

**City of North Saint Paul
December 17, 2019
Adopted Regular City Council Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Staff: City Manager Scott Duddeck, City Engineer Morgan Dawley, Finance Director Jason Zimmerman, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk Mary Mills.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as submitted.

V. PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Harold R. Broman Jr. Presentation

Mayor Furlong read a Resolution in full honoring Dr. Harold R. Broman Jr. for his support and involvement in the City of North St. Paul, and recognizing Dr. Broman's 35 years of dedicated care, compassion and service for the citizens of North St. Paul.

Dr. Broman stated he originally opened his practice in North St. Paul as he was looking for a community in which he could live his professional life in front of his patients and neighbors, and be consistent, and give grace to all those he could reach. He added he began the annual Prayer Breakfast with that in mind. He noted he appreciates the goodness of the community and its residents, and it has been a good place to live and work. He thanked the community of North St. Paul for their support.

Council Member Petersen expressed her appreciation and thanks for the wonderful care Dr. Broman has given family members and other residents.

Council Member Sonnek stated he traveled to Europe in 1985 with the North St. Paul High School Choir, and Dr. Broman accompanied the choir. He added it was very special to have the City's hometown doctor along for the experience. He expressed his thanks to Dr. Broman for his many years of service.

Mr. Duddeck thanked Dr. Broman and his wife Margaret, for their involvement in the community and for being strong community members.

Mayor Furlong called a short recess from 6:41 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, Resolution No. 2019-162 consisting of:

- A. November 19, 2019 workshop meeting minutes.
- B. November 19, 2019 regular meeting minutes.
- C. December 3, 2019 workshop meeting minutes.
- D. December 3, 2019 regular meeting minutes.
- E. General accounts payable: \$1,524,017.17
- F. HRA accounts payable: 98.75.
- G. City Hall Closure Christmas Eve 12-24-19
- H. 2020 Equipment purchase and declare surplus property. Resolution No. 2019-163.
- I. Anchor Block Commons Improvements – Cooperative Agreement with DNR. Resolution No. 2019-164.

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

There were no comments.

Mayor Furlong stated a resident, Donald Bieniek, who is a regular at the City Council meetings, has been in the hospital with pneumonia, but he is doing better. He added the City Council and City Staff send their best wishes to Mr. Bieniek for a fast recovery.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no scheduled hearings.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Anchor Block North Preliminary and Final Plat

City Engineer Morgan Dawley reviewed a request for City Council approval for the Anchor North preliminary and final plat, for which the City is the applicant. He added the property is currently under Contract for Deed with the City as developer. The plat includes three new lots, and a new public road, Anchor Drive, connects to McKnight Road N with a new access point

and traffic signal per approvals from Ramsey County. The plat and property subdivision are being created to facilitate the development of the three parcels.

Mr. Dawley stated improvements are planned that will facilitate future installation of utilities and roadway infrastructure. He added City Staff and the Planning Commission recommend City Council approval of the request with conditions as outlined in the staff report.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-165 approving Preliminary and Final Plat for the Property Commonly Known as Anchor Block North at 2300 McKnight Road N.

B. Animal Licensing Ordinance

Mr. Duddeck reviewed a proposed amendment to the animal license Ordinance, reflecting the newly adopted fee schedule and removing licensing fees for dog and cat licenses. The requirements related to kennel licenses have not been changed, but the fee associated with kennel licenses has been removed. Requirements and fees for dangerous dogs remain unchanged.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Ordinance No. 788 Amending Title IV, Chapter 95 of City Ordinances Pertaining to Licensing of Domestic Animals.

C. 2020 History Cruze Car Show Agreement

Mr. Duddeck stated preparations are being made for the 2020 History Cruze Car show, including a public meeting held last week at City Hall. Due to potential construction near the old City Hall site and proposed construction on 7th Avenue E between 1st Street N and 3rd Street N, the car show will be moved to the area east of Margaret Street to Henry Street. Downtown businesses can still be open during the car show.

Mr. Duddeck stated 35-40 people attended the public meeting, which was noticed in the City's newspaper and letters sent to property owners, and there were no negative comments. He added City Staff is committed to ensuring that the car show goes smoothly. He noted this is a temporary situation, and the car show will be returned to the east end after 2020.

Mr. Duddeck stated this will be the 26th year of the car show, which is a long-standing community event.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-166 approving 2020 Memorandum of Agreement between City of North St. Paul and North St. Paul History Cruzers to Conduct 2020 Friday Night Car Shows.

D. Fire Relief Association Pension Increase Request

Mr. Duddeck stated Fire Department is requesting consideration of an increase in the annual pension dollar amount for their employees. He added the pension is currently \$5,200 per year, and if approved, would increase to \$5,700 per year of service as of January 1, 2020. He noted this proposed increase is important for recruitment and retention

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff recommends approval of this request.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-167 authorizing an increase in Firefighter Pension from \$5,200 per year to \$5,700 per year.

