

**City of North Saint Paul
January 19, 2021
Adopted 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 Cole
Council Member Wong
Mayor Furlong

Staff: City Manager Scott Duddeck, Finance Director Jason Zimmerman, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk Jennie Kloos, Communications Consultant Kari Erpenbach.

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

There were no presentations.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Thorsen requested that the following items be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed under City Business: Item B (General Accounts Payable) and Item D (2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project – Pay Voucher #9).

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, as amended, Resolution No. 2020-008 consisting of:

- A. January 5, 2021 regular meeting minutes.
- B. General accounts payable: \$4,710,256.45. **Moved to City Business**
- C. HRA accounts payable: \$107.39.
- D. 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project – Pay Voucher #9. **Moved to City Business**
- E. CSAH 68 (McKnight Road) Intersection Improvements Project – Pay Voucher #7

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl stated he agrees with a recent workshop discussion regarding City Council meeting agendas that have been amended. He added there is no way of knowing whether the version you are using is the current and updated Agenda. He is noted, for this particular meeting, there are four versions of the agenda.

Mr. Schmahl stated he recently saw a Public Works skid-steer removing snow near the electric transformers on Chisholm Avenue. He added, as usual, they ignored the fire plug. He noted he agrees that removal of snow from the transformers is important, but the fire plugs should be cleared as well. He noted it has been three years that he has been bringing this issue to the City Council.

Mr. Duddeck stated there have been discussions with Public Works staff about snow removal in that area. He agreed to follow up on that right away.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Body Worn Cameras

Mr. Duddeck reviewed the proposed body-worn camera policy, which was initiated and produced by the League of Minnesota Cities and vetted by many communities and agencies. He added the League has provided recommendations for following procedures and policies and a review group comprised of City Staff and Mayor Furlong met 3-4 times to review the recommended policy. He noted the review group recommends consideration and adoption of the policy after a public hearing is held.

Mr. Duddeck stated one public comment was received after the public hearing notice was published.

Mr. Duddeck stated the body-worn camera policy and new technology will be a significant improvement for the community, and it will be advantageous for the Police Department to have the equipment available for Officer use.

Mayor Furlong opened the public hearing.

Mayor Furlong read a letter from Rita During, 2736 Chisholm Avenue, that stated “I am glad to hear that North St. Paul Police Officers will have body cameras. I hope that the rules will require that they be on when the Officer is on duty. On more than off would be best. I am sure the Police Department wants to serve our community to the best of their ability. Having body cameras on while they are on duty will best serve the Officer and the public.”

Police Chief Tom Lauth stated body-worn cameras are a tool that the City’s Police Officers have wanted for a long time, as it provides multiple benefits to the Officers as well as the community. He thanked Mr. Duddeck for his leadership in getting to this point. He added 2020 was a difficult year, and this new technology will be a tool to help the Police Department bridge their relationship with the community, as well as provide transparency, and give the public confidence in law enforcement. He noted he looks forward to being able to implement the policy, procure equipment, and get training for the Officers.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff and the review committee recommend that the City Council adopt the body-worn camera policy and instruct City Staff to move forward as soon as possible with procurement of equipment.

Mayor Furlong asked when the cameras will be in place and in use. Mr. Duddeck stated he is unsure about the equipment delivery time, but he would guess approximately 3 months. He added there will be a period of required training.

Council Member Wong thanked Police Chief Lauth and the committee for taking the time to review this policy. She added she has many questions. She asked what how the Police Chief or Chief's designee could supersede the policy, how that would be implemented, and what discretion would be used.

Chief Lauth stated that clause relates to emergency operations, when Officers may need to use discretion regarding whether to turn on the camera rather than keeping the camera on at all times. He added a superior may give specific direction to an Officer to use a camera properly or for a temporary time period to ensure the policy is being followed.

Mr. Duddeck stated there might be a case where adjustments to the policy will be needed, depending upon the type of equipment, related to footage documentation and retention. He added these types of changes would not be significant.

Council Member Wong expressed concern that there is ambiguity within the policy. She added it would be helpful to determine these different types of scenarios to provide clarity. She asked whether every Officer would receive training, what is included in the training, and whether training is provided by the manufacturer.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff works with vendors to ensure that supervisors are trained in the use of body-worn cameras. He added supervisors would then reach out to the rest of the department to provide instruction and training. He noted this has been the process with other new equipment procurement.

