

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
May 17, 2021
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, 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

APPEARING IN PERSON: Nancy Schnable

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

Added to the Agenda:

Licenses:

Temporary Liquor: Austin Area Commission for the Arts on June 11 & 12, 2021

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

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving Council minutes from May 3, 2021. Carried.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

Nancy Schnable with Discover Austin presented the organization's annual report. She stated the COVID pandemic halted many of the scheduled activities in 2020. They focused on promoting local restaurants and businesses.

Mayor King read a proclamation declaring May 28 – 31st Poppy Days.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Licenses:

Exempt Gambling (raffle): United Catholic Schools Foundation on June 18, 2021

Food: Loikaw21, 209 11th Street NE

Liquor Catering: Tienda Y. Taqueria Guerrero, 301 D 4th Avenue NE

Mobile Business: Solem Concessions, Inc., Rochester

Sign Installer: A – Sign and Screen Printing, Minneapolis

Temporary Liquor: Pacelli Catholic Schools on June 18, 2021

Temporary Liquor: Austin Area Commission for the Arts on June 11 & 12, 2021

Claims:

- a. Pre-list of bills
- b. Investment Report.
- c. Marie Erickson, 2309 10th Street NW. The matter has been forwarded to the City attorney to protect the City's interest.

Event Applications:

Chamber of Commerce Parade Requests on July 4, 2021

River Rats Car Show on August 21, 2021

Carried.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert requested Council approval to participate in the annual performance measurements survey. The City would have a survey available for residents to answer and will receive additional LGA for doing so.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution affirming the City's participation in the Office of the State Auditor's performance measurements program. Carried 7-0.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert requested approval of the 2020 audit report. The report was presented by Craig Popenhagen of CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP at the May 3, 2021 work session. There were no findings from the audit.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving the 2020 audit report. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution

accepting donations to the City of Austin. Carried 7-0.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert requested the Council authorize the closure and liquidation of the Blazing Star Trail account that is held jointly with the City of Albert Lea. The account has had little activity over the last ten years and the bank is going to charge a \$20 service fee per month to keep the account open. Mr. Dankert said the funds in the account would be split between the two cities.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution authorizing the closure and liquidation of the Blazing Star Trail Account. Carried 7-0.

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert requested the Council approve a budget adjustment for the use of \$250,000 of General Fund balance to pay for the Riverside Arena metal roofing system.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution approving budget adjustment number 4 – transfer of funds for the Riverside Arena roofing project. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Oballa, appointing Council Member Paul Fischer to the YMCA Board. Carried.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council approved a DNR flood mitigation grant request in the amount of \$33,822.88 for half of the local share for the purchase of 304 22nd Street SW. The City has been awarded a FEMA grant for 75% of the project cost.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution approving a DNR request for the flood acquisition of 304 22nd Street SW. Carried 7-0.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace presented the preliminary plat for Nature Ridge Third Addition. She stated the plat consists of 26 lots covering 11.5 acres. The Planning Commission reviewed the plat at their May 11, 2021 meeting and recommended approval by a 7-0 vote. The final plat will be reviewed at a future Council meeting.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving a preliminary plat for Nature Ridge Third Addition. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, declaring the property at 1104 11th Avenue SW a hazardous property. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1009 1st Avenue NW, Tun Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Postma, 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 104 14th Street SE, Gonzalez 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 1914 3rd Avenue NE, Howe Property. Carried.

REPORTS

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert started the process for the 2022 budget by asking Council what they would like to accomplish for 2022. He stated the City has fund balance from the CARES act funding and there will be additional staffing costs for 2022 from the compensation and classification study in the approximate amount of \$800,000 - \$900,000.

Council Member Poshusta and Council Member Fischer stated they would like to see the vacant positions rehired that were cut.

Council Member Baskin would like to look at expanding private industry into certain positions including mowing.

Council Member Postma stated he would like to use some of the additional funds into economic development.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated there was a budget working group in 2020 and asked if the Council would like to do that again. The Council did not express interest in having a budget working group.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated he would like to see the budgeted 2021 positions filled immediately and to review the 2020 positions that were not filled. He stated that daycare is a need in the community that needs to be focused on.

Council Member Waller stated she also would like to see eliminated staff positions filled and funding to be allocated to the purchase of a Fire truck.

Council Member Oballa stated he would like to bring positions back also and he would like to focus on daycare.

Mr. Dankert stated he will bring some projections for the June 7, 2021 work session.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the State is working on the two-year state budget and will have a special session to complete it.

Library Director Julie Clinefelter stated the social justice book club has a variety of upcoming events. There will be an Austin Page Turner's event on May 22nd. The Library will be returning to more open hours to the public.

Public Works Director Steven Lang thanked the volunteers at the Electronics Recycling Event.

Council Member Poshusta congratulated the senior class of 2021.

Council Member Baskin asked how the City is handling outdoor dining with the end of the COVID restrictions.

City Clerk Ann Kasel stated during the pandemic certain businesses were offered temporary outside seating permits. The resolution that the Council passed stated those temporary permits would expire when the Governor allowed dining to return indoors unrestricted. That will take place on May 28, 2021 so the temporary permits will expire on May 27, 2021. She stated the City is working with requested businesses to see if they can keep their outdoor dining under a sidewalk café license.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, adjourning the meeting to June 7, 2021. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:26 p.m.

Approved: June 7, 2021

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____