

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 2, 2020
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Members Steve King, Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Laura Helle, Jason Baskin, Joyce Poshusta
Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Police Chief David McKichan, Park and Rec Director Kevin Nelson, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, City Attorney Craig Byram, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann and City Clerk Ann Kasel

OTHERS PRESENT: Honorary Council Member Karem Ramirez, Dr. Adenuga Atewologun, Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio, Public

Mayor Stiehm called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Added to the Agenda

- (res) 12. Approving implementation of certain components of the classification and compensation study.
- (res) 13. Approving a labor agreement and memorandum of agreements between the City of Austin and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. (LELS)
- (res) 14. Setting the policy for the administration of the wage rate for the City Attorney.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving the agenda as amended.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving Council minutes from February 14, 2020 and February 18, 2020. Carried.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

Mayor Stiehm read a proclamation declaring March 9, 2020 as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Day. Dr. Adenuga Atewologun with Riverland Community Colleges stated he wants to educate all Minnesotans to be aware of the cancer and encouraged people to get screened.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving the consent agenda as follows:

Licenses:

Excavation: MP Nexlevel, LLC, Maple Lake
Exempt Gambling (raffle): United Catholic Schools Foundation on April 18, 2020
Food: Sudanese Community International Market, 501 1st Street NW
Hotel Transfer: Days Inn to Satnam Hospitality, LLC, 700 16th Avenue NE

Claims:

- a. Pre-list of bills.
- b. Credit Card Report.

Event Applications:

Shamrockin' Run on April 4, 2020

Carried.

BID OPENING AND AWARD

The City received bids for the seasonal supply of asphalt. The following bids were received:

Bidder	Base Bid	Mileage	Total
Ulland Brothers	\$234,000	\$35,820	\$269,820
Rochester Sand & Gravel	\$246,375	\$50,400	\$296,775

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the materials would be used for patching streets around the City of Austin and recommended awarding the bid to Ulland Brothers, Inc.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution awarding the bid for the seasonal supply of asphalt to Ulland Brothers, Inc. Carried 7-0.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution accepting donations to the City of Austin. Carried 7-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council approve an agricultural lease for part of the Austin Municipal Airport with Patricia Morse for a 5-year lease agreement.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving an airport farm lease with Patricia Morse. Carried 7-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang presented a feasibility report for the Turtle Creek 2 project stating the project will connect 40 homes into the City sewer system at an estimated cost of \$1,933,001. The City hopes to receive a Point Source Implementation Grant for 80% of the construction costs in the amount of \$1,310,400.80 leaving \$622,600.20 to be funded through Fund 61 of the Waste Water Treatment Plant. There were 36 non-compliant properties that would need to be hooked up upon completion of the project.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, receiving a feasibility report for the Turtle Creek 2 Sanitary Sewer project. Carried.

The City proposes to charge each property owner at Sewer Access Charge of \$16,700 for a gravity system or \$18,950 for a pumped system. He stated that currently that amount is due when property owners apply for a plumbing permit. He stated citizens could chose to apply the SAC fee to their taxes over a ten-year period and would be required to sign a waiver for that option. This would apply to any property owner hooking into the sanitary sewer system not just the Turtle Creek 2 project.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, approving a sewer access charge repayment policy. Carried.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council approve an individual control mechanism agreement for Austin Tank Wash. The one-year agreement sets forth the limitations, conditions and requirements for sanitary sewer discharges. In addition, the Austin Tank Wash would be responsible for cleaning the system if it is the cause of the backup. They also need to modify the facility to create a drive-thru bay to eliminate the need for backing in the public right of way.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving an ICM agreement with Austin Tank Wash. Carried 7-0.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council approve Pam Bishop with the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation serve as the facilitator for the annual Council retreat.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated he does not support spending \$1,000 to facilitate a meeting.

Council Member Baskin stated he would like to have a facilitator to result in a more productive discussion at the retreat.

Mayor Stiehm noted the Council wasn't happy with retreats in the past few years.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving \$1,000 from 2020 from contingency for a retreat facilitator. Carried 6-1 with Council Member-at-Large Austin voting nay.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council adopt the Classification and Compensation study. He stated that it's been over 25 years since the City has completed a study. The City selected Flaherty and Hood to begin a study in March of 2018. Mr. Clark stated the Council needs to approve the base pay schedule and then approve the bargaining contract with memorandums of understanding and City Attorney wage resolution.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated he was told that nothing on the pay plan had changed since the initial draft but he noted there were four positions that had changed.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated he didn't know of any changes and asked which positions he was referring to.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated the human resources director's points had gone up and the street superintendent, sewer maintenance and building and ice custodian's points had gone down.

Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann stated she didn't have previous versions of the document in front of her.

Council Member-at-Large Austin asked why it wasn't brought to the Council's attention that changes were made.

Council Member Baskin stated he places an incredible value on City employees and is fully in favor of approving police contract. However, if the plan is fully implemented then there will be double digit levy increases for a few years. This would constrain the City's ability to make needed financial investments into the community. He noted the wage increases are not in line with the economy.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated he shared Council Member Baskin's concerns that the study is a flawed document but he didn't know how to settle contracts without approving the study first.

Council Member King stated he doesn't think the City is sustainable without approving the compensation plan. He stated that the City has been under paying staff for a number of years and it is time to adopt the pay plan.

Council Member Helle stated the scope of the study is huge and it took a lot of work by outside consultants and staff. She noted that one or two incorrect figures doesn't justify a no vote.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated there are several departments that are underpaid and the City can't give raises for just one department. He noted that he wanted to have additional discussions last fall about the financial implications of the study but there wasn't support from Council for them.

Council Member-at-Large Austin asked for the document that details the position points and connects that to a certain pay grade. He stated the position points schedule is disconnected from the base pay scheduled.

Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann stated that the police in the LELS contract are a grade 16.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Helle, adopting a resolution approving the implementation of certain components of the Classification and Compensation study. Carried 6-1 with Council Member Basking voting nay.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving a 2020 – 2022 labor agreement with LELS, Local #73 and approving a memorandum for BPS with LELS, Local #73. Carried 7-0

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Helle, approving 2020 – 2022 wage adjustments for the City Attorney. Carried 6-0 with Council Member Helle abstaining.

HONORARY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Honorary Council Member Karem Ramirez stated she thought it was interesting that the Council approved contracts for wages of employees.

REPORTS

Council Member Baskin stated the Star Tribune has had great coverage of Austin lately.

Council Member Helle state the Welcoming America Group will be in Austin on March 16th. There will be reception before the Council meeting that night.

Council Member King thanked LELS for their patience with contract negotiations.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the City requested sign variance will be going to MnDOT Commissioner's office on April 13th for review. He also stated the March 11th is CGMC Legislative Action Day.

City Clerk Ann Kasel stated voting for the Presidential Primary will take place on Tuesday, March 3rd from 7 am to 8 pm.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member King, adjourning the meeting to March 16, 2020. Carried.

Adjourned: _____ 6:10 p.m. _____

Approved: _____ March 16, 2020 _____

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____