

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 16, 2020
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Members Steve King, Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Laura Helle, Jason Baskin, Joyce Poshusta
Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Police Chief David McKichan, Park and Rec Director Kevin Nelson, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, City Attorney Craig Byram, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann and City Clerk Ann Kasel

OTHERS PRESENT: Patricia Woodhouse, Oballa Oballa, Honorary Council Member Karem Ramirez, Austin Daily Herald, Public

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

Added to the agenda:

(res) 23. Approving temporary relief from certain procedures and procedures during the CLOVID-19 pandemic.

(res) 24. Authorizing employees in the UAW Local 867, Austin Parks Department, to participate in the Minnesota State Retirement System Healthcare Savings Plan and authorizing the Mayor to sign a contract addendum.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving the agenda as amended. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, approving Council minutes from March 3, 2020. Carried.

City Attorney Craig Byram provided a recap of the closed Council meeting earlier in the day for the purpose of evaluating Craig Clark City Administrator. The Council will be evaluating Mr. Clark's job performance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member King, approving the consent agenda as follows:

Licenses:

Food (transfer): Perkins, LLC, 701 17th Avenue NW
Mobile Business: Mimi's Cones, 1208 10th Avenue SW

Claims:

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

Event Applications:

Farmers Market. Mondays and Thursdays May through October
Stepping Out for Autism Walk on April 19, 2020

Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing was held for street improvement assessments for 10th Street NE (Oakland Place SE to 2nd Ave NE) and 4th Street SW (Oakland Ave W to 1st Ave SW), Project 20101. The amount to be assessed is \$139,883.07 at 4% for 15 years. Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the specific details of each project were presented at the February 18, 2020 improvement hearings and notices were mailed to each property owner with the exact assessment amount and payment options.

Mr. Lang noted that the State Aid funds are applied to the entire pool of money for all assessments so it is fair to all residents.

There were no comments and there were no written or oral objections.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution declaring the cost of Project 20101. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting resolution adopting the assessment roll for Project 20101. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvement assessments for 5th Street SW (1st Ave to 5th Ave SW), 6th Avenue SW (4th Street to 6th Street SW) and 7th Street SW (4th Avenue to 5th Avenue SW), Project 20102. The amount to be assessed is \$164,179.06 at 4% for 15 years. Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the specific details of each project were presented at the February 18, 2020 improvement hearings and notices were mailed to each property owner with the exact assessment amount and payment options.

Patricia Woodhouse, 1205 9th Street NW, noted that the interest rate is too high.

There were no additional public comments.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution declaring the cost of Project 20102. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting resolution adopting the assessment roll for Project 20102. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvement assessments for 5th Avenue NE (Oakland Pl NE to 19th Street NE), Project 20103. The amount to be assessed is \$175,424.67 at 4% for 15 years. Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the specific details of each project were presented at the February 18, 2020 improvement hearings and notices were mailed to each property owner with the exact assessment amount and payment options.

There were no comments and there were no written or oral objections.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, adopting a resolution declaring the cost of Project 20103. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting resolution adopting the assessment roll for Project 20103. Carried 7-0.

A public hearing was held for street improvement assessments for 7th Street NW (8th Avenue NW to 13th Avenue NW) and 9th Avenue NW (4th Street NW to 8th Street NW), Project 20105. Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the specific details of each project were presented at the February 18, 2020 improvement hearings and notices were mailed to each property owner with the exact assessment amount and payment options.

There were no comments and there were no written or oral objections.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution declaring the cost of Project 20105. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting resolution adopting the assessment roll for Project 20105. Carried 7-0.

BID OPENING AND AWARD

The City received bids for the Todd Park Lift Station Removal. The following bids were received:

Contractor	Bid
Hodgman Drainage Co. Inc.	\$ 95,135.00

GM Contracting, Inc.	\$123,027.85
Kuechle Underground, Inc.	\$164,365.00

Mr. Lang stated the City is looking to upgrade the sewer system at Todd Park. He recommended awarding the bid to Hodgman Drainage Co., Inc.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, awarding the bid for Todd Park Lift Station Removal to Hodgman Drainage Co. Inc. Carried 7-0.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council approve a DNR grant agreement for the flood buyout of 509 South Main Street. The property was appraised at \$103,000 and with abatement and demolition the project is expected to be \$123,000. The DNR grant would cover 50% of the costs and LOST funds would cover the remainder.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving a DNR acquisition flood grant agreement. Carried 7-0.

