

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
February 16, 2021
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Joyce Poshusta, Jason Baskin, Oballa Oballa and Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Council Member Michael Postma

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

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

OTHERS APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Austin Daily Herald, Felicia Howie, Laura Helle

OTHERS PRESENT: Honorary Council Member Teresa Lugo

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

Added to the Agenda:

Consent Agenda:

License:

Food: Mixto, 803 18th Avenue NW

(res) 20. Approving an agreement with the Austin Parttime Firefighters Relief Association.

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

Moved by Council Member Oballa, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving Council minutes from February 1, 2021. Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Licenses:

- Food: Cedar Valley Services, Inc. (East, West and Main Campus)
- Food: JoAnn, 1700 17th Street NW
- Food: 1910 Mexican Kitchen, 507 1st Street NW
- Mobile Business: B-Lo Zero Sno Cones, Albert Lea
- Right of Way Contractor: Consolidated Communications Enterprise Services, Inc.
- Food: Mixto, 803 18th Avenue NW

Claims:

- a. Pre-list of bills
- b. Investment and Financial Report.

Requests: Redirecting the Austin Symphony Orchestra's funding allocation to website design

Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing was held for the proposed 5-year tax abatement on the proposed construction of a single-family home at 2108 14th Avenue NE. The builder is Bigelow and Lennon Construction and the value of the proposed home is \$355,000.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving a five-year tax abatement for Bigelow and Lennon construction at 2108 14th Avenue NE. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for the proposed 5-year tax abatement on the proposed construction of a single-family home at 2012 14th Avenue NE. The builder is Bigelow and Lennon Construction and the value of the proposed home is \$306,000.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving a five-year tax abatement for Bigelow and Lennon construction at 2012 14th Avenue NE. Carried 7-0.

Mr. Wenum stated there is a revision to the feasibility report for project 21102 narrowing the street to 40 feet wide. He requested the Council approved the new feasibility report.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving a revised feasibility report for Project 21102. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvements on 1st Street SE (Oakland Avenue East to 1st Avenue SE) and 1st Avenue SE (South Main Street to 2nd Street SE) Project 21102. Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum stated the City will remove the existing road and curb and replace with a new concrete street along with removing and replacing the deficient sidewalk. Underground utilities will be repaired or replaced. The project will begin in early May and will last approximately 3.5 months. Adjacent property owners will be assessed per the City's street assessment policy at an interest rate of 3.5%. Property owners will have the option to pay the assessment in full, pay 50% of the assessment and have the remainder go on their real estate taxes or have all of the assessment go on their real estate taxes. The total project is \$815,000 and \$124,355 will be assessed to the adjacent property owners.

Mr. Wenum reviewed the access plans for the individual businesses on the project.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution ordering improvement, approving plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Project 21102. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvements on 19th Street NW (Oakland Avenue West to 4th Avenue NW) and 1st Avenue NW (18th Street NW to 19th Street NW) Project 21103. Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum stated the City will remove the existing road and curb and replace with a new asphalt street along with removing and replacing the deficient sidewalk. Underground utilities will be repaired or replaced. The project will begin in late May or early June on 19th Street and late July or early August on 1st Avenue and is expected to be completed in October. Adjacent property owners will be assessed per the City's street assessment policy at an interest rate of 3.5%. Property owners will have the option to pay the assessment in full, pay 50% of the assessment and have the remainder go on their real estate taxes or have all of the assessment go on their real estate taxes. The total project is \$775,000 and \$210,934 will be assessed to the adjacent property owners.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Oballa, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution ordering improvement, approving plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Project 21103. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvements on 16th Street NE (Oakland Avenue East to 3rd Avenue NE) and 1st Avenue NE (Oakland Place NE to 19th Street NE) Project 21104. Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum stated the City will remove the existing road and curb and replace with new asphalt streets along with removing and replacing the deficient sidewalk. Underground utilities will be repaired or replaced. The project will begin in early May and will

last approximately 3.5 months. Adjacent property owners will be assessed per the City's street assessment policy at an interest rate of 3.5%. Property owners will have the option to pay the assessment in full, pay 50% of the assessment and have the remainder go on their real estate taxes or have all of the assessment go on their real estate taxes. The total project is \$1,080,000 and \$350,449 will be assessed to the adjacent property owners.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert asked what is the best way for residents with mobility challenges to access their properties.

Mr. Wenum stated many residents walked through the neighbor's backyards. He added that he can contact residents individually with specific concerns.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution ordering improvement, approving plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Project 21104. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvements on 8th Street NW (8th Avenue NW to 13th Avenue NW) and 9th Street NW (8th Avenue NW to 10th Avenue NW) Project 21101. Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum stated the City will remove the existing road and curb and replace with a new asphalt street along with removing and replacing the deficient sidewalk.

