

City of North Saint Paul
February 20, 2024
Approved Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Staff: City Manager Brian Frandle, Assistant to the City Manager Jennie Kloos, Fire Chief Jason Mallinger, City Engineer Morgan Dawley, Community Development Director Brandy Howe, Communications Kari Erpenbach, City Attorney Jack Brooksbank

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

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

V. PRESENTATIONS

A. Silver Lake Improvement Association Sponsorship Recognition

Joyce Germscheid and members of the Silver Lake Association updated the City Council on the progress of the hybrid invasive species in Silver Lake. She noted they have engaged the DNR and Ramsey County to treat it. Treatments were applied in October and in November with the possibility of a treatment in the spring depending on levels and if the previous treatments were successful. Ms. Germscheid thanked all those who donated and contributed to this project.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Wong requested that Consent Agenda Item E and L be removed and addressed under City Business.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda as amended, Resolution No. 2024-021 consisting of:

- A. February 6, 2024 workshop meeting minutes
- B. February 6, 2024 regular meeting minutes
- C. General Claims \$1,523,116.66
- D. HRA Claims \$150.00
- E. Resolution to Increase the 2024 Budget and Increase the Police Department Compliment by 1 FTE Related to the State of Minnesota BCA Violent Crime Reduction Unit **Moved to City Business**
- F. Amendments to the Arts and Culture Bylaws **Resolution No. 2024-023**
- G. Project Snowy Purchase Agreements
- H. Ramsey County Library and North St. Paul Use of Fiber Optic Capacity Agreement
- I. MET Council TBRA Grant and Subgrant Agreements
- J. Resolution Accepting Donations – January 2024 **Resolution No. 2024-024**
- K. Building Permit Report – January 2024
- L. Emerald Ash Borer Grant Definitions **Moved to City Business**
- M. Accept the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Emerald Ash Borer Removal Grant

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl expressed his frustration with the disappearance of the LexisNexis program and the agreement between the Library and the City for fiber optics.

Matt Olmstead spoke about the proposed Community Center project and expressed his objection on the basis that it requires an unsustainable tax burden on residents.

Ruthie Olmstead expressed her concern with the difficulty of running the Community Center long term and the financial strain it would put on the City.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Amending the Membership of the Economic Development Authority

Mayor Monge opened the public hearing at 6:47 p.m.

Community Development Director Brandy Howe provided a brief overview of the EDA's goals since its inception in 2009.

The proposed change included transferring the EDA's spending authority to the City Council and creating a new Economic Development Commission to advise the Council on development issues and recommended actions.

Mayor Monge closed the public hearing at 6:52 p.m.

Council Member Cole suggested tabling this item to provide further clarification and planning. He also suggested an additional EDA meeting and a potential workshop to create clear roles and responsibilities for the members. Council Member Nordby and Council Member Wong agreed with a more detailed discussion on the functionality of this Commission.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to table the vote on this item until the infrastructure is in place before it is turned over to the City Council.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Purchase of Fire Department Pumper with Custom Fire Apparatus, Inc.

Fire Chief Jason Mallinger presented this item and put together a 6-person committee within the Fire Department. The first price came in at over \$940,000. He stated they continued to look for something less expensive and Custom Fire Apparatus Inc. was able to create the design that was needed. He provided a timeline for the purchase including; building and accessory additions and stated it would take approximately 15 months. Mr. Mallinger noted the purchase was budgeted for in the 2025 Capital Improvement Plan.

Council Member Cole thanked Fire Chief Mallinger for his fiscally responsible work ethic.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2024-025, Modifying the 2024 – 2033 CIP and Amending the 2024 Budget.

B. 11th Avenue Sidewalk Improvements (City Project No. 24-02, SAP 151-255-008) – Order Advertisement for Bids

City Engineer Morgan Dawley recommended items B and C go out to bid. He noted both projects are funded by a construction grant from MnDOT. The current cost is approximately \$389,000 and 100% of the construction cost will be covered by the grant. He explained the process and stated the results will come back to City Council in April or May and then construction can begin.

Council Member Wong inquired about the remaining grant funds. Mr. Dawley noted any excess funds will remain with the State.

Council Member Cole expressed his excitement for the additional sidewalks and improvements.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2024-026, Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering the Advertisement for Bids for the 11th Avenue Sidewalk Improvements (City Project No. 24-02; SAP 151-255-008).