Chief Lauth confirmed the equipment vendor will determine what type of training will be necessary. Supervisors and Officers will work with trainers to ensure the cameras are being used correctly. He added appropriate training will be vital to ensure the greatest opportunity for the success of the new system.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff has many of these same questions but wanted to bring this to the City Council to move it forward as quickly as possible. He added additional review and policy updates can be completed by City Staff depending upon the vendor and brought back to the City Council.

Council Member Wong requested clarification regarding "Use and Documentation", Section E, which classifies public data. She asked whether there will be an opportunity to collect more qualitative data. She noted there are seven different types of evidence listed. She asked whether there is a way to combine these classifications to provide more clear data on what kind of incidences or evidence are being reviewed.

Mr. Duddeck stated the seven different types of evidence will be a drop-down menu for Officers, so they can identify types of evidence for data collection purposes.

Mr. Duddeck asked whether Council Member Wong is asking whether there is a way to merge the two types of data together. Council Member Wong confirmed this, adding documentation would ensure that the type of evidence would then be available along with the recording.

Mr. Duddeck stated he believes the data is already partnered together. He added he does not know enough about the camera system, but City Staff will continue to learn through this process. He noted the proposed policy was taken directly from the League of Minnesota Cities, including their requirements for the process. He noted City Staff have made any changes to the League's document.

Council Member Wong asked whether there will be any record of when videos are edited, altered or erased. She asked if there are data security safeguards, and whether copies of original documentation are kept. Chief Lauth stated, having spoken to other Police Chiefs, this policy was adopted years ago by the League of Minnesota Cities. He added original recordings would stay intact, showing dates and times of anyone who has accessed the recordings. He added systems are safeguarded and the ability to delete recordings will be very limited. He noted Minnesota data practices requirements will need to be fulfilled.

Mr. Duddeck confirmed this, adding the official recording will have a record of Officer's credentials, and any edits or changes will be documented.

Council Member Wong asked why 90 days or 6 years were chosen in terms of data retention practices.

Mr. Duddeck stated the time frames were included in the original League policy. He added City Staff can review this issue to see if the time periods should be changed, depending upon media storage requirements. He noted, of the two proposed vendors, one is cloud-based and the other is a local server.

Chief Lauth confirmed this, adding State data retention laws address minimum requirements. He added the City does not have a choice regarding the length of time that data must be retained.

Council Member Thorsen stated he appreciates the great questions and concerns from Council Member Wong, especially the issue of whether the Police Chief can supersede policy. He added he shares these concerns. He noted there could be scenarios, after the policy is enacted, where orders would be given to an Officer not to record an interaction, or to always record interactions.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether the policy provides any notification for Officers that the policy can be superseded by the orders of the Police Chief or City Manager. He asked whether notification is given to the City Council or legal staff to ensure that they are aware of the policy's requirements for superseding orders.

Mr. Duddeck stated the policy does not address whether the Chief has the authority to supersede the policy. He added he is hearing from the City Council that this is an area of concern that should be reviewed more thoroughly. He noted the intention is to make adjustments to the policy based

on the feedback and comments of the City Council, as those same comments and concerns will probably be heard from members of the public.

Council Member Thorsen stated he is disappointed with the complete lack of input from the public on this issue. He added he assumes this is an issue that residents will want to be informed about. He noted he is glad the City is moving in this direction and taking these steps, but there is also a lot going on behind the scenes, and it will be vital to ensure that things are being done correctly. He noted the more the City can do now, the better.

Council Member Thorsen stated, with regard to training, there should be a subsection or amendment to the policy to address what information Officers can give to members of the public about their training and the equipment. He added there is probably a written policy that Officers must review as part of their training, and this should be accessible to the general public. He noted the modification of data is another issue.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether there will be safeguards in place to ensure that uploaded data is not tampered with, edited or deleted, and that the City can prove that the data is secure and original.

Council Member Thorsen stated it would be a good idea to communicate to the general public that they should assume they are being recorded when they interact with Law Enforcement. He added he did not see anything in the policy that would require Officers to notify citizens that they are being recorded.

