

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
December 7, 2020
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Member Steve King.

MEMBERS APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Council Members Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Laura Helle, Jason Baskin Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Joyce Poshusta

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Police Chief David McKichan and Park and Rec Director Kevin Nelson

STAFF APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Public Works Director Steven Lang, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann, City Attorney Craig Byram, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, City Clerk Ann Kasel, Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum

OTHERS APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Honorary Council Member Santiago Deng, Oballa Oballa, Michael Postma, Bonnie Reitz, Jeff Ettinger, Elaine Hansen, Patricia Mueller, Austin Daily Herald

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

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, approving the agenda. Carried.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving Council minutes from November 16, 2020. Carried.

Recognitions and Awards

The Council adopted a proclamation in support of the Austin Community Understanding proposal.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Baskin, endorsing a proclamation in support of Austin Community Understanding. Carried.

Representative-elect Patricia Mueller thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak and she stated she looks forward to working with the City.

Council Member Helle asked what committee assignments she may receive at the Capitol.

Representative Mueller stated she has asked to be on certain committees, including education.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving the consent agenda as follows:

Licenses:

Food: Qdoba Mexican Eats, 2701 15th Avenue NW

Claims:

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

Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Council reviewed a tax abatement request from New Horizon Homes, LLC for a five-year tax abatement request. The single-family home would be constructed at 2103 14th Avenue NE with an estimated value of \$334,900. City Administrator Craig Clark stated the application meets the program guidelines and requested Council approval of the abatement.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, approving a five-year tax abatement for New Horizon Homes. Carried.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert requested the Council approve the 2021 Hormel Foundation Grants. He stated the City received \$493,054 in City and pass-through grants from the Foundation. He thanked the Foundation for their generosity to the City.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving accepting 2021 Hormel Foundation grant awards. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang presented a proposed right-of-way management ordinance. The ordinance is designed to preserve the City's right-of-way, keep it in good repair and free from unnecessary encumbrances, ensure minimal disruptions to the public, business and the City and ensure that permittees properly restore the work area once the work has been completed. He

stated many cities have adopted a similar ordinance to keep the right-of-way in good order for the City. He stated the ordinance was reviewed at multiple work sessions and has been modified at the request of Austin Utilities.

Mr. Lang stated that the first step in the process is to get the contractors registered and licensed. Then the contractors would need to pull a right-of-way permit for the work they are going to complete with a plan for job. There will be fees associated with the license and the permit. Fees would not be charged to government entities.

Austin Utilities General Manager Mark Nibaur thanked the Council for working with the Utilities on the issue.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, for preparation of the right-of-way management ordinance. Carried.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, for adoption and publication of the right-of-way ordinance. Carried 6-0.

Fire Chief Jim McCoy presented the fire hydrant maintenance fee ordinance for a second reading.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, for preparation of the fire hydrant maintenance fee ordinance. Carried 5-1 with Council Member Baskin voting nay.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, for adoption and publication of the first hydrant maintenance fee ordinance. Carried 5-1 with Council Member Baskin voting nay.

City Clerk Ann Kasel requested the Council set the locations for the 2021 elections. She stated the County is holding a special election in February and April that only involves one City precinct so the spacious Holiday Inn would not be needed. The City would also be using its own facility and would not be required to pay the Holiday Inn's rental fee.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution approving polling locations for 2021 elections. Carried 6-0.

City Clerk Ann Kasel presented the proposed 2021 license and operational fees for the City.

Austin Chamber of Commerce Director Elaine Hansen stated that many small businesses are struggling and had a concern about a \$25 fee increase on certain licenses.

City Clerk Ann Kasel stated the 2020 fees were adopted in December of 2019 and there were no fee increases during the COVID pandemic.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving license and operational fees of the City for 2021. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council renew an individual control mechanism agreement for Austin Tank Wash. He stated the agreement sets forth the limitations, conditions and requirements for sanitary sewer discharges. The agreement would expire on December 31, 2023.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution approving an ICM agreement with Austin Tank Wash. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council order feasibility reports for the 2021 street construction projects.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Basking, adopting a resolution ordering feasibility reports for 2021 street construction projects. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council approve a sub-agreement with the Mower County Watershed District for a grant reimbursement process to funding projects, specifically the well capping program in the City.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution approving a One Watershed One Plan sub-agreement. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council approve a contract with Ulland Brothers for 8th Avenue SW pond modifications. The project would involve excavation and relocation of material to create a wet zone and a dry zone for the pond. The project would be funded with LOST and DNR grants. He stated the project award would be contingent upon the successful completion of a DNR grant.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution awarding a contract for 8th Avenue SW pond modifications to Ulland Brothers, Inc. subject to the successful completion of a DNR grant. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution accepting donations to the City. Carried 6-0.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace requested the Council approve a minor subdivision of property petitioned by the Austin Country Club who is requesting a portion of land be split off of their parcel for sale.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution approving a minor subdivision of property petitioned by the Austin Country Club. Carried 5-0 with Council Member Baskin abstaining.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace requested the Council approve a minor subdivision of property petitioned by Lavern Kehret. He is requesting that a portion of the land be split off for sale.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a minor subdivision of property petitioned by Lavern Kehret. Carried 6-0.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace requested that Council approve a minor subdivision for Thomas and Terri Nording. They are requesting to combine the parcels to allow for an addition on their home.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a minor subdivision of property petitioned by Thomas and Terri Nordeng. Carried.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1208 10th Avenue SW, Ramirez Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 806 5th Avenue NE, Warrington Properties, LLC. Carried.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the City received \$7.45 million in the 2020 bonding bill for the Waste Water Treatment Plant project. He requested the Council approve a resolution approving the grant.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving a Waste Water Treatment Plant 2020 bonding bill appropriation. Carried 6-0.

REPORTS

Elaine Hansen with the Chamber of Commerce thanked the City for its support of the Winter Extravaganza.

Honorary Council Member Santino Deng thanked the Fire Department for the recent tour.

Mayor Stiehm thanked the Public Works Department for the nice work on the downtown lights.

Council Member Jason Baskin stated he would like to do a proration of liquor fees to the end of the year due to the COVID shutdown.

Council Member King thanked the Hormel Foundation for their generosity to the City and the community.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated he attended a Park and Rec Board meeting recently. He stated the street department has helped the Park and Rec Department to catch up on the tree trimming.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated there will be new member orientation for the newly-elected officials.

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert stated the Truth in Taxation hearing will be held Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, adjourning the meeting to December 21, 2020. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:21 p.m.

Approved: December 21, 2020

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____