their bylaws and their next meeting is February 2, 2022. At their last meeting, they discussed how to accept a new project, the process, and criteria to prioritize projects

Council Member Wong stated there was a Redevelopment Master Plan meeting last night and a June timeline is anticipated to revisit and reframe the packet.

Council Member Petersen stated there was a League of Minnesota Cities board meeting last week where they discussed civility and decided to concentrate on that at their annual June conference in Duluth, which she encouraged Council Members to attend.

Council Member Petersen stated the Business Association will meet on February 8, 2022, at the Legion during which EDA Chair Robert Dew will discuss the EDA.

Council Member Thorsen stated there was a meeting on January 31, 2022, to discuss the Redevelopment Master Plan and the next meeting will be February 28, 2022.

Council Member Cole stated the EDA met on January 11, 2022, discussed interest in development of the City-owned parcel at 2395 Margaret, and received a presentation by a development group.

Mayor Furlong reported on his meeting with local police chiefs, mayors, and Ramsey County Attorney John Choi to discuss crime trends. Topics included legislation to reduce catalytic converter thefts and how to respond to juvenile delinquency and car thefts. Attorney Choi is

working with police chiefs and school resource officers to solve these problems and determine how to update the existing point system to ensure consequences for juvenile crimes. Since Totem Town and another Hennepin County juvenile facility have been closed, they will also look into opening a facility where juveniles can be placed within the community so families can be involved.

X. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Cole thanked all who contributed to the Fire Department's Polar Plunge that raised \$2,600 for Special Olympics. He wished all a happy Black History Month and Lunar New Year's, which is today.

Council Member Petersen stated she is looking forward to the advanced leadership event in Plymouth and announced the program on February 5, 2022, celebrating 100 years of basketball at the North High School gym.

Council Member Thorsen stated he shares the concern of Mr. Schmahl about access to archived website materials.

Council Member Thorsen stated now that the City has revoked the lease with the Community Center, he is disappointed to hear that Kokoro Volleyball will be leaving at some point, which is not a good situation for local businesses and commented that the Council has to come up with a plan. With regard to the heat going out, he did not think it was feasible for the City to find a replacement location and instead should prorate rent for the time the facility was down.

Mayor Furlong stated he would not support leaving the tenant hanging and they will work together on this.

Mayor Furlong announced that early spring, the food shelf and toy shelf will be moving to the old Work Force Center.

Council Member Wong explained that the University of Minnesota Extension in Health and Nutrition has been working with the food shelf for its transition into a 10,000 sq. ft. space that will provide more opportunity for clients to navigate the food shelf with dignity. Mayor Furlong agreed and noted it will also help the volunteers.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Thorsen, Seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ John Stark, City Manager