Chief Lauth stated the Officers do not have an obligation to inform people that they are being recorded. He added, with regard to erasing data, it would be extremely hard to do, and vendors are able to address these types of concerns. He noted State statute requires auditing by an outside firm to be provided to the State on an annual basis.

Mr. Duddeck stated the equipment that is proposed for purchase meets all federal Law Enforcement standards and is a high-quality product. He added he has noted all the concerns and comments that have been expressed by the City Council.

Council Member Wong stated public transparency and evidence are important if there is an incident. She added she looked at police model options, and asked for clarification, regarding allowing officers to make a decision to turn their camera on, or whether it is on all the time, for the sake of efficiency. She asked what the thought process might be behind that. She noted the two options – leave the camera on all the time or turn the camera on if there is something worth recording – gives the officers discretion to make the decision. She asked what the trade-off would be, in terms of efficiency.

Mr. Duddeck stated there will be situations where an officer would not want to have their camera on, for instance, at a National Night Out party. He added that would be a casual encounter with residents, and not a situation to be recorded. He noted there will be 5-10 seconds of recording before recording is initiated.

Chief Lauth confirmed this, adding the cameras will have a “reach-back” feature, which is also available in the squad cars. He added, as for recording all the time, there are privacy issues, and some residents may not want to talk to Officers if they know they are being recorded. He noted

cameras provide transparency, but they might be considered intimidating, as they are creating public data.

Council Member Wong stated, under “Purpose”, the policy indicates that things can happen fast and evolve quickly. She asked whether Officers will really have the time to make discretionary decisions at the drop of a hat.

Mr. Duddeck stated the cameras have a large power button and they are easy to activate. He added the type of activation will depend upon the type of equipment.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether there is any indication, like a sound or light, when a body-worn camera is on. He asked whether an Officer could begin recording after a conversation has started. He stated many of these questions may have been addressed by the committee. He asked whether the committee meetings were recorded, and whether minutes were taken at the meetings. He noted this information should be made available to the public.

Mr. Duddeck stated the committee meetings were conducted via Zoom, and they were recorded. He added the meetings were short, work group meetings, and will not be ongoing. He noted after the recommendations were made, the group was basically released.

Council Member Thorsen stated the committee meetings were not open to the public. Mr. Duddeck confirmed this. Council Member Thorsen asked whether the policy decision is to keep cameras running all the time and then determine later whether to keep the recording and store it with one of the 7 evidence designations. He asked why the Police Department would want to keep something that is not evidence. He asked whether the cameras in police vehicles are always running. He asked whether there any overlap between the two policies.

Mr. Duddeck stated the body-worn cameras will be integrated with the in-car cameras and linked in the same system.

Council Member Thorsen stated his original question was how officers will know if their camera is on.

Mr. Duddeck stated that would be an operational question that City Staff can get the answer to. He added it will depend upon the equipment.

Council Member Thorsen stated he understands that anything can be videotaped or recorded, but this is a new system, and all the City’s Officers will be using this system. He added this will be different for members of the public and may discourage some people from interacting with the police.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether officers will be obligated to confirm when someone asks them if they are being recorded.

Chief Lauth stated, according to the policy, they are not required to advise someone that they are being recorded. He added Police Officers will be advised to respond and confirm that they are wearing a body camera and it is recording.

Council Member Thorsen stated the City and City Council should support this policy as it is a good thing, and it will improve public safety. He added he understands there will be some policy revisions down the road. He stressed the importance of reaching out to the general public and being proactive in providing information about these changes and the positive aspects of this new policy. He noted he would lean towards supporting having cameras always on, as that will eliminate uncertainties and questions.

Mr. Duddeck stated the concern related to having cameras recording all the time is the community relations aspect of policing. He added an officer may stop in at a downtown business to say hello and check in, and it would not be necessary to have the camera on. He stressed the importance of relying on officer instinct and timing.

Mr. Duddeck stated, as referenced in the email from Ms. During, residents are happy to see that this is going to be done, and cameras “on more than off would be best”.

