

**City of North Saint Paul
October 20, 2020
Approved Regular City Council Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

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 Planner Erin Perdu, Finance Director Jason Zimmerman, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk Jennie Kloos.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

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

V. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Walczak, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, Resolution No. 2020-117 consisting of:

- A. 10-6-2020 workshop meeting minutes.
- B. 10-6-2020 regular meeting minutes.
- C. General accounts payable: \$1,981,193.52
- D. HRA accounts payable: \$186.38.
- E. Construction Pay Voucher No. 6 – 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project.
- F. 2021 SCORE Grant Fund Application. **Resolution No. 2020-118**
- G. MN Lawful Gambling Permit – Neumann’s Bar & Grille. **Resolution No. 2020-119**

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl, 2750 Chisolm Avenue, stated the City Council should have received a newsletter from the City of Maplewood, which includes information regarding a unique method of bulk waste pick-up that is being offered to their citizens at reduced rates with no taxes. He requested that City Staff look into this. He asked whether there is an analysis of the City’s existing trash pick-up service, which has been in place for a year. He noted this is information that should be readily available for residents.

Mr. Schmahl stated the City's weekly email newsletter from October 14, 2020, had a link to the agenda for tonight's City Council meeting. He added he was pleased to see the link come out 2 days early, but the link did not work. He noted this is another disappointment.

Mr. Schmahl stated the City Council addressed signs and setback requirements at their workshop. He added he recently had issues related to Code enforcement and tried unsuccessfully to access the City Code on the City website, although he was able to obtain the City Code. He noted the issue he wanted to review was violations of political signs everywhere, and he has asked City Staff what they plan to do in terms of enforcement.

Mr. Schmahl stated the City Code requires that signs must be placed 10 feet from the right of way and side lot lines. He added his neighbor has over 10 signs in various locations. He noted his neighbor's signs were moved, but other offending signs on Chisholm Avenue were left in place.

Mr. Schmahl stated only 20% of properties in North St. Paul have a sidewalk. He added the narrative should indicate that residential signs are limited to 1 sign for each property's street frontage. He noted the State of Minnesota says you can have as many signs as you want.

Mayor Furlong stated, as discussed at the workshop, the Planning Commission will review the sign Ordinance and provide their feedback and comment. Mr. Schmahl stated it is about time.

Mr. Schmahl stated street cleaning is an issue because people park their cars on the streets. He added cars used to be parked in garages and on driveways, but now street cleaners cannot clean the streets because they have to go around so many cars.

Mr. Duddeck agreed to follow up on Mr. Schmahl's concerns.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Special Assessment Hearing for unpaid bills and authorizing the City of North St. Paul to certify to the County Auditor's Office all unpaid fees.

Mayor Furlong opened the public hearing at 6:43 p.m.

Finance Director Jason Zimmerman reviewed special assessments for unpaid utilities, assessable on residential parcels. He added some parcels that have unpaid nuisance abatements. He noted individuals may pay without penalty at City Hall until November 30, 2020, when they will be turned over to Ramsey County and assessed to property taxes.

Mayor Furlong closed the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

City Attorney Soren Mattick stated all resolutions were covered under one public hearing and can also be covered under one motion.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the following Resolutions:

Resolution No. 2020-120 A Resolution Approving Assessments to Properties For 2019-2020 Nuisance Abatements

Resolution No. 2020-121 Resolution Approving Assessment to Properties for Unpaid Water, Waste Water, Environmental Utility and Recycling for Maplewood Properties

Resolution No. 2020-122 Resolution Approving Assessment to Properties for Unpaid Water, Waste Water, Environmental Utility, Street Lights, Solid Waste and Recycling for North St. Paul Properties.

- B. Senior Living Developments and the Issuance of Senior Living Revenue Bonds by the City of Deephaven, MN and Adoption of a Housing Program Related thereto Under MN Statutes, Chapter 562C, as Amended.

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

Mr. Duddeck reviewed the issuance of senior living revenue bonds by the City of Deephaven and adoption of a related housing program.

Tim Eppler stated the portfolio will be operated under the name Suite Living and involves 5 existing properties as well as 5 additional properties to be developed. He added Suite Living is already engaged to continue as the operator. He noted the use of bonds would complete the acquisition.

Mr. Duddeck stated this transaction has no financial impact on the City of North St. Paul.

Mayor Furlong closed the public hearing at 6:50 p.m.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-123 Giving Approval to a Proposed Housing Program and the Issuance by City of the Deephaven, Minnesota of its Senior Living Revenue Bonds (State Holdings of Minnesota LLC Project) Series 2020.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Purchase Agreement with the owner of 2711 Helen Street

Mr. Duddeck reviewed a proposed purchase agreement for purchase of property at 2711 Helen Street N, which adjoins the student build housing site at 2487 19th Avenue. He added this purchase will facilitate construction of the new home at the site.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-125 Authorizing Purchase of Property from 2711 Helen Street N to Accommodate Construction of the Development of Student Build Home At 2487 19th Avenue E.

- B. Uptown Commons Final Plat

Ms. Perdu reviewed a request for approval of the final plat for a mixed-use development. She added the site plan was originally approved in July 2019, and parcels on the south end must be rezoned to Mixed Use-1. A remaining condition is that the existing lots be combined into one parcel and the right-of-way vacated.

