

City of North Saint Paul
June 6, 2023
Approved City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Monge called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Schweer
Council Member Nordby
Council Member Cole absent
Council Member Wong
Mayor Monge

Staff: City Manager Brian Frandle, Assistant to the City Manager Jennie Kloos,
Community Development Director Brandy Howe, Communications Coordinator
Kari Erpenbach

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Schweer, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as submitted.

IV. TOPICS

A. Ramsey County HRA Levy Discussion

Community Development Director Brandy Howe provided a brief update on the Ramsey County HRA levy that was discussed at the city council workshop meeting in April. She provided information on what benefit the HRA levy could provide to the City of North St. Paul, noting in 2022, \$11 million was levied to help with housing. North St. Paul has the option to opt in or out due to its own HRA levies. The Ramsey County HRA levy will provide programming, affordable housing, critical corridors grants and wealth generation programs. She defined each of those projects and explained how much money would be allowed for each program. If the City chose to opt in, approximately \$198,000 would be added to the levy from the North St. Paul residents.

Ms. Howe introduced the Ramsey County Community Director Kari Collins to answer any questions. It was noted the deadline for participation would require a resolution at the next meeting.

Mayor Monge inquired about the amount we bring in to the City's HRA levy. City Manager Brian Frandle added the HRA has approximately \$400,000 in their budget. Council Member Nordby inquired if the City's HRA levy would discontinue. Ms. Howe stated both could continue simultaneously. Ms. Collins noted the City would be able to opt out, with a similar process to the opting in and similar timeline if the City so desired. She also stressed any project

that Ramsey County funds, if opted in, would need city council approved. Ramsey County cannot fund a project with HRA levy dollars without municipal support.

Council Member Wong inquired about the application submissions process and factors the HRA considers when allocating money or approving projects. Ms. Collins stated they look at a range of affordability, first come first serve on the Wealth Generation Program and multifamily buildings that need repair. She stressed geographic distribution is important as well.

Council Member Nordby inquired about the tax base of St. Paul and if they fall above or below compared to the combination of all the other cities in Ramsey County. Ms. Collins stated it is almost an even split between suburban Ramsey County and all of St. Paul. She also provided detailed information on the critical corridor project as it relates to business retention.

Council Member Nordby inquired on the history of these issues and if it would be possible to put this on the next election agenda to see what the community wants. Council Member Schweer inquired about the tax levy amount on an average home owner. Ms. Howe stated it would be a \$42 a year increase for residents of North St. Paul to be a part of this program.

Council Member Wong noted there are a limited number of staff members to address and work on this. Ramsey County Commissioner Reinhardt addressed the City Council and expressed her support for this opportunity.

Council Member Wong also noted her concern with the current development projects and noted the difficulty agreeing upon a direction for the HRA to follow. Ms. Howe noted to contact her if more information is needed.

Council Member Wong recommended the Council look at the return investment and believes it could be positive for the City. Mr. Frandle suggested continuing the discussion surrounding the direction of the current and future HRA funds.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

There were no presentations.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), meeting is adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

/s/ John Monge, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Brian Frandle, City Manager / Clerk