Underground utilities will be repaired or replaced. The project will begin in late May or early June and will last approximately 3.5 months. Adjacent property owners will be assessed per the City's street assessment policy at an interest rate of 3.5%. Property owners will have the option to pay the assessment in full, pay 50% of the assessment and have the remainder go on their real estate taxes or have all of the assessment go on their real estate taxes. The total project is \$920,000 and \$212,699 will be assessed to the adjacent property owners.

Mr. Wenum stated they are anticipating on removing 38 trees on the project and plan to replant some of the trees.

Council Member Postma asked if the utility lines will be buried on the project.

Mr. Wenum stated the utilities will be buried and there will not be issues with trees in the overhead lines.

Laura Helle spoke in favor of the project and that the loss of trees saddens her but she is going to add trees in her yard.

Felicia Howie, 1007 8th Street NW, stated this is her first time purchasing a home and wondered about her assessment amount.

Mr. Wenum stated her total is \$2,599.77. Mr. Wenum stated there are options for payment of the assessment including allowing the assessment to go on the real estate taxes for 15 years.

There were no additional public comments.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Oballa, adopting a resolution ordering improvement, approving plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Project 21101. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvements on 8th Avenue/Place NW (North Main Street to 4th Street NW) and 8th Avenue SW (27th Street to Dead End) Project 21105. Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum stated the City will mill and overlay the streets with new asphalt paving. The NW streets should be done in two days and 8th Avenue SW will take 2 weeks due to some underground work. Adjacent property owners will be assessed per the City's street assessment policy at an interest rate of 3.5%. Property owners will have the option to pay the assessment in full, pay 50% of the assessment and have the remainder go on their real estate taxes or have all of the assessment go on their real estate taxes. The total project is \$125,000 and \$37,382 will be assessed to the adjacent property owners.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Oballa, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution ordering improvement, approving plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Project 21105. Carried 7-0.

BID OPENING AND AWARD

Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum stated the City received the following bid for asphalt emulsion:

Bidder	Bid
Henry G. Meigs	\$90,819.75
Flint Hills Resources	No Bid

Mr. Wenum stated the material is used as part of the chip sealing roadway maintenance program. He recommended awarding the bid to Henry G. Meigs.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, awarding a bid for asphalt emulsion to Henry G. Meigs. Carried 7-0.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution setting public hearings for March 15, 2021 for street improvement project assessments. Carried 7-0.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the City is working with Mower County to realign 31st Street SW. The City has purchase agreements with two property owners for the purchase of the land needed for the road. The Kehret Revocable Living Trust owns property needed for the

project and has agreed to donate 1.98 acres for the roadway. The City will then purchase a remnant parcel, up to 3 acres at \$6,723.82 per acre. B & F Distributing Properties have agreed to exchange needed right-of-way for the project for soon to be vacated right-of-way. Both purchase agreements are contingent upon successful completion of the project.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution approving a purchase agreement with the Kehret Revocable Living Trust. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution approving a purchase agreement with B & F Properties, LLC. Carried 7-0.

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

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the City is proposing a contract with Flashing Thunder Fireworks for one night of fireworks on July 4, 2021 for \$30,000.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a contract with Flashing Thunder Fireworks. Carried 7-0.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert stated the City of Austin and Albert Lea have a joint powers board for the Blazing Star Trail. In 2020, there was \$16.74 of interest earned as the only account activity. The City of Albert Lea approved waiving the annual audit and Mr. Dankert requested that the City of Austin also approve the waiver.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, waiving the annual audit for the Blazing Star Trail. Carried.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace stated the Austin Port Authority has requested the consolidation of two lots in the Creekside Business Park for the Nu-Tech project. She stated City staff has no issue with the lot consolidation.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution approving a lot consolidation on behalf of the Austin Port Authority. Carried 7-0.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert stated the State of Minnesota is requiring the City have an Aid Allocation Agreement with the Austin Parttime Firefighter Relief Association. The agreement would not change the way the State Aid is allocated, it just defines it in a way to satisfy the State.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, approving an aid allocation agreement with the Austin Parttime Firefighter Relief Association. Carried 7-0.

HONORARY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Honorary Council Member Teresa Lugo stated she is looking forward to the street reconstruction because she travels on the roads being worked on.

REPORTS

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the City could possibly receive covid financial aid from the Federal government.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated that Austin, Minnesota was the coldest Austin in the nation yesterday. He stated he did an interview with an Austin, Texas paper.

Council Member Oballa stated that February is Black History Month.

Mayor King stated City staff and local representatives toured the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, adjourning the meeting to March 1, 2021. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:45 p.m.

Approved: March 1, 2021

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____