

City of North Saint Paul
June 1, 2021
Approved City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was conducted at City Hall in the Council Chambers, and also via Zoom.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Scott Thorsen
Council Member Candy Petersen
Council Member Lisa Wong
Council Member Tim Cole
Mayor Terry Furlong

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

III. ADOPT AGENDA

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

Council Member Thorsen questioned why there is not an HRA meeting scheduled and that information pertaining to the HRA should be discussed at that meeting.

Mayor Furlong mentioned that he and City Manager Duddeck discussed this and Ramsey County's HRA has a upcoming deadline and looking for an answer to participation soon. Based on feedback at tonight's meeting, if there is no interest, a letter would be sent to Ramsey County stating so. If the majority was supporting this, it would go to tonight's city council meeting looking for approval on a Resolution. An HRA meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

IV. TOPIC(S)

A. Review of North St. Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority and Ramsey County's Request to Levy

City Manager Duddeck commented that the majority of the information on this topic was information that was provided at the previous workshop meeting except for information added that was added today from Council Member Wong.

Mr. Duddeck commented that he contacted the City of St. Paul and was informed that the City of St. Paul unanimously voted to approve the Resolution accepting Ramsey County's request to levy. With the addition that St. Paul would be adding a statement that a minimum of 50% of the dollars levied would go back to the City of St. Paul to be spent on St. Paul projects. Discussion was held on this topic and what would be allocated to the suburbs.

Council Member Wong commented that looking at our Comprehensive Plan, are we reaching our goals addressing affordable housing? According to our Comp Plan, we are currently at 93% of

affordable housing. How do we maintain affordable housing for our residents? Ms. Wong also reviewed the links that she had added to the workshop packet.

Council Member Thorsen stated that he struggles on how government is trying to get involved with housing. And believes that we have other areas within the city to focus on before expanding into other areas outside of the core essential services (such as public safety, infrastructure, and essential operational services within the city).

Council members discussed the options and the general consensus of the City Council is to opt out at this time. City Manager Duddeck will send a letter to Ramsey County stating that the City of North St. Paul will not be participating with the request to levy at this time. No additional action is needed.

B. Purchasing Policy Updates

Accountant Kyle Stasica presented information regarding policy updates that were received as part of auditor recommendations for the 2020 audit. Recommendations included:

- All increases to the contract price, whether through change orders or otherwise, be approved by the City Council; and
- When the City Council approves an increase to a contract price, also consider requiring additional contractor's bonds, and votes to require or waive such bonds.

In addition to auditor recommendations, staff also recommends updates to the policy, for City Council review and feedback:

- All subsequent increases to approved prices are required to go through the same approval process as the original purchase.
- For any approved purchases that have subsequent increases in cost (i.e. change orders), the increases are required to go through the same approval process as the original purchase along with any further approvals required.
- For any increases, such as change orders, to contracts with performance and payment bonds, City Council review is required to determine if additional performance and payment bonds are required. City Council will vote to require or waive such additional bonds.

City Attorney Mattick asked to review on how change orders will be processed and suggested a change to the language as to a clearer reference to refer back to the quick reference guide.

Council Member Thorsen stated that a good way to make audit comments go away is to follow the policies. Mr. Thorsen questioned if there is language within the policy on who has authority to make purchases on behalf of the City. He suggested adopting an amendment to clearly outline that only authorized City personnel could make purchases on City accounts and then further define who is authorized personnel.

Mr. Stasica reviewed the policy and reported that the policy doesn't specifically define who is authorized to make purchases on behalf of the city and who those employees are.

Mr. Duddeck recommended reviewing the authorized purchasing personnel on a regular basis to make sure they are updated at least on an annual basis.

City Attorney Mattick made comment that many cities use a City issued credit card for purchases. Council Member Thorsen suggested all purchasing is moved to City credit card

purchasing, issued to authorized personnel which would eliminate the issue on non-authorized personnel purchasing.

Discussion was also held regarding adding verbiage to the policy regarding City employees purchasing through local vendors to make sure the process is followed correctly and to achieve a balance.

C. CivicClerk Implementation

Communications Consultant Kari Erpenbach gave a review of the next phase if implementation of CivicClerk information software. She stated City Staff is committed to bringing resources together for the City Council and residents. She added elected officials will now have access to the portal, as well as residents who have subscribed to the “notify me” module on the City website.

Ms. Erpenbach encouraged the City Council to reach out to City Staff with questions and ideas. She added she likes being able to tag different elements in the meeting packet for search purposes. She noted it is easier to search and find information. All City meetings will now be generated through CivicClerk.

Ms. Erpenbach stated City Staff are committed to make this work for the City and residents, and are already experiencing ease of use and time savings.

D. City Manager Operational Updates

City Manager Duddeck stated that the Kwik Trip project will be starting soon, but noted they missed installing a fire sprinkler system in their building. North St. Paul and many cities in the metro have adopted code 1306, which requires a fire sprinkler system. They are working on getting that in place and moving along quickly. The job fair is starting today and they are looking to hire a minimum of 55 employees. Mr. Duddeck stated that Kwik Trip is outstanding to work with.

Mr. Duddeck informed the council that the hiring process for the Police Chief and Finance Director is moving along very well with hopes to have the positions filled in the very near future.

Mr. Duddeck mentioned a future discussion would be needed in regards to the park rental process. Unfortunately, rentals have repetitively been left in a complete mess with disrespect to the facilities. The City eliminated deposits on park rentals a couple years ago and it may be time to look at reinstating the park rental deposit. This topic will be added to an upcoming agenda.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the workshop meeting at 6:24 p.m.

/s/ Terrence Furlong, Mayor

Attest: /s/ Brian Frandle, Interim City Manager