Council Member Thorsen stated, in his experience as a Fire Fighter, the Police Department are often called upon to respond to medical calls. He asked how residents will be made aware that Officers could be entering their home with a body-worn camera. He asked what protections individuals will have if they seek medical attention but are worried about a Police Officer with a camera entering their home. He noted this might discourage people who need assistance from calling 9-1-1.

Chief Lauth stated privacy issues are of great concern, related to having a camera on all the time. He added there are some protections related to privacy issues.

Mr. Duddeck stated recordings can be viewed as a tool, as the City works toward getting the policy in place. He added the concerns raised by the City Council are valid, including when to record, giving officers the flexibility to decide when to record, and ensure continued public input and interaction on this policy. He noted there will be changes that will need to be made moving forward, and operational reviews, as well as gauging public response.

Mayor Furlong closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Body Worn Cameras

Mr. Duddeck requested City Council consideration of adoption of the proposed body-worn camera policy, and authorization to purchase equipment. He added the City Council’s feedback and comments on this issue is very much appreciated and taken to heart. He added it is expected that there will be issues that will arise, and the policy will need to be amended and enhanced and brought back to the City Council for recommended revisions.

Mr. Duddeck stated City staff recommends City Council approval of the body-worn camera policy as reviewed with approval to pursue acquisition of equipment.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-009 Approving the Body-Worn Camera Policy for Law Enforcement.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff will continue to update the City Council regarding equipment and training processes, so they can be a part of it and also to be as public and transparent as possible. He added the possibility of body-worn cameras has been discussed at the City level for many years, and City Staff are proud of the successful efforts to move forward with this program.

B. Anchor View LLC – Third Amendment to Contract for Private Development

Mr. Duddeck reviewed the third amendment to the contract for private development for the Anchor View Apartments, the first two of which were related to closing dates. He added the third amendment is related to the TIF agreement. He noted the contract will be amended to reflect that a partial value will be in place in 2021 with full value for taxation in 2023.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-010 Approving the Third Amendment for Contract for Private Development for Anchor View LLC.

C. Approval of Collateral Assignment and Subordination of Contract

Mr. Duddeck reviewed closing documents approving a subordination agreement related to the Old City Hall site, with the lender, Old National Bank. He added he is pleased that Old National is the lender, and also the lender on the downtown City Hall site development, as it is a branch of that bank that is located in the community and financing these two large projects. He noted this shows their commitment to the community.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-011 Approving Collateral Assignment and Subordination of Contract for Private Development.

D. 2021 Committee Appointments

Mr. Duddeck reviewed the proposed 2021 Committee appointments, which are all re-appointments:

Economic Development Authority (EDA) – Chair Robert Dew

Parks & Recreation Commission – Sara Zahradka

Police Civil Service Commission – Robert Engwer, Jr.

Planning Commission – John Monge (appointed to the Commission in 2020, to complete a vacancy that was created)

Mr. Duddeck stated notification was placed on the City website looking for applicants for vacancies on the Planning Commission and Parks & Recreation Commission. Applications were received and candidates selected by Mayor Furlong after an interview process with Mr. Duddeck.

Mr. Duddeck stated 5 Planning Commission applications were received from Andrew Wise, Jason Nordby, Erik Brenna, Wayne Horan and James Schmidt. He added Mayor Furlong recommends the appointment of Andrew Wise and Eric Brenna.

Mr. Duddeck stated 3 Parks & Recreation Commission applications were received from Arthur Alvarez, Cassidy Schweer and Sarah Morrison. He added Mayor Furlong recommends appointment of Arthur Alvarez.

Mr. Duddeck stated, with regard to the EDA, two residents, Kevin Fuller and Archie Vickerman, have been attending EDA meetings for two years but were never formally sworn in as members. He added Mayor Furlong recommends appointment of Kevin Fuller and Archie Vickerman to the EDA. He noted the new term for EDA appointments will be 3 years, rather than 6 years, to be consistent with other Commissions.

Council Member Thorsen stated he does not have any objections to the appointments. He asked how Mayor Furlong conducted the selection process, and what criteria he used to choose the recommended candidates. He expressed concern that the City Council is expected to vote on this issue without being involved in the process.

Mayor Furlong stated he conducted a review of the candidates and interviews with Mr. Duddeck's assistance and determined the candidates who were the best fit for the position.

