

M I N U T E S  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
October 2, 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, City Attorney Craig Byram, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, and City Clerk Ann Kasel

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio, Verne Olson, Norma Olson

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

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

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving two sets of Council minutes from September 18, 2023. Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Licenses:

Massage Therapist: Jada DeClue, 1807 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue SE

Movable Business, Infuzn Foods, LLC, Rochester

Movable Business: True Smoke BBQ, Oronoco

Temporary Liquor: Mower County Historical Society on November 3, 2023

Claims:

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

Event Applications:

Fire Station Open House on October 11, 2023

## Downtown Trick or Treat on October 28, 2023

Carried.

### PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public hearings were held for the fall assessments on the agenda. For each type of assessment, the individual property owners were mailed a notice of hearing and a public notice was also published in the Austin Daily Herald.

A public hearing was held for the assessment of sanitary sewer assessments.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting the assessment roll for sanitary sewer assessments. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for assessments for miscellaneous sidewalk and driveway projects.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting the assessment roll for miscellaneous sidewalk and driveway projects. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for the assessment of 2023 snow removal.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution for assessments for 2023 snow removal. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held on assessments for 2023 junk and garbage removal.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution for assessments for 2023 junk and garbage removal. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for the assessments for 2023 grass and weed removal.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution for assessments for 2023 grass and weed removal. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for assessments for administrative citations.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution for the assessment of Park and Recreation administrative citations. Carried 7-0.

Verne Olson, 1304 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, stated he has received multiple citations for front yard parking. He paid the first citation and asked the Council to forgive the second one in the amount of \$150.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace stated the first citation was for a boat parked on the lawn and the second for a vehicle parked in the front yard.

Norma Olson stated she purchased the property in 1987 and she has traditionally used the area for parking right in front of the house.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baker, affirming the citation for Verne Olson. Carried 6-1 with Council Member-at-Large Austin voting nay.

There were no additional public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution for the assessment of zoning administrative citations. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution for the assessment of rental housing administrative citations. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution for the assessment of sump pump administrative citations. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution for the assessment of building department administrative citations. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for the assessment of unpaid vacant property fees.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution for the assessment of unpaid vacant property fees. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for tree removal.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution for the assessment of tree removal costs. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for the assessment of hazardous housing abatements.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution for the assessment of hazardous housing abatements. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for the assessment of senior deferral assessments.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution for the assessment of senior deferral assessments. Carried 7-0.

#### AWARDING BID

The City received the following bids for the Todd Park Trail box culvert:

Contractor	Total Bid
Fitzgerald Excavating	\$116,648.00
Ulland Brothers, Inc.	\$169,564.00

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the project would consist of removing the existing trail bridge over Wolf Creek and the construction of a box culvert in that same location. The project funding would come from a \$100,500 Hormel Foundation grant with the remaining from the Capital Improvement Fund. Mr. Lang recommended awarding the bid to Fitzgerald Excavating.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, awarding a bid to Fitzgerald Excavating for Todd Park Trail box culvert replacement. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Helle, awarding the bid for group life insurance to Lincoln Financial. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Baskin, awarding the bid for long term disability insurance to Lincoln Financial. Carried 7-0.

#### PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested Council authorization for the sale of a 2006 Sterling snow plow truck with front plow, wing, belly plow and sander. He stated he believes the City will receive the most money for the truck on auction.

Council Member Baker questioned if the City would get more for the truck trading it in versus placing it on the auction.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, authorizing the action sale of a 2006 Sterling snow plow truck. Carried 6-1 with Council Member Baker voting nay.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert stated the Council recently adopted a resolution authorizing City staff to submit necessary documentation to the PFA for the \$14.5 million grant for the Waste Water Treatment Plant project. The PFA has requested a resolution to ensure the matching funds from Hormel Foods are committed to the project. Mr. Dankert requested the Council adopt the resolution.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adopting a resolution committing to use Hormel Foods Corporation's EPRP payments toward the Waste Water Treatment Plant expansion. Carried 6-0 with Council Member Baskin abstaining.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council authorize \$1,500 from fund balance for an in-home child care provider appreciation brunch at the Austin Country Club.

Council Member Baskin asked if the brunch will make an impact. He stated the use of the funds may not be the best investment.

Council Member Baker stated he is not supportive of the donation because it does not address the problem of child care shortages in Austin.

Council Member Postma stated he attending one of the meetings where this idea was brought up and it was thought up to try to increase participation in the childcare discussion.

Moved by Council Member Helle, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving \$1,500 from fund balance for an in-home childcare provider appreciation brunch hosted by Austin Aspires. Motion failed 2-5 with Council Members Baker, Baskin, Fischer, Poshusta, and Council Member-at-Large Austin voting nay.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution accepting donations to the City of Austin.

#### HONORARY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Honorary Council Member An Le stated the Pride Festival is on October 7<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 to 8:00 at the Mower County square.

#### REPORTS

Council Member Helle stated the Parks Department is in the process of hiring the next director. She also noted that employee work groups going to meet with consultants on Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Council Member Postma stated at the Discover Austin meeting Double Tree renovations and rebranding by February 1, 2024.

Council Member Baker asked the leaders at the City to talk to their employees and encourage participation in the City meetings.

Council Member Baskin working on strategic roadmap for the Port Authority for the next ten years.

Mayor King stated the Hormel Institute is hiring a new director from Penn State.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Postma, adjourning the meeting to October 16, 2023. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:08 p.m.

Approved: October 16, 2023

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

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