Fire Chief Jason Mallinger, accompanied by Captain Mike Richter, thanked the City Council on behalf of the Fire Department. He added the City's Firefighters do a great job protecting the City, and the majority earn \$13.50 per hour based on the number of calls they take. He noted they must respond to a minimum of 25% of fire calls to remain in good standing.

Council Member Sonnek expressed his thanks on behalf of the City to the Fire Department for their hard work and dedication.

Mayor Furlong thanked the Firefighters for their commitment. He added he understands what it takes to be a volunteer firefighter, as his son currently serves his community as a firefighter. He noted the difficulty of finding people willing to take part-time on-call firefighter positions, and the City is fortunate to have recently hired 5 new trainees.

E. 2019-2022 Metropolitan Council Water Efficiency Grant Approval

Finance Director Jason Zimmerman reviewed a grant from the Metropolitan Council related to water conservation programs. City Staff attended an information session and applied for funding, and the City received a grant of \$19,000. The Metropolitan Council requires the City fund a portion of the program costs by matching the grant 75%/25%. Rebates for homeowners are limited to \$200 per account for owner-occupied properties only, in the form of a utility bill credit. The program will extend through June 2022.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the Award of Metropolitan Council 2019-2022 Water Efficiency Grant and Authorize Execution of Agreement by City Manager.

F. Former BP Gas Station, 2545 Division Street N

Mr. Duddeck stated the Economic Development Authority (EDA) has recommended that the City purchase the property at 2545 Division Street North, the former BP gas station, which has been vacant and in disrepair for many years. He added the property is in a highly visible area of the City and is an important gateway location. He noted City Staff negotiated a price of \$340,000 for the property, which was purchased in 2006 for \$475,000, and is valued at \$413,500 per Ramsey County 2020 estimated tax assessment.

Mr. Duddeck stated the goal is to demolish the existing building and remove curbs, light poles and other items on the site, in preparation for restoration to green space in Spring 2020. The property would be held for future use for highway right away when improvements to Highway 36/Highway 120 are constructed.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff recommends approval of the purchase of property at 2545 Division Street North.

Council Member Sonnek asked whether funds would be recouped when the property is sold to the State for roadway reconstruction purposes. Mr. Duddeck confirmed this.

Council Member Sonnek asked whether City Staff has considered any other uses for the property in the interim, with the addition of park benches or trail connections, or a welcome sign. Mr. Duddeck stated that is a possibility, and any amenities could be located on the far end of the parcel away from the highway and future construction, so it could stay there in the future. He added the area could become a small accessory park, with nearby Rotary Park and trail access.

Mayor Furlong stated this is an important purchase as the property is a gateway to the community and highly visible.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether demolition would start immediately or wait until Spring 2020. Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff would move ahead with demolition as soon as possible, if the paperwork and other follow-up items can be completed by the end of the year. He added restoration would take place in the spring.

Mayor Furlong asked whether there might be residual value for any portion of the gas station and car wash. Mr. Duddeck stated most of it has already been removed. He agreed to look into it.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to authorize the City Manager to enter into Formal Purchase Agreement and complete transaction for purchase of 2545 Division Street North in the Amount of \$340,000 plus closing costs and taxes.

G. 2020 S&U Improvement Project Feasibility Study and Set Public Hearing

City Engineer Morgan Dawley presented the 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project Feasibility Presentation. He added this updated version of the project report, as requested by City Council, includes additional project scope and covers issues pertaining to adjacent properties.

Mr. Dawley stated the maintenance areas will be concurrently completed and include maintenance overlay of 2nd Street N to the frontage road and 4th Avenue E north of the condos. In addition, the alley south of 7th Avenue E will be reconstructed in two locations. Proposed surface improvements include full pavement reconstruction; new concrete barrier curb; new and replacement sidewalks; medians and trails; and paved alleys. Proposed utilities improvements

include complete watermain replacement including services; sanitary sewer replacements or lining where necessary; and storm sewer improvements.

Mr. Dawley stated the downtown area revitalization includes an urban street design with landscaped median, additional parking and stormwater design standards, new watershed rules and coordination for potential future roundabout to be planned in conjunction with Ramsey County and regarding which concept discussions are still ongoing. Construction in 2020 would not include a roundabout.

Mr. Dawley stated the City-owned parcel east of 1st Street N and south of 7th Avenue E has been identified for stormwater drainage improvements to provide flood relief and improve drainage characteristics. He added the stormwater feature will connect to storm sewer through the old 1st Street N right of way that is now green space.

Mr. Dawley reviewed the updated project cost of \$5.6 million, with special assessments per City policy, and an average assessment of \$4,350 per property. Condos and townhomes would be assessed at approximately \$1,000 per unit, and Commercial, industrial and multi-family properties at \$96 per foot. Assessments would be based on actual street front footage. The public hearing for the project would be set for the January 21, 2020 City Council meeting, with primary construction during the 2020 construction season and additional clean-up in 2021.