Mr. Duddeck stated these recommendations have historically been made by the Mayor, and this was the first time that City Staff advertised and received applications for the positions. He added applications were reviewed and candidates selected for interview, and the strongest candidates are being recommended for City Council approval.

Council Member Thorsen stated he understands these appointments are traditionally made by the Mayor, with City Council approval. He added his objection is that there should be more transparency about how and why these decisions were made. He noted it would be helpful for the City Council to review applicant documentation and forms that, in the past, were included in the meeting packet. He expressed the importance of involving the City Council since they are being asked to approve the appointments.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether the Environmental and Design Commissions, currently on hiatus, will continue to remain on hiatus. He asked how long hiatus should last. He noted he asks for the status of this every year.

Mayor Furlong stated this is an issue that the City Council can review at an upcoming workshop or retreat. He added interviews were conducted with every applicant.

Council Member Thorsen stated he does not object to the candidates, but rather the process. He added the City Council should be involved and have more information if they are required to vote on the candidates. He stressed the importance of clarifying roles and getting people engaged and involved.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with Council Members Petersen, Cole, Wong, and Mayor Furlong voting aye, Council Member Thorsen voting nay (4-1), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-012 Approving Appointments to Commissions and Authorities for 2021.

E. Gambling Permit – Richardson Elementary PTA

Chief Lauth reviewed a request for gambling permit for Richardson Elementary PTA, which is a local permit and does not require State approval. The PTA was unable to have their event in 2020, but they are applying again this year in the hopes that they will be able to pull it off with Covid-related restrictions.

Chief Lauth stated City Staff recommends City Council approval of the gambling permit for Richardson Elementary PTA.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-015 Approving a Local Lawful Charitable Gambling Application for Richardson Elementary School Parents Support Group.

F. General Accounts Payable – Consent Agenda Item B

Council Member Thorsen stated he requested that this item be removed from the Consent Agenda for additional discussion and review. He added the City Council has expressed concern in the past that the City credit card statement is not always included in General Accounts Payable. He noted the City Council was told the statement would be included.

Finance Director Jason Zimmerman stated there is a process in place, but City Staff failed to meet the deadline for this meeting. He added it is his responsibility, and this was not done. He noted he will address the issue and adhere to the deadline.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff is planning to use Amazon Business platform that will eliminate credit card statements. He added Amazon Business will invoice the City for purchases with 55-day terms. He noted that will eliminate the numerous Amazon credit card charges.

Council Member Thorsen stressed the importance of following the General Accounts Payable policy. He added everyone who has a City credit card must submit receipts to the Finance Department on a timely basis. He noted this seems like a routine issue.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-013 Approving General Accounts Payable of \$4,710,256.45.

G. Utility Project Pay Voucher #9 (Consent Agenda Item D)

Council Member Thorsen stated he requested that this item be removed from General Accounts Payable for additional discussion and review. He added the pay voucher is on page 29 of 94 in the Council packet, although the pdf says it is 105 pages. He noted he has brought up this issue before, regarding changes to contracts that have already been approved by the City Council. He noted the City policy states that any contract changes, up to a certain amount, require City Council approval.

Council Member Thorsen stated he understands that construction projects can have unexpected issues. He added, according to the change order on page 39 of the packet, this work was already done before City Staff brought it back for City Council approval, and now it must be paid. He noted that is not correct procedure and policy, as any changes should be discussed by the City Council.

Council Member Thorsen stated the City is required by State statute to choose the lowest responsible bid, and the addition of changes orders could create a situation where the bid that is accepted is no longer the lowest bid. He added the City Council must hold contractors, engineers, and ourselves accountable. He noted, in future, City Staff should follow established policy, which could mean a special meeting of the City Council.

Council Member Thorsen stated he has no intention of voting against the item; however, in future any major contract changes should be reviewed by the City Council before they can occur.

Mr. Duddeck stated this is something that could be discussed at a workshop or retreat. He added Council Member Thorsen is correct, and this type of change happens all the time on these projects. He noted he assumes there will be additional costs with all the work that was completed in Fall 2020. He noted the City Council should review the policy for change orders.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-014 Approving the 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project Pay Voucher #9.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Duddeck stated closing on the Anchor View Apartments is pending for January 27, 2021, with construction to begin immediately. He added that action will fulfill redevelopment of all three sites at Anchor Block. He thanked the City Council for their support and diligence in bringing the project through to redevelopment. He noted this will be a quite a transformation and will bring over 200 housing units and many new families into the community. He noted this is a proud moment in the redevelopment of North St. Paul.

