

**City of North Saint Paul
December 15, 2020
Adopted Regular City Council Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:34 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 Engineer Morgan Dawley, Finance Director Jason Zimmerman, Fire Chief Jason Mallinger, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk Jennie Kloos.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

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

V. PRESENTATIONS

Holiday Lights Awards

Mayor Furlong welcomed Brett Garry from the Business Association, the co-sponsors of the North St. Paul Hometown Holiday Lights Contest. He added prizes will be awarded of \$100 for the first prize winner and \$50 for the second prize winner.

Brett Garry stated the inaugural Holiday Lights Contest was a big success, with over 20 participants, and the lights displays were enjoyed by many residents. He added the contest was a lot of fun, and the Business Association hopes to continue to grow the contest over the coming years.

Mr. Garry stated the Hometown Holiday Lights Contest winners in the residential division are: Second Place winner: Samantha Aswell, 2727 1st Avenue E; and First Place winner: Jannie Baltes, 2883 Lake Boulevard.

Mayor Furlong stated awards will be delivered to the first and second prize winners.

Mr. Garry stated the City Staff's best lights display award goes to Jayme Wardell, 2656 3rd Avenue E.

City Manager Duddeck thanked Council Member Thorsen for initiating this program and getting it going. He added it is hoped that the City will continue to do the contest year after year.

Mayor Furlong thanked Council Member Thorsen for his efforts in organizing the contest. He thanked all the volunteer judges, and especially to Mr. Garry. He offered his congratulations to the contest winners, as well as all the contestants.

Mr. Duddeck stated a resident with GIS experience is planning to put together a map of the Holiday Lights contest, which should be published on the City website within the next few days.

Mr. Garry stated he will be reaching out to the three winners by email.

VI. APPROVAL OF 12-01-2020 CONSENT AGENDA (MOTION MISSED)

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, Resolution No. 2020-146 consisting of:

- A. November 10, 2020 Special meeting minutes.
- B. November 12, 2020 Canvassing meeting minutes.
- C. November 17, 2020 workshop meeting minutes.
- D. November 17, 2020 regular meeting minutes.
- E. General accounts payable: \$6,242,227.39
- F. HRA accounts payable: \$56.13
- G. Non-union employee COLA and Wage Adjustment

VII. 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. 2020-147 consisting of:

- A. 12-1-2020 workshop meeting minutes.
- B. 12-1-2020 regular meeting minutes
- C. General accounts payable: \$1,482,105.66
- D. EDA accounts payable: \$167.16
- E. HRA accounts payable: \$446.01
- F. Pay Voucher No. 8 – 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project
- G. 2021 Non-Union Benefits

VIII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl stated the City of Maplewood's newsletter is distributed to North St. Paul residents, and shows their new rates for trash and recycling, including three different container sizes. He added he has been advocating for smaller containers in North St. Paul, and he would really like one now due to winter weather. He noted he called Tennis Sanitation to see if they serve other cities that get different container sizes, and the answer was yes, except for North St. Paul, which has its own cart service. He requested that the City Manager find out how many North St. Paul

residents, like him, would like to have a smaller cart, as maybe there is no demand for it, and the price is the same for all cart sizes.

Mayor Furlong stated he believes City Staff is working on this issue.

Robbie Sivill stated he is a member of the local Boy Scout troop, currently working on his Eagle Award. He added he wants to build a 12-15-foot chimney swift house at Southwood Nature Preserve. He added this would provide a habitat for birds that have been displaced due to closing of chimneys at local schools. He noted he has calculated materials costs at \$610.

Mayor Furlong asked whether Robbie is doing any fundraising. Robbie stated he hopes the Parks & Recreation Department would be able to pay for materials. He added he spoke with Kathy Trundell, who indicated that Parks & Recreation would be able to pay for it. He noted he has not asked the Parks & Recreation Commission yet.

Mayor Furlong asked when the project must be completed. Robbie stated he has to get it done before he turns 18 years old in March 2022.

Mayor Furlong stated it sounds like a great project. He added Robbie will need to talk to the Parks & Recreation Commission about funding. He asked whether the troop could participate and contribute funding.