C. 2024 Pavement Management Project (City Project No. 24-01) – Order Advertisement for Bids

Mr. Dawley stated Public Works identified roadways based on their current conditions. It was also decided that staff review all of the prices and recommended maximizing the most work possible in the current calendar year. Roads that are not completed in 2024, will be completed in 2026. Mr. Dawley stated more information and another resolution will be coming to City Council in April.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2024-027, Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering the Advertisement for Bids for the 2024 Pavement Management Project (City Project No. 24-01).

D. Resolution to Increase the 2024 Budget and Increase the Police Department Compliment by 1 FTE Related to the State of Minnesota BCA Violent Crime Reduction Unit (formerly Consent Agenda Item E)

Council Member Wong requested this item be pulled to provide clarification on increasing the budget. City Manager Brian Frandle noted the BCA will cover the cost of one of the investigators but the Police Department needs to backfill that position. He added this grant is a three-year program and may extend longer but with anticipated retirements or resignations, it would be presumed the position within the Police Department would be available when the grant is terminated.

The City Council held a robust discussion on what this would look like. Mr. Frandle noted the Resolution keeps the Police Department at full staff. He also noted the officer will still be employed by the City but working full time for the BCA and then would add an officer to fill that spot while the officer is in the Violent Crime Reduction Unit.

Council Member Wong believes the decision would be better made years down the road. City Attorney Jack Brooksbank stated the grant would effectively keep the Police Department at a net neutral staffing level for the duration of the grant.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Nordby, with Mayor Monge and Council Members Cole and Nordby voting aye and Council Member Wong voting nay (3-1), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2024-022, Increase the 2024 Budget and Increase the Police Department Compliment by 1 FTE Related to the State of Minnesota BCA Violent Crime Reduction Unit.

E. Emerald Ash Borer Grant Definitions (formerly Consent Agenda Item L)

Council Member Wong pulled this item for clarification on the decision for this particular definition of low income. Public Works Director Ron Ritchie clarified they talked with Finance Director Dan Winek and it was decided the best way to determine low income was to use the same process as other programs within the City.

Council Member Wong inquired if the definition may be too narrow. Mr. Ritchie noted this is the City's first time with this grant and staff will review it. He stated changes can be made each year going forward and is open to changing and widening the scope in the following years. Mr. Ritchie also stated they will make this as easy on residents as possible.

On motion by Council Member Wong, and seconded by Council Member Nordby, with all present voting aye (4-0), motion carried to approve the Emerald Ash Borer Grant definition.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Frandle noted the Fire Department posted for the full-time Code Enforcement Officer and have promoted the current part-time Code Enforcement Officer. Ice rescue training continues on Silver Lake. The crane will be back at the Lillie Building on March 4th and the student-built house is moving onto drywall. He also noted the continuance of well maintenance and wood chipping with the Public Works Department.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Cole noted he is hopeful the EDA can schedule a meeting and workshop.

Council Member Wong reported the Arts and Culture Commission have sold 7 Snowy's. More paint nights are to come and the Art Cart will be back for Music in the Park. She added utility box wraps will be coming as the weather gets nicer. The next meeting is March 6, 2024.

Council Member Nordby noted the Planning Commission meeting on February 1st was cancelled and the next meeting is March 7, 2024.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Nordby reminded everyone that one week from today, the City Council will be at the Historical Society at 7:00 p.m. to answer questions.

Council Member Wong acknowledged the Officers and First Responders who passed away in Burnsville. She expressed her disappointment and anger regarding the article in the City Newsletter on the Community Center as she felt it was misleading. She stated the City Council directed staff to come up with this budget but it was not discussed with City Council. She recommended public conversation around the Community Center to provide clear and consistent information.

Council Member Cole also expressed his disappointment with what he felt was misleading information and the timeline in which City Council received the article stating there was no need to rush.

Mayor Monge addressed the same issue and stated he is hoping for more education on the Community Center. He recommended City Council continue to move forward on the Community Center.

Council Member Cole added the City Council was not aware of the financial request that had been made before it was given to the public and that the request to publish the information came from the Mayor and not the City Council.

Council Member Wong suggested a workshop and presentation from Wold Architects to review all of the information.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (4-0), Mayor Monge adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

/s/ John Monge, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Brian Frandle, City Manager / Clerk