

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL CHARTER MEETING
March 3, 2008
5:30 P.M.
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Members McAlister, Austin, Dick Pacholl, Hecimovich, and Martin. Council Member-at-Large Christopherson.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Scott Pacholl

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Hurm, Steven Lang, Craig Hoium, Tom Dankert, Jeanne Howatt, David Hoversten, Dan Wilson, Ann Hokanson, Denny Maschka, and Paul Philipp.

OTHERS PRESENT: Post Bulletin, Austin Daily Herald. Public. Cheryl Corey, Beth Altergott and Betty Olson.

Added to the agenda: a resolution approving a grant from the University of Minnesota for \$5000 to be used for a renewable energy fair.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, approving the amended agenda. Carried.

Council Member Dick Pacholl requested the following change be made to the minutes of February 19, 2008 on page 7: “. . . consensus was *not* in favor of keeping the cul de sac.”

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, approving the amended council minutes of March 3, 2008. Carried.

Cheryl Corey gave a brief oral report of the CVB and presented Council with the 2009 Visitors guide and the CVB's annual report. The State provides a visual aid, a cereal box, which she asked to be displayed during the 25th anniversary of National Tourism Week, May 10-18. 2007 saw an increase in lodging tax. Based on the state formula, the 2007 economic impact from tourism in Austin and the surrounding area is over \$19 million. For every \$1 that is spent on tourism, \$78 comes back into the community.

Council Member Hecimovich made note of the fact that the community should know that the CVB will help plan conventions. That is a great service to the community.

Moved by Council Member Dick Pacholl, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, approving the consent agenda as follows:

Consent Agenda

Licenses:

Master Plumber: K&S Heating & Plumbing, Rochester, MN

Master Plumber: MJ O'Connor, Austin, MN

Master Plumber: Voigt Plumbing & Heating, Grand Meadow, MN

Sign: DeMars Signs, Coon Rapids, MN

Claims:

- a. Pre-list of bills.
- b. Margaret Jahnke, Owatonna, MN. This claim has been referred to the city attorney to protect the city's interest.
- c. Melissa Haroldson, 1010 10th Avenue SW. This claim has been referred to the city attorney to protect the city's interest.

Carried.

A public hearing was held on the 2008 Sidewalk Project SW Quadrant, 1-C-08. The concentrated area is from Oakland to Turtle Creek and from 4th Street to 11th Street. The Street Department will address deficient sidewalk for potential trip and fall claims. Assistant City Engineer Steven Lang explained the assessment payment options. The sidewalk assessment interest rate will be 5.5% and would be spread out over 10 years if placed on property taxes. Cost per panel would be \$90-94 per panel. Grinding would be done at \$50 per panel. Assessment hearings will be held in the fall.

Council Member Hecimovich asked if the Street Department grinds sidewalks around trees. Mr. Lang said they chop out the surface roots, put in a new panel and tie it to an adjacent panel with rebar. Council Member Dick Pacholl said they used to just chop the roots out and drop the old panel down. Mr. Lang said they do not do this anymore; it is more cost effective this other way.

No other comments were made.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, adopting a resolution ordering the improvement, approving the plans and specs, and ordering the advertisement for bids for 1-C-08. 6-0. Carried.

Hormel Foods has an agreement with the City of Austin regarding the industrial side of wastewater treatment. Council is requested to approve an addendum to the original agreement which involves a digester repair project. Hormel Foods would pay 100%.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, adopting a resolution approving an addendum to the Wastewater Treatment Agreement with Hormel Foods. 6-0. Carried.

Four bids were received on February 14 for the industrial side of the Wastewater Treatment Plant – the project noted in the Addendum to the Wastewater Treatment Agreement with Hormel Foods. The total would be paid 100% by Hormel. Bids are as follows.

Magney Construction, Chanhassen, MN	\$ 3,629,810
Gridor Construction, Buffalo, MN	3,777,000
The Joseph Co., Inc., Austin, MN	3,879,000
Wapasha Construction	4,379,549

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, adopting a resolution awarding the bid to Magney Construction. 6-0. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, appointing the following to represent the City of Austin on the Board of Review:

First Ward: Mary Keenan
 Second Ward: Phyllis Prybelski
 Third Ward: Mahlon Krueger
 Representative At-Large: Jerry Mohrfeld

Carried.

