

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
May 3, 2021
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller (6:09 p.m.), Jason Baskin, Michael Postma, Oballa Oballa, Joyce Poshusta and Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

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, Representative Patricia Mueller, Mary Ann Duren, Bob Cohrs

APPEARING IN PERSON: Honorary Council Member Christopher Moore

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

Added to the Agenda:
Consent Agenda Addition
Approving Freedom Fest event requests.

Addition to Agenda

- (res) 15. Approving a consulting contract with SEH for right-of-way permitting review.
(additional backup)
- (res) 16. Committing to a transfer of funds to the Austin Port Authority for YMCA site redevelopment purposes.
- (mot) 17. Approving the Farmer's market requests for use of land and as a mobile food Location.

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

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving Council minutes from April 19, 2021. Carried.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

Mayor King introduced Christopher Moore, the new honorary council member. He stated he is part of the Liberian Association for Progress in the community and came to the United States in 2000. He is excited to serve as the honorary council member.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Licenses:

- Exempt Gambling (bingo): American Legion Auxiliary Post 91 – August 10-15, 2021
- Exempt Gambling (raffle): Mower County Pheasants Forever – July 31, 2021
- Mobile Business: Classic Kitchen, 22133 State Hwy 56, Austin
- Right of Way: Alcon Excavating, 2258 Marion Rd SE, Rochester
- Right of Way: Hodgman Concrete & Masonry, 2360 Majestic Ln NE, Owatonna
- Right of Way: Michels Pipeline, Inc., 817 Main Street, Brownsville, WI
- Taxi Driver: Nicole Stadig, 1000 14th Street NW, Apt 101

Claims:

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

Event Applications:

- Austin High School Post Prom Movie on May 15, 2021
- Austin High School Senior Parade on June 2, 2021
- Freedom Fest requests for July 4, 2021

Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing was held for the assessment of sewer improvements in the Turtle Creek 2 area. Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the assessments are for the connections to the sanitary sewer system. The total amount of the assessments is \$104,100 and will be placed on the real estate taxes at 4% interest for 10 years.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Fischer, declaring the cost of the Turtle Creek 2 sanitary sewer assessments. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting the assessment roll for the Turtle Creek 2 sanitary sewer assessments. Carried 6-0.

BID OPENINGS AND AWARDS

The City received the following bids for airfield lighting at the Austin Municipal Airport:

Contractor	Base Bid	Alt. #1
Werner Bros., Inc.	\$322,780.00	\$52,400.00
Neo Electrical Solutions, LLC	\$356,724.00	\$38,040.00
Fox Electric Co.	\$400,999.50	\$49,772.00

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the project would involve replacement of 58 runway lights and 136 taxiway lights with LED lighting. He recommended awarding the base bid to Werner Bros., Inc. subject to the successful award of a Federal AIP grant.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Oballa, awarding the base bid for airfield lighting at the Austin Municipal Airport to Werner Bros., Inc. subject to the successful award of a Federal AIP grant. Carried 6-0.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated there are administration and inspection services necessary for the airport lighting improvement project. The City has received a proposal in the amount of \$24,000 for these services which would also be funded via grant. Mr. Lang recommended awarding the contract to SEH, Inc.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a contract with SEH for engineering services on the airfield lighting project at the Austin Municipal Airport. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the City approved individual control mechanism (ICM) agreements with Hormel Foods for the industrial and domestic plants at the Waste Water Treatment Plant in December of 2017. A modification to Item 3, pH sampling is requested. Mr. Lang requested the Council approve the modified ICM agreements.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution approving a modified ICM agreement with Hormel Foods for the domestic plant. Carried 4-0 with Council Members Baskin and Oballa abstaining.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution approving a modified ICM agreement with Hormel Foods for the industrial plant. Carried 4-0 with Council Members Baskin and Oballa abstaining.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the City approved an individual control mechanism (ICM) agreement with Hormel Foods for the spice annex in December of 2019 and revised in May 2020. Hormel Foods has requested additional modification and Mr. Lang requested the Council approve the modified ICM agreement.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a modified ICM agreement with Hormel Foods for the spice annex. Carried 4-0 with Council Members Baskin and Oballa abstaining.