Mr. Dawley stated City Staff recommends City Council approval of the resolution to set the public hearing, authorize preparation of plans and specifications, and set the assessment rolls.

Mayor Furlong asked whether Xcel Energy considered the potential roundabout construction when they completed their work at that location. Mr. Dawley stated he spoke with Xcel Energy representatives and provided preliminary information during their construction, and they are aware of plans for a potential roundabout that would occur in 2023-24. He added Xcel Energy is aware that relocation of facilities may be necessary at that time. He noted the details of the roundabout are not finalized, and Xcel is experienced at facilities relocation.

Mayor Furlong asked about Xcel's above-ground gas facilities that are unsightly and unattractive. Mr. Dawley stated he has heard similar complaints and agreed to look into this issue and provide an update for the City Council. He added, based on past communication with Xcel, the project is still ongoing and will continue next year into Maplewood and St. Paul, and aesthetic components are not complete. He noted he is unsure what will happen, but City Staff can work with Xcel to make the above-ground units more amenable and look at opportunities for screening and other concerns.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff plans to meet with Xcel Energy representatives in January 2020 to discuss noise issues from regulators and aesthetics of the regulator building at South Avenue E and Henry Street N. He stressed the importance of making these features more aesthetically acceptable for the neighborhood's residents.

Mr. Duddeck stated the City's first water main break of the season occurred at the townhomes between South Avenue E and McKnight Road N on 7th Avenue E. He added repairs were completed and concrete was temporarily repaired. He noted the road will re-open when the concrete is cured.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-168 Receiving the City Engineer's Feasibility Study Ordering Preparation of Plans and Specifications and Calling for Public Hearing on 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project and Set the Date for January 21, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

H. Membership with the Ramsey Washington Suburban Cable Commission (RWSCC)

Mr. Duddeck stated the City's membership in the Ramsey Washington Suburban Cable Commission (RWSCC) was cancelled in October 2019. He requested the City Council's consideration of rescinding that request and maintain membership in the RWSCC. He added, if approved, City Staff will request City Council consideration of appointment of Terre Heiser as the City's representative on the Cable Commission.

Council Member Sonnek stated he still has questions about what can be accomplished by renewing RWSCC membership. He added he trusts the guidance of the City Manager and City Staff and approves of the recommendation of appointment of Terre Heiser. He noted he hopes tangible positive changes will happen in 2020.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2019-169 Rescinding City of North St. Paul's Intent to Withdraw from the Ramsey Washington Suburban Cable Commission (RWSCC) Joint Powers Agreement and Authorize Staff to Provide Written Notice to the Secretary of the RWSCC of this Intent.

Council Member Thorsen stated this issue has been evaluated all year, and other member communities reached out to put a plan together for RWSCC. He added he feels confident in turning this over to Terre Heiser, and hopefully some good will come from going back to RWSCC membership.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Duddeck stated City Public Works crews have been working on a water main break that occurred last weekend.

Mr. Duddeck stated demolition and site clearing has begun on a house on 1st Street N off 7th Avenue E, on property that will be used as a future site for stormwater ponding.

Mr. Duddeck stated the house that will be moved as part of the Student-Built House program is being prepared for removal from its current site. He added it will be transported to its new

location on 7th Avenue E on next week. He noted this is a unique opportunity for the program and for the City, as it provides opportunities and improvements in the community.

Mr. Duddeck stated the Anchor North site work is finished, with soil corrections completed and pad ready for construction. He added straw and mulch was blown over the site, and the project is done for the winter.

Mr. Duddeck stated bids were released for the upcoming road and utility street work that will commence in Spring 2020. City Staff is working with end users on purchase agreements.

Mr. Duddeck stated plans are continuing for development of the old City Hall site, with final documents and pricing reviews. He added the plans will be presented to the City Council for review at an upcoming meeting in early 2020, with a February start date.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Peterson stated she attended the Minnesota League of Cities Board Meeting on December 12, 2019, at which the 2020 Annual Conference were discussed.

Council Member Thorsen stated the EDA met on December 10, 2019 and took action on the City's purchase of the BP station, as reviewed at tonight's meeting. He added the EDA also reviewed ongoing development opportunities.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Sonnek wished everybody a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and happy holiday season.

Council Member Walczak wished everybody a blessed and Merry Christmas and holidays.

Council Member Peterson stated the 2019 Holiday Hop was a big success. She thanked all the participating merchants. She added the trolley rides were very popular. She wished everyone a happy, healthy holiday and New Year.

Council Member Thorsen wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mr. Duddeck stated 2020 has been a busy year. He thanked the City Council for the opportunity to serve the City of North St. Paul. He added he is looking forward to a big year for the City in 2020.

Mayor Furlong stated it has been a busy and challenging year, balancing the commitments of City Council with family and work. He thanked the City Council and City Staff for their support and wished everyone a happy and blessed holiday season.

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 Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

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