

**City of North Saint Paul
November 19, 2019
Adopted Regular City Council Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

II. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Thorsen
Council Member Petersen
Council Member Walczak
Council Member Sonnek
Mayor Furlong

Staff: City Manager Scott Duddeck, City Engineer Morgan Dawley, City Planner Ryan Krzos, Finance Director Jason Zimmerman, Fire Chief Jason Mallinger, Community Development/Parks & Recreation Coordinator Keith Stachowski, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk Mary Mills.

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. PRESENTATIONS

Fire Prevention Poster Awards

Fire Chief Jason Mallinger stated October 6-12, 2019 was Fire Prevention Week. He reviewed the North St. Paul Fire Department fire safety and prevention education efforts in classrooms and homes, as well as large group presentations and public safety open houses. He noted 6 elementary schools were visited, and 5 firefighters spent 30 hours with over 1,100 students, with a goal of creating a lasting impression on local youth regarding fire safety and prevention.

Fire Chief Mallinger stated this year's theme was "Not every hero wears a cape, plan and practice your escape". He added the intent is to engage students, so they know what to do in case of a fire both at school and home, including how to test smoke detectors. He noted the Fire Department sponsored a poster contest featuring this year's theme that was open to all local students in Kindergarten through fifth grade, and over 500 entries were received.

Fire Chief Mallinger presented awards to three students in three age groups. He added first place-winning entries from each age group will be submitted to the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association for a statewide contest.

Fire Chief Mallinger invited contest winners to join him at the podium to receive their award. K-1st Grade awards: 3rd place - Ashlynn Hansmann, first grader at Christ Lutheran; 2nd place - Ella Petersen, first grader at St. Peter; and 1st place - Hazel Evgen, first grader at Christ Lutheran. 2nd - 3rd Grade awards: 3rd place - Eliza Bella Yang, third grader at Webster (not present); 2nd place - Aubrey McCoy, second grader at Cowern; and 1st place - Latrice Sanders, third grader at Webster. 4th - 5th Grade awards: 3rd place - Daniel Mint, fourth grader at Christ Lutheran; 2nd place - Jack Gill, fourth grader at St. Peter; and 1st place - Lauren Radcliffe, fourth grader at St. Peter.

The City Council meeting went into a 5-minute recess at 6:42 p.m.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, Resolution No. 2019-150 consisting of:

- A. November 5, 2019 regular meeting minutes.
- B. General accounts payable: \$1,988,167.97
- C. HRA accounts payable: \$2,688.12
- D. Reschedule December 10, 2019 Council Retreat Workshop to Tuesday, November 26, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.
- E. 2019-2020 Well Sealing Policy

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl stated the Tennis garbage hauler truck was on Chisholm Avenue during the first week in October but bags of leaves and a root ball were not collected, so he notified City Staff. He added it has been five weeks and the items were still there this week.

Mr. Schmahl stated the Tennis garbage truck was on Chisholm Avenue again this week. He added a resident indicated that the truck got too close to the curb and knocked over a tree. He asked whether residents can leave bags of leaves out to be picked up by Tennis. Mr. Duddeck confirmed there is a per bag cost for collection of yard waste, for which residents can subscribe on a monthly basis. He added the Public Works Department cleared up the fallen tree.

Mr. Schmahl stated trees should not be hanging so close to the roadway that they can get knocked over by garbage haulers. Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff have discussed clearing and trimming of trees to ensure access for snowplows. He added yard waste collection will continue through the end of November, which is longer than previously scheduled.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. 2018 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Annual Review and Public Meeting

Mr. Duddeck stated the annual Stormwater Pollution Plan meeting is required under the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) MS4 regulations for stormwater systems. He introduced Keith Stachowski, Community Services/Parks and Recreation Coordinator.

Mr. Stachowski stated the Stormwater Pollution Plan meeting will be conducted at tonight's City Council meeting to allow the City's viewing audience have access to the meeting and information that is presented. He added the meeting and subsequent permit application is required every five years under the MPCA's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System regulations (MS4).