City Clerk Ann Kasel presented a list of properties that were forfeited to the State of Minnesota in 2020 for non-payment of real estate taxes. She stated each property has outstanding special assessments that were cancelled at forfeiture that the City will need to reassess after the sale of the property. She requested the Council approve the resolution and the amounts of outstanding assessments.

Moved by Council Member Oballa, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution approving the County Board classification of forfeited tax property, public sale of said property and declaring the City's intention to reassess unpaid assessments. Carried 6-0.

City Clerk Ann Kasel stated of the forfeited properties, there is one property that the HRA would like to obtain and refurbish for housing purposes. There are no outstanding assessments on that parcel and she requested the Council pass a resolution authorizing the property to be conveyed to the HRA.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving the County Board classification of forfeited tax property and declaring the City's intention to redevelop said property. Carried 6-0.

City Clerk Ann Kasel requested the Council pass two resolutions setting public hearings for June 7, 2021 for deferred sewer and water assessments.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution setting a public hearing for deferred sanitary sewer assessments for June 7, 2021. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution setting a public hearing for deferred water assessments for June 7, 2021. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1204 11th Avenue SW, Duncan Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, 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 107 2nd Street SE, NC Real Estate Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1205 7th Avenue NW, DAK Solutions Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 503 8th Avenue SE, Wakefield Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Postma, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 207 3rd Avenue SW, Dune Acquisitions Property. Carried.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the City is working with a telecommunications company on a citywide buildout of a fiber-optic network planned for construction in the summer of 2021. The project will involve approximately 150 miles of roadway with 72% of the system on existing Austin Utilities poles and 28% underground. The permit review process will be extensive with a short turn around. Mr. Lang requested Council authorization to hire a consultant to expediate the process. He stated SEH had the most experience and he recommended awarding the contract to them in the amount up to \$75,000.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving a consulting contract with SEH for right-of-way permitting review. Carried 6-0.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council's commitment to transfer \$650,000 to the Port Authority for the purchase of the old YMCA for redevelopment purposes for housing with the Stencil group. The transfer would be contingent upon the purchase agreement.

Council Member-at-Large Austin asked if the resolution is premature because there is not a purchase agreement or project designed.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the developer wants to be assured that the property is moving forward to being under contract and supported by Council.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Postma, committing to a transfer of funds to the Austin Port Authority for YMCA site redevelopment purposes. Carried 6-0.

Mary Ann Duren with Impact Austin presented a proposal for a permanent space for the Farmer's Market in Austin. She requested the farmer's market be granted permission to use the old "Budget Oil" site and surrounding area for the market and allow licensed mobile food vendors on the site during market days and times. She stated it will provide locally grown healthy food for all City residents.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving the Farmer's market requests for use of land and as a mobile food location. Carried.

HONORARY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Moore stated the Council should be aware of the immigrants in the community when making decisions and growing.

REPORTS

City Administrator Craig Clark stated he will be testifying on a house bill for funding for the waste water treatment plant.

Library Director Julie Clinefelter stated the social justice book club will meet in the coming month. Also, the Austin Page Turners will host an event in May for the yearly book on May 22nd in the park.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated street reconstruction season has begun with project beginning today. He stated MN DOT is planning to start reconstruction of the 28th Street bridge on May 10th with removal of the bridge on May 14-16th with the closure of I-90 overnight.

He also stated the City-County recycling event will be held May 8th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The City is still looking for volunteers for the event.

Representative Patti Mueller stated there are two weeks left in the session at the State Capitol. She stated she is lobbying for funding at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Council Member Baskin thanked Representative Mueller for all her work. He recognized Ann Kasel and the complete count committee for their work with the 2020 census. Minnesota kept their seat by 29 people. He also stated there is a SE Together MN webinar for Welcoming America.

Council Member Postma thanked the Oaxacan community for their improvements to Rotary Park. Mayor King also attended the Oaxacan festival.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adjourning the meeting to May 17, 2021. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:20 p.m.

Approved: May 17, 2021

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____