

City of North Saint Paul
February 2, 2021
Adopted Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was conducted in Council Chambers and 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,
Communications Staff Kari Erpenbach, City Attorney Soren Mattick, Deputy Clerk
Jennie Kloos.

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 Items D, E, F and G be removed from the Consent Agenda and added to the Regular Agenda.

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, Resolution No. 2021-017 consisting of:

- A. January 19, 2021 workshop meeting minutes.
- B. January 19, 2021 regular meeting minutes.
- C. January 19, 2021 HRA meeting minutes.
- D. General accounts payable: \$637,031.15. **Moved to City Business**

- E. HRA accounts payable: \$35,478.33. **Moved to City Business**
- F. EDA accounts payable: \$3,589.80. **Moved to City Business**
- G. League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust Municipal Tort Liability Waiver **Moved to City Business**

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl, 2750 Chisholm Avenue, stated there was no audio at the beginning of the workshop.

Mr. Schmahl stated the issue of amended agendas came up again as both of tonight's meeting agendas were amended. He added two items were added to the workshop agenda, at the same time, at the same minute, and the regular meeting agenda was also amended. He noted someone should confirm whether changes are being made and things are going well, because at this time they are not.

Mr. Schmahl stated a footnote should have been added to the regular session agenda to note that Item D was split into three separate agenda items, and that it was a corrected item. He added page 48 of 72 is a landscape-oriented document instead of portrait, like the rest of the packet. He noted this document, a credit card summary, includes a miscellaneous purchase by the City Administrator. He asked whether the item will be updated to indicate what was purchased. He noted he may need to submit a data request to find out about that purchase.

Mayor Furlong stated the issue of meeting agenda changes has been brought up a few times, and City Staff are working on correcting these issues.

Mr. Duddeck stated the item listed under "Miscellaneous", which includes the name of the vendor, is a recurring charge for car wash services for Police and Fire Department vehicles. He agreed to ensure the detailed information is included in the summary on a monthly basis.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no scheduled hearings.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Ordinance Amending North St. Paul City Code Concerning Mayor and Council Salaries

City Attorney Soren Mattick reviewed an amendment to the current Ordinance setting Council Member salaries. He stated Council Member Thorsen wanted to reduce his salary, and the Ordinance amendment is required to reset his salary for the remainder of 2021.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Ordinance establishes City Council and Mayor salaries. He asked whether the default salary that is included in the City budget would be the guiding principle for that decision. Mr. Mattick confirmed this. He added, however, an Ordinance is required.

On motion by Council Member Petersen seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Ordinance No. 795 Amending North St. Paul City Code Concerning Mayor and Council Salaries.

B. 2021 North St. Paul History Cruzers Car Show

Mr. Duddeck reviewed a Memorandum of Agreement between the City of North St. Paul and the History Cruzers Car Show, setting the car show dates from June 4 through September 24, 2021. He stated car show organizers are hoping to move forward with the car show this year, which was cancelled last year. He added the proposed car show dates are extended one week longer than previous years, as it may not be possible for the car show to begin on June 4, 2021. He noted the Agreement includes the use of 7th Avenue to Henry Street rather than Charles Street, so the car show can be relocated as necessary due to continued construction in the downtown area.

Mr. Duddeck stated the proposed Agreement will give the car show organizers the opportunity to plan and publicize the events with City approval, although it is unknown whether the events will occur as planned. He added the cost for City services has increased from \$350 to \$475 per show, as well as \$125 per show during rained out events, to provide and maintain portable restrooms. He noted the proposed Agreement includes provision of City parking lots that will be made available for overflow parking.

Council Member Wong asked what circumstances led to the cancellation of the car show in 2020. Mr. Duddeck stated the City of North St. Paul complied with the Governor's Executive Order related to Covid-19, as well as recommendations for cancelling City events and programs that could cause potential harm to the general public.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution 2021-019 Memorandum of Agreement between the City of North St. Paul and North St. Paul History Cruzers for Friday Night Car Shows.