Robbie's mom stated costs are mostly covered by fundraising. Council Member Sonnek stated some type of fundraising could be done in conjunction with the Eagle Scout Troop. Robbie agreed.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Parks & Recreation Commission should have funds to cover this project, and it is a great cause. He added he would be willing to participate in the fundraising through a donation by his business. He noted he would support a motion for preliminary approval of funding for Robbie's project.

Mayor Furlong stated there is a process for Scouts to follow, and Robbie should make his request to the Parks & Recreation Commission first.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff will follow up with the Parks & Recreation Commission to have Robbie's project added to an upcoming Commission Agenda.

Mayor Furlong stated Robbie has plenty of time to complete this project. He offered his congratulations on all his hard work in working towards Eagle Scout status, which is something he will have for the rest of his life.

IX. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no scheduled hearings.

X. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. 2021 City Council Meeting Calendar

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-149 to approve the 2021 City Council Meeting Calendar.

B. Fire Relief Association Pension Increase

Mr. Duddeck stated the Fire Relief Association is requesting an increase in member pensions from \$5,200 to \$5,400. He added the last time this request was made was January 2017. He noted the pension is a valuable tool for recruitment and retention for the Fire Department.

Fire Chief Jason Mallinger stated the increase will help with recruitment and make it easier to keep firefighters. He added the increase to \$5,400 would be effective January 1, 2021.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-150 authorizing Fire Fighter pensions increase from \$5,200 to \$5,400 per year.

C. 2021 Municipal Fee Schedule and Utility Rate Schedule, Adoption of Ordinance No. 794

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the proposed 2021 Municipal Fee Schedule and Utility Rate Schedule, Adopt Ord 794.

Discussion during the motion: Council Member Thorsen stressed the importance of having discussions about these funds early in the year, even though there are no increases, and having budget discussions in a workshop setting. He stated perhaps a budget schedule or calendar could be adopted.

D. 2021 Non-Levy Final Budget Approval

Mr. Zimmerman stated the 2021 non-levy supported funds for City operations were reviewed earlier at the City Council work session.

On motion by Council Member Walczak, seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-151 approving 2021 Non-Levy Final Budget.

E. Kwik Trip Extension

Mr. Duddeck stated the Kwik Trip developer's due diligence process ended two weeks ago. He added an extension is requested as a formality to stay concurrent with the current contract, and extend the due diligence period to December 18, 2020, with a close date of December 22, 2020.

Council Member Thorsen requested clarification regarding why the due diligence cannot be extended to the end of 2020. Mr. Duddeck stated the due diligence period is necessary because if there is something found, there would be no time for the City to react.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2020-152 an Amendment to Contract for Private Development with Kwik Trip, Inc.

F. Second Amendment to Purchase Agreement for Anchor View Apartments

Mr. Duddeck stated the City Council recently extended the closing date for the Anchor View Apartments property to December 17, 2020, but that will not take place due to financing and appraisal work. He added the close date is proposed to be extended to on or before January 29, 2021.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 2020-153 approving a Second Amendment to Contract for Private Development.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Duddeck stated the Uptown Commons Project is still under construction. 7th Avenue had to be closed from Margaret to Helen Streets during the day due to safety issues. He added concrete barriers will be placed near parking stalls to designate construction areas and keep the roads open and uninterrupted.

Mr. Duddeck stated the Kwik Trip project construction will begin in the spring, and Anchor View Apartments will begin construction after their close date.

Mr. Duddeck stated road construction will continue in the spring, in development areas. There will be temporary asphalt on the sidewalk throughout the winter and spring. Mayor Furlong stated he is excited to open the road and see the buildings taking shape.

Duddeck expressed his appreciation to the Electric Department for getting streetlights back up on the north side of the street and at corners.

Mayor Furlong requested an update on the History Cruzers for next summer. Mr. Duddeck stated there have been no updates, but everyone is waiting for things to return to normal. He added, in any case, construction in the downtown area can be worked around the car show.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Sonnek stated the Planning Commission's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 7, 2021, at 6:15 p.m.