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert requested the Council approve 2019 budget carry overs. Mr. Dankert itemized the items in the General Fund, Capital Improvement Revolving Fund and Central Garage Fund. The funds for the items were not spent in 2019 and the departments will carry them over into the 2020 budget.

Moved by Council Member Helle, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving budget adjustment number one, 2019 budget carryovers. Carried 7-0.

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert requested the Council approve a budget adjustment to amend certain budget items for the Hormel Foundation grant expenditures.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, adopting a resolution approving budget adjustment number two, amending the general and capital improvement revolving funds. Carried 7-0.

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert requested Council authorization to pay off Series 2010A bonds that were issued to finance sewer improvements. Mr. Dankert stated market conditions allow for this and payoff the bonds to alleviate higher interest savings.

Council Member Baskin asked if the City would be refinancing or paying off any other bonds in this market.

Mr. Dankert stated the City only has two bond issues left. One of them is directly tied to a TIF district and the other has approximately a year left.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution

authorizing the call of certain outstanding taxable general obligation utility revenue bonds. Carried 7-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested the Council set the electronics recycling event for May 9, 2020 at the Mower County Fairgrounds. The event has been successful in the past and the City would like to continue it for another year. The event will be in conjunction with Mower County. He stated the City would also be looking for volunteers for the event.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member King, setting the annual electronics recycling event for May 9, 2020. Carried.

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Nelson requested the Council approve a grant application for portages on the north and south side of 4th Avenue on the Cedar River.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving a DNR grant application for Cedar River dam portages. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Baskin, appointing Oballa Oballa as the next honorary council member May – July 2020. Carried.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace requested the City act as the fiscal agent for the Culture and Arts Commission.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, approving the City of Austin act as the fiscal agent for the Culture and Arts Commission. Carried.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace requested the Council adopt fees for zoning compliance letter. The fees would be \$30 for residential properties and \$100 for commercial properties.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Helle, adopting a resolution adopting fees for zoning compliance letters. Carried 7-0.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace reviewed a variance request from Shannon Schewe. She stated the petitioner is requesting a variance from Austin City Code Section 11.01 regulating the square footage of accessory structures. The property owner already has one detached structure and is requesting a second garage totaling 1,000 square feet and that would put him over the allowable square footage by 400 square feet. The Planning Commission reviewed the matter at their March 12, 2020 meeting and recommended approval by an 8-0 vote.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving a variance request for Shannon Schewe. Carried.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution declaring the property at 906 13th Avenue NE a hazardous structure. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution declaring the property at 904 13th Avenue NE a hazardous structure. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 1812 Oakland Avenue E, Affordable Rentals Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member King, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 503 8th Avenue SE, Wakefield Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 504 18th Street SE, Anderson Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Waller, authorizing the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 201 3rd Street SE, Pizano Property. Carried.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested the Council approve the pandemic plan for CLOVID-19. He stated the City would allow employees to go negative in sick leave and other precautionary measures. He also noted the Council may have electronic meetings in the future.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member King, adopting a resolution approving temporary relief from certain procedures and procedures during the CLOVID-19 pandemic.

City Administrator Craig Clark requested a change to the health care savings plan for the UAW Parks Department due to a retirement.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Fischer, authorizing employees in the UAW Local 867, Austin Parks Department, to participate in the Minnesota State Retirement System Healthcare Savings Plan and authorizing the Mayor to sign a contract addendum. Carried 7-0.

REPORTS

Council Member Baskin stated he did a ride along with the Police Department and appreciated the opportunity.

Council Member Helle stated the community must pull together in the COVID-19 panic.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated he attended legislative action day at the capitol. He said he had meetings with legislators and the MPCA Commissioner.

City Clerk Ann Kasel stated the Census letters are in the mail and encouraged citizens to reply.

HONORARY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Honorary Council Member Karem Ramirez stated she appreciates being in City government at this time.

Oballa Oballa, 1000 14th Street NW, thanked the Council for all the work the City is doing with the CLOVID-19 outbreak.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Helle, adjourning the meeting to April 6, 2020. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:19 p.m.

Approved: March 16, 2020

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____