Meghan Litsey, an environmental consultant with WSB providing support for the MS4 program, stated the MS4 permit regulates storm sewer systems in various jurisdictions, including cities, counties and districts, to address stormwater run-off. She added efforts include public awareness and education regarding residential run-off.

Ms. Litsey reviewed the MPCA's control measures: public education in partnership with Ramsey/Washington Metro Watershed District; public participation; illicit discharge, detection and elimination; construction and post-construction management; and good housekeeping for municipal operations. She added implementation of the 2020 program is dependent upon permit renewal, and new program components will be addressed when there is more information. She noted additional information is available online on the City's website, the MPCA website, and the Watershed District's website.

Council Member Thorsen stated there was significant run-off from a holding pond near Highway 36 over Memorial Day weekend 2019. He asked whether these types of run-off issues are addressed on a complaint basis, or if there is someone assigned to do inspections during construction projects.

Mr. Stachowski stated observation and notice from residents is helpful, but inspectors should be on-site within 48 hours of a heavy rain event.

Ms. Litsey stated weekly inspections and rain inspections should be occurring weekly on development sites to ensure that run-off issues are addressed in a timely manner.

Commissioner Walczak stated homeowners on Silver Lake have started grass buffers along the lakeshore, that make a big difference in terms of blocking phosphorus and nutrients from getting into the lake. She added it would be great if more homeowners on the lake would follow that lead.

Donald Bienek stated he has seen a lot of leaves in the street, as he makes an effort to keep his drains open.

Mr. Duddeck stated the street sweeper will be employed as long as weather allows.

Mayor Furlong stated residents should be aware of the importance of removing debris around sewer drains.

Mayor Furlong requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Litsey agreed. Mr. Duddeck stated the PowerPoint presentation would be uploaded to the City website.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. 2104 Eldridge Avenue E Minor Subdivision and Conditional Use Permit

Ryan Krzos, Planner with WSB, reviewed a request for a conditional use permit and minor subdivision at 2104 Eldridge Avenue, submitted by Seth Peterson on behalf of Coastland Productions and property owner Donald Quist. This request will allow the applicant to subdivide the property to create 3 new home sites and demolition of the existing home at 2104 Eldridge Avenue E, for a total of 4 new lots. Each lot would have a lot area that is substandard to the normal R-1 minimum of 7920 square feet although special infill housing allows a deviation of 10%.

Mr. Krzos stated the proposed homes fit in with the low-density neighborhood with traditional building designs, split level living and attached garage oriented toward the road. The Planning Commission held a public hearing and one resident expressed concerns about density and drainage issues in this neighborhood. The City Engineer has reviewed the proposed grading plans and included a few recommendations for conditions for approval. The City Engineer does not have any larger concerns about drainage associated with the proposed development.

Mr. Krzos stated City Staff recommends approval of two resolutions related to this request for a conditional use permit for special infill housing.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-151 Approving Conditional Use Permit for Special Infill Housing Located at 2104 Eldridge Avenue E.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-152 Approving Minor Subdivision for Property at 2104 and 2120 Eldridge Avenue E.

Mr. Duddeck stated 2 new addresses have been created for the site. The addresses will be 2108 and 2112 Eldridge Avenue E.

B. Authorize Amended Feasibility Study for 2020 Street and Utilities 7th Avenue Project

Morgan Dawley, City Engineer, WSB, reviewed the feasibility study for the 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project, which has been narrowed down to one project on 7th Avenue

between 1st and 3rd Streets, and some portions of 2nd Street. He requested the City Council's consideration of authorizing the City Engineer to update and revise the feasibility study and review overall improvements before bringing it back to the City Council for final approval. He added it is not anticipated that this will affect the bidding schedule.

Mayor Furlong asked how long the project will last. Mr. Dawley stated there are times when 7th Avenue will be closed to traffic, as it is easier and safer for contractors to complete heavy projects when roads are closed. Alternate routes in and around town will be sign posted.

