

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
November 6, 2023
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Jason Baskin

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, City Clerk Ann Kasel, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann, Nature Center Director Luke Reese, Park and Rec Supervisor Randy Hofner, Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum, Street Department Chauffer Greg Yocum

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio, Honorary Council Member An Le

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

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

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving Council minutes from October 16, 2023. Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Licenses:

Exempt Gambling (raffle): Whitetails Unlimited Southern MN on January 13, 2024
Right of Way: Haugland Excavating, LLC, 28310 570th Avenue

Claims:

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

Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing was held for a tax abatement hearing requested by Bigelow and Lennon Construction. They are proposing to build a single-family home at 805 24th Avenue NW valued at approximately \$282,000. City Administrator Craig Clark stated the application is in conformance with the City's policy for tax abatement.

There were no public comments.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving a five-year tax abatement for Bigelow and Lennon Construction. Carried 6-0.

AWARDING BID

The City received the following bids for residential building demolition:

Contractor	Bid
Jim's Excavating, LLC	\$26,350
Hansen Hauling & Excavating, LLC	Rescinded Bid
Husemoeller Excavating, Inc.	No Bid

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace stated the bids are for the demolition of the houses at 1005 8th Avenue NE and 1203 11th Avenue NW plus the garage at 904 13th Avenue NE. She stated Hansen Hauling & Excavating originally submitted a bid but rescinded it after additional discussion. She recommended awarding the bid to Jim's Excavating, LLC.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, awarding a bid for residential building demolition to Jim's Excavating, LLC. Carried 6-0.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

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

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council approve a memorandum of agreement with Minnesota Public Employees Association for insurance for 2024.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a memorandum of agreement with Minnesota Public Employees Association. Carried 6-0.

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert requested the Council adopt a resolution to decertify tax increment financing district number 8. Mr. Dankert stated the TIF district was established in 1998 to develop the Whittier Townhomes. All of the eligible expenses have been

repaid through the tax increment district and he asked the Council to decertify it as of December 8, 2023. Any unused dollars will be returned to Mower County to be split between the City, County and School District.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution decertifying tax increment financing (redevelopment) district number 8. Carried 6-0.

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 608 9th Avenue NW, Rembao Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Fischer, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1200 3rd Avenue NE, Carlos Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1005 6th Avenue NE, Cunningham Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 605 10th Avenue NW, Einfeldt/Roggeman Property. Carried.

CITIZENS ADDRESSING

Greg Yocum, 1407 24th Street SW, stated the street department is having an ongoing issue with garbage cans being in the right of way which makes it difficult to plow, collect leaves and street sweep. He suggested sending letters to the garbage companies and a facebook post by the City showing proper can placement.

Tim Sorgine, 505 11th Avenue SW, spoke to the Council with concerns about medical cannabis. He also requested that the drug task force be reconvened.

REPORTS

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the public open house for the Oakland and 1st Avenue projects will be Wednesday, November 8th at the Austin Public Library.

Council Member Poshusta stated she recently attended a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon meeting and stated the group is working to support the local unit for their annual Christmas party.

Council Member Helle reported the Park and Rec is down to two finalists for the open director position. She thanked Kristen Olsen and the Chamber of Commerce for welcoming the candidates to Austin and providing a tour. She noted the Park Board approved collaborating with the Friends of the Nature Center on a book walk around Mill Pond. She also stated there have been 30 deer harvested in the public deer hunt.

Mayor King thanked Luke Reese for the use of the Nature Center for the SE Minnesota League of Cities meeting. He also attended an in-home daycare appreciation brunch at the Country Club.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adjourning the meeting to November 20, 2023. Carried.

Adjourned: 5:47 p.m.

Approved: November 20, 2023

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____