Mr. Duddeck stated the former City Hall site redevelopment work continues, and traffic signals are now in place and operational. He added the developer hopes to get started with construction of a model home by February 1, 2021. He noted a non-matching grant opportunity for street improvements in the downtown area is being considered.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Hall will be open to the public on February 1, 2021. In-person City Council meetings will resume in City Hall that week, with social distancing in Council Chambers and Zoom online capacity for people to join in. He noted 1.5 City Staff members are still working remotely.

Mr. Duddeck stated he would like to confirm the date of February 23, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. for a City Council retreat. He added the retreat will probably be in the training room. The City Council agreed.

Mr. Duddeck stated formal photographs of the City Council will be taken on February 2, 2021 beginning at 5:00 p.m. prior to the City Council's workshop.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Cole stated he would like to welcome newly appointed Parks & Recreation Commissioner Alvarez. He added he is excited to have him on the Commission, and to meet him

on the Commission's next Zoom meeting on January 27, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. He noted this meeting will include consideration of an outdoor recreation matching grant program for parks programming and development.

Council Member Wong stated the next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. on Zoom. She added she looks forward to welcoming the new Planning Commissioners.

Mr. Duddeck stated an additional informal Planning Commission meeting is being scheduled for January 28, 2021. He added, in addition to a new City Council liaison, Council Member Wong, there are 2 new Commissioners as well as a new contract City Planner from WSB. He noted there is a fair amount of turnover, and an informal meeting will be helpful in preparation for the February 4, 2021 meeting, as referenced by Council Member Wong.

Council Member Petersen stated she plans to attend the League of Minnesota Cities Board meeting on Thursday January 22, 2021. She added a Metropolitan Cities Zoom meeting is coming up regarding the current legislative session, and several lawmakers will be in attendance. She noted she participates in a Minnesota Women in City Government networking group, and she has provided the schedule and other information for Council Member Wong.

Council Member Thorsen stated the EDA met on Tuesday January 12, 2021 and appointed Robert Dew as Chair, Kevin Fuller as Vice Chair and Don Jensen as Treasurer. He added there was some discussion about potential development of a downtown parcel that is going into foreclosure, and whether the property would serve a public purpose, potentially including expansion of downtown parking. He noted the EDA recommended that City Staff look into it and bring forward to the City Council for recommendations. He noted the EDA's next meeting will be a Zoom meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of February 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Business Association was unable to meet in December 2020 due to Covid-related restrictions but there are plans to meet at the American Legion on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. with social distancing in place. He added it is hoped that local businesses will be back in attendance, and that local businesses who received CARES grant funding will come to the meetings and get involved.

Mayor Furlong stated Rich McNamara has stepped down from the EDA. He added he brought a wealth of knowledge and support to the EDA for many years.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Cole stated he and Council Member Wong have started the League of Minnesota Cities' Elected Leaders Institute 6-week training program on Zoom, as well as informal individual study. He added he saw Council Member Peterson in the meeting today.

Council Member Wong stated she is participating in League of Minnesota Cities training with Council Member Cole. She added she has been invited to participate in a network of Minnesota elected officials who identify as black, indigenous or person of color. She added the network will meet Friday at 8:30 a.m. and she plans to attend.

Council Member Thorsen stated, to follow up on comments made regarding the clearing of fire hydrants, it is disappointing that this topic gets brought up year after year. He added, as a former Fire Fighter for over 10 years, it is important that fire hydrants are cleared of snow in case of emergency. He noted he hopes this can be resolved, and he asked the City Manager to follow up.

Mr. Duddeck agreed, and stated it is disheartening to hear this happened again. He added he will definitely follow up.

Mayor Furlong stated he plans to attend a live event on Friday, January 23, 2021, when Apollo Heating will be donating a new furnace to a resident who is a veteran. He added the event will be broadcast on Twin Cities Live.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Thorsen, Seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

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