On motion by Council Member Walczak, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-153 Authorizing Preparation of Feasibility Study and Preliminary Report for the 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project.

C. 2020 Fee Schedule – first review and reading

Mr. Duddeck presented the proposed 2020 fee schedule. He added no action is required at tonight's meeting. He noted the fee schedule will be presented and reviewed at the City Council's December 3, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Duddeck stated most fees remain the same. He added City Staff have received feedback regarding the \$300 deposit for park building rentals, which he would like to discontinue as it is labor intensive and a hardship for residents. He asked the City Council to consider eliminating the deposit. He noted language could be added to the park rental application form regarding responsibility for damages.

Council Member Walczak asked whether there have been issues at Casey Lake Park, when the deposit has been kept, and whether residents could be billed instead. Mr. Duddeck stated there was an additional clean-up necessary after a rental, and a portion of the deposit was withheld. He added he is not aware of any other issues. He added residents could be billed but it might be difficult to collect payment.

City Attorney Soren Mattick stated residents could be billed. He added a deposit is meant to be an incentive but can cause hardship and complaints related to cash outlay to reserve a park shelter months in advance. He added it might make sense to give it a try.

Council Member Thorsen stated the process of taking a deposit and then refunding it months later is time and labor intensive and holding the check does not really eliminate the additional work that is created.

Mr. Duddeck stated no action is required at tonight's meeting. He added the fee schedule will be presented to the City Council for adoption at their December 3, 2019 meeting.

Mayor Furlong requested clarification regarding the solar fee. Mr. Duddeck stated that is a fee that was added as part of the contract inspector's fees and is a reflection of a shift in the types of electrical fees.

Council Member Thorsen stated he supports the elimination of deposits as there has not been a problem, and the City Council can revisit the issue if problems occur.

Council Member Thorsen stated he supports elimination of cat, dog and dog kennel licenses, which are difficult to enforce and have become obsolete with microchip technology and social media. He added the City of Maplewood eliminated their pet-related licensing fees.

Mr. Duddeck stated this is addressed in the Ordinance, so an amendment would be necessary.

Council Member Sonnek asked for clarification regarding the purpose of registration and fee for pet licenses. Mr. Duddeck stated the City wants to ensure that dogs are vaccinated and registered so they can be returned to their owner if they are lost. He added this is a labor-intensive process and there is a cost involved, including purchase of license tags. He noted City Staff can put something together to address an Ordinance change.

Mayor Furlong requested additional information from Code Enforcement, to see whether there is something else triggered in the Code in relation to pet licenses and registration. Mr. Duddeck agreed. He added the ordinance would need to be updated to some extent.

Council Member Thorsen stated he does not support a raise in utility rates while there are unanswered questions about the budget and future capital improvement plans. He added the City will not be in a bad situation if rates are kept the same as they are now. He noted he has proposed the elimination of the Street light fee, an issue about which the City Council is waiting for additional information from City Staff.

Mr. Duddeck agreed to follow up with the Electric Director. He stated this item is related to new equipment required in connection with upgrading the City's street lights to LED bulbs. He added City Staff have indicated the LED bulbs result in a 50-60% decrease in energy costs, but no adjustment has been made for that. He noted the item does not include labor, as the City's Electric Department does the labor.

Council Member Sonnek stated he agrees that fees related to streetlights are questionable, especially when residents do not have a streetlight on their street. He added, however, the money would have to be made up from somewhere else if the streetlights fee is eliminated.

Jason Zimmerman Finance Director, stated residential accounts, including the franchise fee, will see a 3% increase.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether any progress has been made on amending the utility bill process. Mr. Duddeck stated that is an ongoing process.

Mr. Zimmerman stated the utility billing process is much more complex than originally thought. The software is outdated, and billing information is submitted to a third party for bill printing and mailing. The printed bill does not provide any data calculations and the lack of test database environment makes it difficult to test daily operations and configurations. He noted he has some additional information that he can resent at an upcoming City Council meeting.

