

**MINUTES**  
**COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION**  
**September 20, 2021**  
**City 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, Police Chief David McKichan, City Attorney Craig Byram, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Nelson, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, Human Resources Director Trisha Wiechmann and City Clerk Ann Kasel

OTHERS APPEARING

ELECTRONICALLY: Austin Daily Herald, Greg Paulson, Jai Kalsy, Dave Nelson

Mayor King opened the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

**Item No. 1 – 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Replacement Project**

Public Works Director Steven Lang introduced Jai Kalsy and Greg Paulson, MnDOT Project engineers, and Dave Nelson, SRF Consulting, who are working on the 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW bridge replacement project.

Jai Kalsy provided additional information about the 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW bridge. He stated by Minnesota Statutes the Council must provide municipal consent for the project. The City will need to hold a public hearing, take public input and ultimately provide a resolution of consent.

He stated the Council expressed interest in a single point intersection and he wanted the Council to affirm that selection.

Dave Nelson explained the design options for the bridge and reviewed the pros and cons of each selection. He stated that one of the negatives of the single point intersection is that there is not a clear east-west pedestrian crossing.

Mayor King stated that any design will be better than the current situation and the Council liked the single point option.

The Council discussed the different options for the bridge. Council Member Postma stated he would prefer the roundabout option because of the pedestrian traffic on the bridge.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, recommending approval of a single point intersection at the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge. Carried 6-1.

The item will be on the October 4, 2021 Council Agenda.

### **Item No. 2 – Fund Balance Usage**

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert stated the City has approximately \$3.6 million in excess fund balance as of December 31, 2020. He stated this is due to CARES act funding and unspent budgeted funds. Staff and Council had debated using some of these funds to balance the 2022 budget but that would result in a higher percentage of tax levy in future years.

Mr. Dankert stated the funds are going to be used for one time projects including \$1.5 million for a fire truck replacement, \$250,000 for Library renovations, \$80,000 for siding and windows at Ruby Rupner and other miscellaneous projects. (*see Mr. Dankert's back up memo for full detail.*) Mr. Dankert stated after the project are funded then the fund balance will be in the acceptable range of 42-48%.

He noted that there may be additional fund balance available in the future due to 2022 ARPA funding.

Council Member-at-Large Austin asked if there are specific projects identified for the large redevelopment or daycare projects.

Mr. Dankert stated there are no specific projects at the time but the funds would be earmarked for it.

Council Member Baskin asked if some fund balance should be used to catch up the tree trimming issues.

Mr. Dankert stated that issue will be looked at near the end of 2021.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving fund balance usage. Carried.

The item will be placed on the October 4, 2021 Council Agenda.

### **Item No. 3 - Administrative Report**

City Administrator Craig Clark stated October 7<sup>th</sup> will be the groundbreaking for KSMQ.

### **Item No. 4 – Open Discussion**

Council Member Postma asked if the Council would like staff to actively pursue licensing for Air BnB's in Austin.

Mayor King stated he would like those entities to be registered.

Council Member Fischer stated he would like to have masks be a choice in City buildings.

Mayor King stated he would like to keep the mandate in City buildings.

Council Member Waller stated she was in favor of masks being a choice.

Council Member Oballa stated he is in favor of following the CDC guidelines.

Moved by Council Member Oballa, seconded by Council Member Postma, adjourning the meeting at 7:01 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Ann M. Kasel  
City Clerk