City of North Saint Paul
September 7, 2022
Approved Special City Council Workshop Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Thorsen
Council Member Petersen
Council Member Cole
Council Member Wong (arrived at 5:01 p.m.)
Mayor Furlong

Staff: City Manager Brian Frandle, Assistant to the City Manager Jennie Kloos, Finance Director Dan Winek, Public Works Director Ron Ritchie, Public Works Supervisor Randy Miller, Fire Chief Jason Mallinger, Police Chief Phil Baebenroth

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to approve the agenda.

City Council Member Wong arrived at 5:01 p.m.

Mayor Furlong requested a moment of silence in remembrance of Richard Critten.

IV. TOPIC(S)

A. <u>2023 Budget</u>

Finance Director Dan Winek stated this is the fourth workshop to review the 2023 budget. He requested the maximum levy be certified for taxes payable in 2023 and to set the Truth in Taxation public hearing dates tonight as it will go to City Council on September 20, 2022.

Mr. Winek stated there have been some changes to the general fund budget since July 19th when line items were given to City Council. Included in the packet is the estimated property taxes and values from Ramsey County. Mr. Winek stated the general fund balance will be finalized tonight and resolutions will be considered at the September 20th City Council meeting. There were discussions around grant assistance from Hamline graduate students and a possible change in the City's technology service contract as options to decrease expenditures.

Council Member Wong inquired about the Police Department staffing levels and an explanation of time off, vacation time, and suspense time. Police Chief Baebenroth explained leave time is up from last year by 4.7% but sick time is down by almost 60%. He stated this is due to a better work culture and increased staffing.

Mr. Winek provided salary information for a Public Works employee and stated 55% of the salary would come from the general fund and the rest would come from the enterprise fund.

After questions from City Council, Public Works Director Ron Ritchie provided the following information:

- The proposed additional staff position's salary could top out at $116,000 including fringe benefits.
- Prerequisite for this position requires a water and sewer license or at minimum 3 years of experience in water and sewer.
- Pay scale ranges from $26.00-$34.00 an hour.
- Explained the duties of a typical public works employee and shared the variety of needs and tasks done by the Public Works Department.
- Park rentals are becoming increasingly popular leading to increased maintenance.

Mr. Winek discussed the Capital Improvement Plan and explained it is still a work in progress and staff will provide more information as it becomes available and as departments finalize their plans for 2023.

Mr. Winek explained the fund balance numbers are dated prior to December 31, 2021 and updated numbers as of June 30, 2022 were added but have not yet been audited or broken into categories.

After questions from City Council, Mr. Winek provided the following information:

- Defined enterprise funds and explained the rate increase or decrease looking ahead.
- The park dedication funds have tight guidelines and can only be used for specific future projects. The balance will begin to decrease and fall into the negative beginning in 2025 and will continue through 2032 likely requiring a bond to cover those costs.
- Fund balances in the Capital Improvement Plan have positioned the City to be in good financial standing
- Provided details on requirements and guidelines for project specific money allocation.

Mr. Winek recommended an 8.48% tax levy and stated this would put the City within the average range of other cities around the metro area.

Mr. Winek introduced the Police Department's current overtime budget at $60,000 per year and the average paid overtime has consistently been at an average of approximately $90,000. Chief Baebenroth explained the overtime is due to sick time, mandated training, injuries, extra-duty jobs such as community events, and critical incidents. He did add, however, that some events are reimbursed back to the department. Mayor Furlong inquired about using police reserves to help with the overtime. Chief Baebenroth explained all positions must be filled by licensed peace officers. Council Member Cole noted with the staffing at appropriate levels, the City should see a reduction in overtime and mentioned to be mindful where it is possible to decrease the overtime amount.

Chief Baebenroth proposed a drone at an operational cost with police officers trained providing one trained pilot on each shift. Council Member Wong inquired how this related to the community policing efforts. Chief Baebenroth stated this is a perfect way to engage the community and provide a piece of current technology to the department. Council Member Wong requested more information about the increased time for searches without the use of an in-house drone. Chief Baebenroth explained when there is a need of a search, the City currently has to get permission from a neighboring department, find someone who can operate it, and then wait for them to get to the scene, noting the request can be denied. Chief Baebenroth stated the drone would have night vision, heat imaging, and video recording capabilities. He also explained the cost details.

Mr. Winek thanked everyone for their hard work, time, and dedication to this budget. He appreciated the ability to work together.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the workshop meeting at 7:26 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:
/s/ Brian Frandle, City Manager / Clerk