Mr. Stachowski stated his goal is to have this review complete for November goals into December. He added the City Council can review this at their next work session.

Council Member Thorsen stated the streetlight fee complicates the utility bill, which the City is trying to simplify. He added many residents express frustration about the fee as they do not have a streetlight. He noted, if the fee is removed, the difference could be balanced with a cost adjustment.

Mr. Duddeck stated the streetlight fee would take on a name change to reduce confusion. He added this would be brought back to the City Council for consideration.

Mr. Duddeck stated the fee schedule reflects that there is no increase in garbage and recycling rates.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Duddeck stated construction continues at the Anchor North site, although there is 6-8 inches of frost which will have an impact on the schedule. He added materials to be transported to the site will be brought in and stockpiled for use in Spring 2020.

Mr. Duddeck requested an update from Mr. Dawley on the bid package for the Anchor North site in preparation for Spring 2020 construction season.

Mr. Dawley stated bids will be brought back the City Council as soon as possible. He added, due to the holidays and winter weather, contractors will be given the opportunity to bid after the New Year. He noted contract bid awards will be presented for City Council review at their second meeting in January 2020.

Mr. Duddeck stated three parties are currently working on agreements for the Anchor North site, with bids going out as soon as possible and anticipated spring construction.

Mr. Duddeck stated the new M&I townhomes have at least one new tenant who moved in before Thanksgiving. He added the new addresses were forwarded to local authorities including the United States Postal Service but there has been confusion due to a change in mail delivery routes. He added City Staff are working to resolve these issues.

Mr. Duddeck stated the paving project near Richardson School has been completed, and the School District is requesting “no parking during school hours” signage on the south side of 17th

Avenue, which is a County road. He added the signage would be placed between 1st Street and 2nd Street as buses exit from the school drive at that location.

Mr. Duddeck stated a potential four-way stop is being considered at 1st Street and 15th Street, which would increase safety for students. He added signage that the location has been removed while this issue is reviewed.

Mr. Duddeck stated plans for proposed development at the former City Hall site will be presented to the City Council at their December 3, 2019 meeting. He added construction will probably begin in February 2020.

Mayor Furlong requested an update on construction of Suite Living Senior Care assisted living facility. Mr. Duddeck stated the contractors are working on completing the project.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Petersen stated the League of Minnesota Cities held their annual meeting, at which a main topic for discussion was the increase in the incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder for first responders.

Council Member Petersen stated the Park and Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, November 20, 2019.

Council Member Petersen stated two homes in North St. Paul have been nominated for Home Improvement Awards, which will be awarded in January 2020.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Petersen stated the recent meeting regarding Highway 36 and Highway 120 was well attended, which she believes will be moving forward. She added there were a lot of good ideas and information.

Council Member Petersen stated a new fire pit has been installed behind the museum, which was constructed as part of a project similar to Boy Scouts.

Council Member Petersen congratulated the North High School Polars Volleyball team, who took 3rd place in the State Tournament.

Council Member Petersen wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Duddeck stated signage on the former community center will be removed from the building. He added signage will reflect the building's current tenants, Ramsey County Library and Kokoro Volleyball.

Mayor Furlong stated a recent meeting was held to discuss the future of the Highway 36/Highway 120 interchange. The meeting brought together legislators, representatives of

Ramsey and Washington Counties, MnDOT and local residents and City Staff to discuss potential future plans for Century Avenue, from Century College to Highway 94.

Mayor Furlong stated meeting participants liked the phrase “Smart Corridor” to refer to the roadway, which was suggested by Mr. Dawley. The information discussed will be used to complete a feasibility study and continue to keep the project moving along.

Mr. Duddeck stated representatives from North St. Paul who attended the meeting gave a strong message of support for the project and to ensure that it keeps moving.

Mayor Furlong stated an event at Veterans’ Park on Veterans’ Day was well attended, and a very nice event despite the cold windy weather. He thanked all the participants and attendees.

Mayor Furlong wished everyone a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Sonnek, Seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest: /s/ Scott A. Duddeck, City Manager