One of two most recently hired police officers has not successfully completed probation. A background check has been completed on the next candidate, and the police chief is ready to make a conditional job offer. The candidate must still successfully complete psychological and medical testing.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, seconded by Council Member Dick Pacholl, approving a conditional job offer for a police officer. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member Dick Pacholl, adopting a resolution approving 3.2 Beer On-Sale License for Mower County Agricultural Society. 6-0. Carried.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, seconded by Council Member Austin, adopting a resolution setting a public hearing for March 17, 2008 for final plat approval of Menards Addition. 6-0. Carried.

Paul Johnson Architects have given us a proposal for roof repair for Riverside Arena (over the Youth Activity Center), City Hall (west side roof) and the Mower County Senior Center. These projects are 2007 budgeted items and funding would carry over if approved.

Council Member-at-Large Christopherson questioned what type of roof would be put on the senior center. Steven Lang said the architects will give us their proposal on metal vs. shingle.

Council Member Dick Pacholl recalled some roofing work at the senior center during the last couple of years. Mr. Dankert said that was repair work by Kiker Bros., and it was to get them through. Mr. Dankert noted all budget carryovers will be ready to be approved via a resolution at the next council meeting.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, seconded by Council Member Austin, adopting a resolution approving consultant services for roof replacement. 6-0. Carried.

The City has received a proposal from SEH for Phase 8 of the flood control. SEH will assist with some background research regarding different processes for flood control. They will prepare plan reviews, shop drawing reviews and provide technical advice. Fifty percent of the project cost is from a DNR grant and 50% will come from the local option sales tax.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, adopting a resolution approving engineering services from SEH 6-0. Carried.

Council is being asked to approve a Contract for Professional Services with the University of Minnesota. The contract relates to a \$5000 grant that several entities– Austin Utilities, Owatonna Utilities, Rochester Utilities, CERTS, Riverland Community and Technical College and the City of Austin applied for to be used for a renewable energy fair. The fair has been set for September 20, 2008 and will take place at the J.C. Hormel Nature Center.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, adopting a resolution approving the contract. 6-0. Carried.

Junk has been removed from 1102 12th Street NW by the Street Department. The junk was removed as it was obstructing snow removal process. Community Development Director Craig Hoium said that according to City Code 10.14, Subd 4, the City is allowed to remove items in emergency situations. This work has already been done; Council must approve charging the property owner.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, seconded by Council Member Austin, approving charging property owner for junk removal. Carried.

REPORTS:

Council Member Hecimovich reported that on February 20, he and Mr. Hurm attended the Coalition's Legislative Action Day. Their objectives were to obtain bond funding for flood control (\$5 million) and the TIF funding bill regarding reimbursement to the HRA. They also presented a paper again this year regarding jails and justice centers and requesting that the Legislature put in place a plan so these are less costly for cities and counties. This is important especially when budgets are very tight. There had been an anticipated \$90M overall increase in LGA; now we're looking at a possibility of being \$935 million short. This is significant as this is where 55% of our budget comes from. Also, the gas tax veto was overridden. Minnesota has lost employment; this, in part, due to the budget deficit.

Library Director Ann Hokanson said the Library and the Paramount are sponsoring a free concert, La Vent du Nord, to be held on Tuesday.

Fire Chief Dan Wilson said council members may have heard a piece in the media on the smoke alarm program. There has been a huge response – over 150 calls. The Department needs to purchase additional smoke alarms and asked Council if they would like to do this out of the existing budget. Mr. Hurm said this could be absorbed within the current Fire Department budget; it is an excellent program.

City Administrator Jim Hurm reported on funds received from the Hormel Foundation: \$50,000 for soccer fields, \$20,000 for a pedestrian trail, and \$30,000 for the AMCAT work route.

The Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a Legislative Day luncheon on Friday, March 7.

Mr. Hurm will be testifying before the Senate Tax Committee early Wednesday regarding the TIF funding bill reimbursing the HRA.

Moved by Council Member Hecimovich, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Christopherson, adjourning the meeting to March 17, 2008.

Adjourned: _____ 6:15 pm _____

Approved: _____ March 17, 2008 _____

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____