

M I N U T E S  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
April 17, 2023  
5:30 PM  
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Laura Helle, Jason Baskin, Michael Postma, Joyce Poshusta, Geoff Baker 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, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, Park and Rec Director Dave Merrill, City Attorney Craig Byram, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum and City Clerk Ann Kasel

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, Honorary Council Member Denver Ritz

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

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving the agenda. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving Council minutes from April 3, 2023. Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving the consent agenda as follows:

Licenses:

Mobile Business: Erin's Street Bistro, Albert Lea  
Sign Installer: Scenic Sign, Sauk Rapids

Claims:

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

Carried.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing was held for a five-year tax abatement request from New Horizon Homes, LLC. City Administrator Craig Clark stated New Horizon is planning on building a property valued at approximately \$550,000 at 1803 18<sup>th</sup> Place NE. He stated the application is in conformance with the City's tax abatement policy.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving a tax abatement request from New Horizon Homes, LLC. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for a five-year tax abatement request from Bigelow & Lennon Construction. City Administrator Craig Clark stated Bigelow & Lennon is planning on building a property valued at approximately \$350,000 at 1302 18<sup>th</sup> Street NE. He stated the application is in conformance with the City's tax abatement policy.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving a tax abatement request from Bigelow & Lennon Construction. Carried 7-0.

## BID OPENINGS AND AWARDS

The City received the following bids for bituminous street reconstruction on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 19<sup>th</sup> Drive NE:

Contractor	Bid
Ims Contracting, LLC	\$1,124,695.30
Ulland Brothers, Inc.	\$1,150,730.15
Elcor Construction	\$1,515,203.75
Rochester Sand & Gravel	Rejected

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the work would consist of pavement removal, sanitary sewer and storm sewer improvements, curb & gutter, asphalt paving and sidewalk extension and removal. He recommended awarding the bid to Ims Contracting, LLC.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, awarding a bid for bituminous street reconstruction on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 19<sup>th</sup> Drive NE to Ims Contracting, LLC. Carried 7-0.

The City received the following bids for concrete street reconstruction on 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW:

<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Base Bid</b>	<b>Alternate Bid 1 Concrete Storm Sewer Pipe</b>	<b>Alternate Bid 2 Plastic Storm Sewer Pipe</b>	<b>Total Base Bid + Alternate 2</b>
Doyle Conner Co.	\$2,365,720.89	\$431,719.92	\$347,824.57	\$2,713,545.46
Elcor Construction	\$2,589,038.00	\$519,921.00	\$432,399.00	\$3,021,437.00
Engineer's Estimate	\$2,174,417.50	\$234,176.00	\$169,750.00	\$2,344,167.50

Mr. Lang stated the bid prices came in higher than anticipated due to difficult digging conditions and extra mobilization costs. He recommended awarding the base bid plus alternate 2 to Doyle Connor Co.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baker, awarding the base bid plus alternate 2 for concrete street reconstruction on 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW to Doyle Connor Co. Carried 7-0.

#### PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

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

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council authorize participation in the joint City and County electronic recycling event on May 13, 2023. The event is in partnership with the Retrofit Companies and will be held at the Mower County Fairgrounds. Mr. Lang requested \$500 from the transfer station budget and the use of a forklift. He noted this may be the final year of the event as Mower County is planning an expansion project at their Recycling Center which would allow year-round electronics recycling.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, approving City participation in the 2023 electronics recycling event. Carried.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace reviewed a petition for the renewal of a five-year interim use permit to keep horses in City limits from Nikola and Christopher Baumann. She stated the Planning Commission reviewed the matter at their March 11, 2023 meeting and recommended approval of the 5-year renewal as there have been no complaints.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving the renewal of a five-year interim use permit for Nikola and Christopher Baumann. Carried.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace reviewed a variance application for a structural addition on the Nikola and Christopher Baumann property. She stated the variance would be to exceed the maximum lot coverage of 1,800 square feet by proposing an addition to an existing structure. Ms. Wallace stated the Planning Commission reviewed the application at their March 11, 2023 meeting and recommended approval of the variance due to the unusually large size of her property.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving a variance application from Nikola and Christopher Baumann. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution declaring the property at 1005 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE a hazardous structure. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 406 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue SE, Morales/Castandena Property. Carried.

## HONORARY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Honorary Council Member Denver Ritz stated he looks forward to the next couple months.

## REPORTS

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the Impact Austin speaker series will be coming up and encouraged the public to attend.

Public Works Director Steven Lang noted on the 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW project the City cannot install bump outs on the project at the 4-way stop.

Council Member Helle stated the open house for the Parks Master Plan will be on April 20<sup>th</sup> from 4-8 p.m. at the Nature Center. She noted the emerald ash borer will cause substantial harm to the City's ash trees. She stated the Cultural and Arts committee will place a mural on the side of the pool building.

Council Member Postma stated Wolf Creek in Todd Park has been stocked with trout.

Council Member Baker stated he attended the Hometown Food Security project meeting and found it eye opening. He also noted that April 18<sup>th</sup> is tax freedom day.

Council Member-at-Large Austin noted the library has reopened and construction is coming along on schedule.

Council Member Baskin noted Commissioner Chuck Moline passed away on the Port Authority Board. He also stated the Port signed two new business agreements with Nu-Tek and Harty Mechanical for land in Creekside Business Park.

Council Member Poshusta stated there will be a social justice book club on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor King expressed his condolences to the Moline family.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baker, adjourning the meeting to May 1, 2023. Carried.

Adjourned: 5:58 p.m.

Approved: May 1, 2023

Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

City Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_