Council Member Petersen stated the Ramsey County League of Local Government's recent meeting featured an election summary by Hamline Professor David Schulz. She added Minnesota led the nation with a 79% voter turnout, and an 80% voter turnout in Ramsey County, which is an all-time high. She noted the League of Minnesota Cities will meet on Thursday via zoom, beginning with a program for new members.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Economic Development Authority (EDA) met last Tuesday, December 8, 2020, to review ongoing development project updates, as well as discussion regarding

procedures for businesses transferring ownership. He added K&J Catering was specifically mentioned. He noted Mayor Furlong or Mr. Duddeck may wish to follow up with the EDA to confirm that they are in communication with the Planning Commission, as well as reaching out to local businesses who received CARES Act funding as a follow-up.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Sonnek wished everyone a Happy Holidays.

Council Member Walczak wished everyone a very merry and blessed Christmas.

Council Member Petersen expressed her thanks to residents who put up their beautiful holiday lights, which has been very nice, and she has really enjoyed it.

Council Member Petersen thanked Rachel Thompson who provided support for 37 families as part of the Christmas Tree project. She thanked City Manager Duddeck for his support for this effort. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

Council Member Thorsen thanked everyone who participated in the holiday lights competition. He added he hopes it will continue to grow and expand over the years. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Happy Holidays

Mayor Furlong stated the Santa and the North St. Paul Snow Man drive-by event is scheduled for Saturday December 19, 2020 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Casey Lake, and both the Fire and Police Departments will be represented there. He added this has been a difficult year, and he hopes this fun event will bring everyone together.

Mayor Furlong expressed his appreciation to Council Members Sonnek and Walczak for their years of dedication and service to the City of North St. Paul. He stated Council Member Sonnek has been an important part of the City Council, putting people at ease and providing thoughtful ideas and perspectives, and he will be missed. He added he hopes both Council Members Sonnek and Walczak will be able to stay involved in some way.

Council Member Petersen expressed her appreciation for Council Member Sonnek's measured, intelligence approach to issues, as well as his positive attitude. She wished him well in his retirement from the City Council.

Council Member Petersen stated she will miss Council Member Walczak, who has been a mentor for her, and a lot of good work has been done during her 20 years of service.

Council Member Thorsen thanked Council Members Sonnek and Walczak for their dedicated service and commitment to North St. Paul. He stated Council Member Sonnek brings an articulate, well-spoken manner well thought-out ideas that strengthen the deliberations of the City Council. He added that will definitely be missed at the Planning Commission, to which Council Member Sonnek serves as Liaison.

Councilmember Thorsen stated Council Member Walczak has a positive approach to controversial topics and issues, and she will be greatly missed. He added he appreciates the time she has spent

with him, discussing issues and having phone conversations, which led to some good decision-making.

Mr. Duddeck stated he concurs with all that has been said about Council Members Sonnek and Walczak. He added Council Member Sonnek's professionalism, thoughtfulness, and graciousness has been much appreciated. He noted he cannot say enough to express his gratitude to Council Member Sonnek for his work on the City Council.

Mr. Duddeck stated Council Member Walczak has served on the City Council for 20 years and has guided the City Council and will influence future City Councils to come in a positive way. He thanked her for her service to the community of North St. Paul.

Council Member Sonnek thanked Mayor Furlong, who has grown into the role of Mayor and has done a fantastic job on top of his many years as a Council Member. He added he is pleased with the work of the City Manager in his role, and he has been a great fit for the City. He thanked the rest of the City Council, as well as City Staff and most of all, the residents of North St. Paul. He noted he has appreciated having the privilege and opportunity to serve the City in this way.

Council Member Walczak stated it has been a gift to work with Mayor Furlong, and there have been wonderful times on the City Council. She added it has been a real honor to work with City Manager Duddeck as well, and to serve the City for as long as she did, and to see so many wonderful things happen in the City.

Mayor Furlong stated he will present plaques to both Council Members Sonnek and Walczak expressing gratitude and appreciation for their leadership and dedication; to Council Member Sonnek for his term from June 16, 2015 – December 31, 2020; and Council Member Walczak from January 1, 2001 – December 31, 2020.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

City Council Member Jan Walczak called for a motion to adjourn.

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 7:43 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

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