C. General Accounts Payable

Council Member Thorsen requested clarification regarding the following expense items under General Accounts Payable related to "C03108 Civic Plus"; "Civ Rec Annual Fee 2020 - \$1585.25"; "Civic Annual Fee 2021 - \$4755.75"; and "Civic Clerk Annual Fee - \$9110.64".

Mr. Duddeck stated these expenses are related to Civic Rec, the City's online parks scheduling and programming portal. He added "Civic Annual" is the annual cost for the website, and "Civic Clerk" is a web-based City meetings platform.

Communications Staff Kari Erpenbach stated Civic Rec runs all North St. Paul Parks and Recreation online reservations. She added the item dated 2020 was a contract signed late in 2020 which resulted in significant savings. She noted Civic Rec went live on December 1, 2020.

Council Member Thorsen thanked Mr. Duddeck and Ms. Erpenbach for the clarification.

Council Member Thorsen requested clarification regarding credit card charges on page 45 and 48 of the meeting packet. He added he brought up this issue at the last City Council meeting. He noted City Staff who use a City-issued credit card must provide receipts and submit a form, and that is not happening. He stressed the importance of following the established policy.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-020 General Accounts Payable for \$637,031.15.

D. HRA Accounts Payable

Council Member Thorsen requested clarification regarding an item in HRA Accounts Payable related to new expenses incurred after the \$367,000 appraisal was accepted by the City Council. He asked what have expenses been to date, and whether additional expenses are forthcoming. He stated the building appears to be complete, and a budget has never been provided. He added he is happy to expense details on the report. He added, moving forward with HRA projects, expenses must be held within the adopted budget. He noted he does not feel comfortable moving forward if this continues, and he is apt to vote no for these bills for symbolic reasons. He stressed the importance of having a budget process rather than approving expenses as they arise.

Mr. Duddeck stated, as he mentioned at the last City Council meeting, a full account of project costs and expenses will be provided at the end, and the City will not start another project without advanced budget information.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-021, HRA Accounts Payable for \$35,478.33.

E. EDA Accounts Payable

Council Member Thorsen requested clarification regarding an EDA Accounts Payable item of approximately \$2,000 under “UB November 2020”. He added this item is on page 58 of the meeting packet.

Finance Director Jason Zimmerman stated the code “UB” designates utility bills, in this case for the Lillie Newspapers building. Mr. Duddeck stated utility costs are billed back out to the contractor for the construction of the Uptown Commons building. He added the building is being used as a construction site and the City is reimbursed for utility bills.

Council Member Thorsen asked why this item falls under the EDA budget.

Mr. Duddeck stated an agreement between the EDA and Lillie Newspapers was reached regarding the use of the building. He added this can be changed if the City Council is not comfortable with the arrangement. He noted this item shows up under the EDA Accounts Payable so City Staff can track it, but it is reimbursed by the contractor.

Council Member Thorsen thanked Mr. Duddeck for the clarification.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-022, EDA Accounts Payable for \$3,589.80.

F. League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust Municipal Tort Liability Waiver

Council Member Thorsen stated the Tort Waiver is typically done at the end of the year, so the City is covered for a full year and there is no lapse in coverage. He asked why this item is on tonight's Consent Agenda.

Mr. Duddeck stated approval of the Tort Liability Waiver tonight is in preparation for insurance renewal in May 2021.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve Resolution No. 2021-018, League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust Municipal Tort Liability Waiver.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Duddeck reviewed the land sale of the Anchor development site on Friday, January 29, 2021. He thanked everyone for their commitment to the project. He added M&I Homes are well into their 2nd phase, with homes selling as fast as they are being built. He reviewed the project, including installation of Anchor Drive and traffic signals, dividing parcels for development, and closing on the storage facility and Kwik Trip sites, as well as the Anchor View Apartments. He noted there will be many new families moving into the community.

