

City of North Saint Paul
August 29, 2024
Approved City Council Special Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Monge called the meeting to order at 5:21 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

Staff: City Manager Brian Frandle, Assistant to the City Manager Jennie Kloos, Finance Director Dan Winek, Community Development Director Riley Grams and Police Chief Ray Rozales

III. ADOPT AGENDA

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

IV. TOPICS

A. 2025 Budget Discussion – Levy Budgets

Community Development Director Riley Grams reviewed the commissions and committees that the community development staff service. He also reviewed the duties of the community development staff.

Mr. Winek discussed the community development budget and noted the 15% increase is mainly due to personnel expenditures. He discussed the capital expenditure of the updated downtown design manual and suggested it be funded by the EDA.

Council Member Wong inquired if the community development staff feel they can handle their current work load. Mr. Grams stated staff feel comfortable and are adequately handling the work load.

Council Member Wong also inquired if a full-time grant writer would be able to step in and help with other community development projects when needed. Mr. Winek suggested a grant writer consultant before the hire of a grant writer to test out that scenario.

Mr. Winek also expressed his appreciation for the partnership with Rum River and the city is looking to change the permitting software to streamline with Rum River. Mr. Winek added the new software would contain a better digital data storage. Council Member Cole expressed his

concern about privacy regarding proprietary confidential information and records if the city chose another data storage system in the future.

Mr. Winek briefly discussed the recreation department's budget and noted the current increase is for personnel expenses and added this department would likely see an increase in the future as well.

Mr. Winek provided an overview of the HRA budget and its duties. The student-built housing program continues to fund the HRA budget. Mr. Winek is recommending the HRA's budget increase \$11,000 and added the potential for federal funding for low-income housing. Council Member Wong inquired about potentially allocating a percentage of the HRA funds to help low-income housing residents. Mr. Grams stated he is looking into ways to assist residents through the profits from the student-built house.

Mr. Winek discussed the EDA's mission, goals and budget. He noted a .25% reduction due to the reallocation of the community development director's time. He added the EDA has discussed the potential hire of a consultant to increase economic development in the city. Mr. Winek and Mr. Grams also provided information on the downtown design manual and the new façade project and how that could affect the budget and the trajectory of the future of North St. Paul.

Council Member Wong inquired about direction or ways to help the downtown design manual or the façade project. Mr. Grams recommended halting the downtown design manual for now. Mr. Winek added there was to be discussion on this topic at the last EDA meeting but the EDA did not have a quorum.

Council Member Wong also inquired about the Arts and Culture Commission collaborating with EDA regarding murals to coincide with the façade project. Mr. Grams said he thinks there is a good opportunity to do that.

Chief of Police Ray Rozales presented the Police Department budget. He discussed the department's mission, community outreach and policing programs, organizational chart, future staffing, the BCA Violent Crimes Unit collaboration, culture and wellness and the new recruitment video.

He read the mission of the 2025 North St. Paul Police Department. He discussed the community outreach programs the department participates in and the wellness program that creates a work life balance along with mental health services.

He provided a picture of the organizational staff flow chart for the Police Department and noted the shortages. He stated three applicants are currently going through the hiring process and discussed his staffing wishes for 2025. Those positions include a deputy chief, two power shift patrol officers, crime analyst, community service officer and an embedded mental health crisis specialist.

He ended his presentation with a newly created recruitment video.

Mr. Winek went through the Police Department's budget and highlighted the only major increase was for personnel services.

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

- Explained various recruitment strategies
- Restructuring of field training program to expedite process for lateral transfers
- Recommended hiring an experienced candidate for the potential new positions
- Patrol officers currently work a 12 hour shift
- Collaboration with other agencies can be looked into but tends to get complicated
- Described hiring process timeline
- Detailed the specifics of what an embedded mental health crisis specialist would assist with
- School Resource Officer will spend most of their time at North High with potentially some time at Webster
- Defined the roles and responsibilities of a community service officer
- Explained his priority of needs in regards to staffing
- Provided the benefits of a deputy chief within their department

Mr. Winek expressed his gratitude to Mr. Rozales for his work ethic and the morale he creates within the department.

V. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (4-0), meeting is adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

/s/ John Monge, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Brian Frandle, City Manager / Clerk