Ms. Perdu stated the request meets all zoning requirements and has been reviewed by the City Engineer. She added City Staff recommends approval of the final plat.

On motion by Council Member Walczak, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-126 Approving Final Plat for Property at 2546 and 2554 5th Avenue E.

- C. Land Sale with Development Co, LLC

Mr. Duddeck reviewed a purchase agreement between the City and the apartment complex developer. He added several parcels need to be included in the agreement to facilitate development of the site, and the developer will be able to start work early.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-127 Approving Land Sale Between City of North St. Paul and North St. Paul Development Company for Development of an 89-Unit Market Rate Apartment Building with Retail Space.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Duddeck expressed his appreciation to the Public Works Department, for their hard work during the recent unexpected early snowfall. He added the first water main break of the season occurred at 15th Avenue and 2nd Street. He noted City Staff is planning a meeting to address issues with road reconstruction in the downtown area as a result of recent snowfall.

Mr. Duddeck stated projects are moving along well, including the downtown building which is formally under construction, and road work that will continue. He added the road work at Anchor North Site continues, and the new storage facility is under construction. He added the Planning Commission will review the Kwik Trip development at their November 2020 meeting, as the developer plans to close on the property prior to the end of the year, with construction starting in Spring 2021. He noted the Anchor View Apartments developer will close on that property around November 1, 2020.

Mr. Duddeck stated the City's Business Grant Program, recently approved by the City Council, is well under way. He added City Staff sent information about the program to 150 mailing addresses and posted program details on the City website and the City's Facebook page. He noted two applications had been received as of last week. The deadline to receive applications is October 30, 2020, with review of applications during the week of November 1, 2020 and a special City Council meeting to review and approve applications on November 10, 2020.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Sonnek stated the Planning Commission's November 5, 2020 meeting will be on Zoom at 6:15 p.m. He added the Kwik Trip development will be discussed.

Council Member Petersen stated the League of Minnesota Cities has been providing information to local cities about the organization, and many cities are experiencing layoffs and budget shortfalls.

Council Member Petersen stated the next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Council Member Petersen stated she serves on the Ramsey County Park & Recreation Commission, and restrictions have been placed on how many people can attend hockey games.

Council Member Peterson expressed her appreciation to the Legion Auxiliary for their support for Homes for Heroes. She added the Legion also intends to assemble more tote bags for veterans, containing necessary household items.

Mayor Furlong stated he has received many calls from residents asking how they can donate items to Homes for Heroes. Mr. Duddeck stated the house in North St. Paul is fully furnished, but there are other opportunities to support Homes for Heroes. He added City Staff will try to set something up to be able to accept donations.

Council Member Thorsen stated the October 13, 2020, Economic Development Authority (EDA) meeting was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Business Association met recently at the American Legion, at which a presentation was given on the business grants opportunity. He added the presentation was live-streamed by City Staff on the City's You Tube channel, and information has been added to the City website.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Sonnek urged residents to get out and vote on November 3, 2020. He added he is pleased with the variety of City Council candidates, and the level of involvement.

Council Member Sonnek asked whether the City Council's workshop meetings are being recorded and broadcast online. Mr. Duddeck confirmed that workshop meetings are being shown on the City website. He added City Staff are working to ensure that all City meetings will be made available on the City's You Tube channel.

Council Member Walczak wished everyone a safe Halloween.

Mayor Furlong asked whether there will be a pumpkin drop this year. Council Member Walczak stated she is not sure, but she will look into it.

Council Member Petersen urged residents to get out and vote, and best of luck to candidates. She wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

Council Member Thorsen stated, at the last City Council meeting, he mentioned an email regarding a meeting in Oakdale to which he was invited. He added the meeting was cancelled.

Council Member Thorsen stated, with regard to Mr. Schmahl's comments, there should be a way City can notify residents that street parking will be prohibited on days that the streets will be cleaned. He added online notifications about street cleaning could be sent to residents, but that would only reach people who subscribe to City notifications. He noted signs can be placed on the street before street sweeping takes place. He noted Mr. Schmahl had a good point on this issue.

Council Member Thorsen stated he received the same notification from Maplewood that Mr. Schmahl referred to, with prices that reflect a 20% discount from contracted prices, and no added tax. He added it would not be possible for a City to arbitrarily rule not to collect taxes on this type of service.

Council Member Thorsen stated, with regard to Council Member Sonnek's comment regarding Zoom meetings, City Council Workshop meetings are recorded and uploaded to the City website. He added the City Council has had informal discussions but not taken formal action on this issue. He noted he supports an official City policy requiring the recording and broadcasting of all City meetings to be shown online.

Mr. Duddeck stated the City has its own You Tube channel which provides a forum for broadcasting meetings. He added the only challenge is when meetings, like the Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, are held in parks or out in the field. He noted they will need to be recorded in the field and made available to the public.

Council Member Thorsen reiterated his support for a policy to make all City meetings accessible, including those that are held in City parks.

Mayor Furlong thanked residents for the patience and understanding regarding ongoing projects in and around the City in 2020. He added there have been a lot of construction projects, Xcel Energy projects,

and complications due to early winter weather. He noted the number of Covid-19 cases are increasing, and it is hitting closer to home than before.

Mr. Duddeck agreed, adding stress and mental health issues are critical right now. He urged anyone who is having mental health issues to reach out and ask for help if they need it.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Walczak, Seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

/s/ Scott A. Duddeck, City Manager / Clerk