Mayor Furlong thanked Mr. Duddeck for seeing the projects through to fruition. He added it will be monumental for North St. Paul, especially considering the current pandemic, which has delayed or postponed development in other communities.

Mr. Duddeck stated construction on the 7th Street townhomes will be starting soon, with 18 twin homes to be constructed, as well as 3 single family homes. Building permits have been received and are being reviewed.

Council Member Thorsen thanked Mr. Duddeck for all the work he has done with regard to Anchor site redevelopment. He added support from Ramsey County for the new road and signal was vital, and Mr. Duddeck was instrumental in making that happen. He expressed his gratitude to Mr. Duddeck for taking control of the process and working with his connections at Ramsey County.

Mr. Duddeck stated the City of North St. Paul has had a great relationship with the County Engineer, on the Anchor North project and also future projects.

Mr. Duddeck thanked Communications Staff Kari Erpenbach for her hard work on the City's online presence and web-based programs. He added residents are moving over to the online permitting process without any hesitation, and the program has been a huge success. He noted building permits are now available online.

Ms. Erpenbach stated the website links were switched over on Friday afternoon, and by Monday City Staff were receiving online permit applications. She added City Staff are working to document the process and have received positive comments about how easy the online tool is to use. She noted 90% of the City's permits are now available online.

Mr. Duddeck thanked City Staff for all their hard work in getting the new online permit process up and running. He added customers should contact City Staff with any questions or comments.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Cole stated the first Parks & Recreation meeting of 2021 was held on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, at which the newest Commissioner, Arthur Alvarez, was welcomed. He added the 2021 schedule of events was reviewed, with many cancellations due to the pandemic, including the Fire & Ice event and the Easter Egg Bonanza. He noted Concerts in the Park is still being planned, as well as Trick or Treat Trail in October, pending Covid-related restrictions.

Council Member Cole stated the Parks & Recreation Commission's next meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom and will focus on the Comprehensive Plan and Parks Update Improvement Plan. He added a workshop with the City Council will be planned.

Council Member Wong stated the Planning Commission met on January 28, 2021 for an introductory meeting since there are many new attendees, including herself, the City Planner and two new Commissioners, Andrew Wise and Erik Brenna. She added she looks forward to working with both the new and existing Commissioners. She noted there was a vote to re-elect Elaine Barton as Commission Chair and John Monge as Vice-Chair.

Council Member Wong stated the next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday February 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. She added the meeting start time has been moved to 6:30 p.m. to be consistent with other City meetings.

Council Member Petersen made a statement that was inaudible.

Council Member Thorsen stated the North St. Paul Business Association will meet on Tuesday, February 9, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. at the American Legion in the Back Hall.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Economic Development Authority is scheduled to meet Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. to review operational updates. He added this will be a Zoom meeting that is open to the public.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Wong stated Ramsey County has posted opportunities for small businesses to receive federal funding. This is a good opportunity for eligible small businesses to apply for extra funding.

Council Member Petersen made a statement that was inaudible.

Mayor Furlong stated an introductory meeting was held recently with representatives of the City's nine churches as well as City Staff and the School District to discuss relocation of the food shelf and toy shelf within North St. Paul. Another meeting has been scheduled to continue these efforts.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

- A. The meeting will be closed as permitted by the attorney-client privilege (Minn. Stat. 13D.05, Subd. 3 (b)) to discuss the pending arbitration involving IBEW, Local 160 and North St. Paul.
- B. The meeting will be closed as permitted by section 13D.05, Subdivision 3 (c) to consider offers relating to the City's possible sale or lease of the Community Center Building.

Mayor Furlong recessed the regular meeting to go into closed session at 7:26 p.m.

Mayor Furlong called the closed session to order at 7:35 p.m.

Mayor Furlong adjourned the closed session at 9:15 p.m.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Furlong reconvened the regular meeting at 9:15 p.m.

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Wong, Seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

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