

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Jason Baskin, Michael Postma, Joyce Poshusta, Geoff Baker and Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Laura Helle

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Police Captain Todd Clennon, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, City Attorney Craig Byram, Library Director Julie Clinefelter and City Clerk Ann Kasel

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio, Jeff Baldus, Lisa Dunlop, Bonnie and Tim Reitz, Denver Ritz, Tim Sorgine, An Le, Tar Lar Paw, Gentry Sovers, Scott Soderberg, Brian Prentiss

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

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

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving Council minutes from August 21, 2023. Carried.

#### AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Briana Broberg with Welcoming America accepted the Welcoming Week Proclamation and thanked the City for its participation in the event.

Bonnie and Tim Rietz presented their art purchase award to the City of Austin. They requested it be placed in the Bonnie Besse Reitz conference room at City Hall.

Lisa Dunlop and Jeff Baldus presented the City Art Award made by Love Quetee and selected by Council Members Baker and Postma.

Captain Todd Clennon introduced Gentry Solvers and Tar Lar Pa as new officers to the Austin Police Department.

## CONSENT AGENDA

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

### Licenses:

Exempt Gambling (raffle): United Catholic Schools Foundation on November 8, 2023

### Claims:

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

### Appointments:

An Le as the Honorary Council Member – September 18 to December 4, 2023  
Bryan Davis to the Human Rights Commission – term through December 31, 2024  
Tina Miller to the Parks and Recreation Board – term through December 31, 2025  
Michael Bambrick to the Parks and Recreation Board – term through December 31, 2024

Carried.

## PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Baker, adopting a resolution approving a contract with Abestrol for asbestos tile removal in City Hall with funding from the Building Fund. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution setting public hearings for October 2, 2023 for fall assessments. Carried 6-0.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council approve a letter of understanding with Agriculture Pollution Innovation, LLC and a grant application on their behalf with Compeer Financial. The \$5,000 grant would be for a biochar project for nitrate reduction and the City would act as the fiscal host for the grant.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution approving a letter of understanding with Agriculture Pollution Innovation and a grant application with Compeer Financial. Carried 6-0.

Library Director Julie Clinefelter requested the Council approve \$23,485 from 2023 contingency for an emergency lighting panel at the Library. Ms. Clinefelter stated the emergency lighting was not working at the library and shed solicited proposals to remedy the matter and Fox Electric Company provided the lowest amount.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution approving \$23,485 from 2023 contingency for an emergency panel at the Library. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution accepting donations to the City of Austin. Carried 6-0.

Fire Chief Jim McCoy stated the department received a grant in the amount of \$2,882 from the MnDNR for volunteer firefighter assistance. He requested that the Council accept the grant.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution accepting a volunteer fire assistance grant from the MnDNR. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested Council authorization for the installation of cameras at Riverside Arena for the Austin Bruins. The cost of the cameras and installation will be covered by the NAHL and the Austin Bruins.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution authorizing the installation of camera equipment for the Austin Bruins at Riverside Arena. Carried.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the City is planning for a equalization digester cover replacement at the waste water treatment plant. He stated the first step is to design the project and SEH, Inc. has provided an estimate in the amount of \$26,387 for design and bidding services. He requested the Council approve the contract which will be funded with industrial plant funds.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a contract with SEH, Inc. for design services on an equalization digester at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Carried 6-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the City recently received a grant from the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority in the amount of \$14.5 million and requested the Council authorize City staff to submit the required documents for the grant.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution authorizing grant funding with Minnesota Public Facilities Authority. Carried 6-0.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace requested the Council approve a modified resolution for a recent annexation with Austin Township due to a change in the legal description.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Baker, adopting a resolution approving a modified resolution for an annexation with Austin Township. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Baker, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1019 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Graham Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baskin, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 709 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, Win Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 601 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, Wilder Property. Carried.

#### CITIZENS ADDRESSING THE COUNCIL

Tim Sorgine, 505 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, asked the Council to reconvene the drug task force.

Scott Soderberg, 2408 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, was concerned about the proposed property tax increase. He felt the City should not be in property management and spoke against the City's rental property ordinance. He stated he was concerned about City employees' wages.

Brian Prentiss, 1103 5<sup>th</sup> Place SE, was concerned about resisting arrest and evading police. He stated there was recently a high-speed pursuit on the interstate.

Captain Clennon stated there is a policy for no pursuit in town.

#### REPORTS

City Administrator Craig Clark stated Representative Brad Finstad will be in Austin tomorrow.

Council Member Postma stated the HRA house recently sold.

Council Member Baskin welcomed the new officers and thanked the Police Chief for his leadership.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adjourning the meeting to September 18, 2023. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:18 p.m.

Approved: September 18, 2023

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

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