M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 21, 2025
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Laura Helle, Michael Postma, Jason Baskin, Joyce Poshusta 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, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Public Works Director Steven Lang, City Attorney Craig Byram, Park and Rec Director Jason Sehon, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann and City Clerk Brianne Wolf
APPEARING IN PERSON:	Austin Daily Herald, City of Austin Police Officers, Minnesota Law Enforcement Liaison Scott McConkey, Paramount Theater Director Tom Robbins, Community Members

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 Waller, approving Council minutes from April 7, 2025. Carried.

Police Chief McKichan recognized Officer Josh Bradley and Officer Ryan McCormack for receiving an award from the State of Minnesota for their extra work on DUI arrests. He stated these Officers have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

Minnesota Law Enforcement Liaison Scott McConkey recognized the Officers as DWI Enforcer All-Stars for all their efforts towards enforcing impaired driving laws. They were presented with awards in front of Council and attendees.

Mayor King thanked them for their outstanding work and he appreciates all that they do for the community.

Mayor King read a proclamation recognizing May 10, 2025 as the City of Austin Arbor Day and the Month of May as Arbor Month.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Licenses:

Right of Way: Volt Electric, Austin, MN
Mobile: La Borinqua, Albert Lea, MN
Mobile: Mimi's Cone, Austin, MN
Mobile: Cousins Maine Lobster, Astoria, NY

Claims:

a. Pre-list of Bills
b. Financial Report

Events:

Farmers Market (Downtown) June 2, 2025 – October 27, 2025
4th Avenue Fest on June 4, 2025

Carried.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Director of Public Works Steven Lang stated the resolution presented to the Council is usually adopted in December, but the Public Works Department is looking to add the Fats, Oils, Grease, and Sewer Fees now that the ordinance related to these fees has passed and will go into effect.

Moved by Council Member Helle, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution establishing miscellaneous administration license fees for 2025. Carried 7-0.

Director of Public Works Steven Lang stated the City has a contract with Oyer Trucking to haul liquid sludge. Instead of readvertising for this contract, they would like to extend the current contract with Oyer Trucking. They would like to extend this contract for two more years at the same rates the City is paying now.

Mr. Lang stated once the Waste Water Treatment Plant renovations are completed, they will no longer need to haul this product as the liquid will go away. He would recommend extending this contract with Oyer Trucking.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving a contract with Oyer Trucking for 2025 and 2026. Carried 7-0.

City Administrator Craig Clark presented an updated policy on employee engagement to Council. Mr. Clark stated the policy had new additions that focused on employee years of service for recognition. He stated the policy had been before the employee engagement team, and they endorsed it. The policy was also discussed at the previous work session. He is looking for Council approval.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Waller, establishing an Employee Recognition Policy. Carried 7-0.

City Administrator Craig Clark stated the Paramount Theater is requesting the City cover $46,500 of the $93,000 project for the proposed ADA modifications to the Paramount front entry. This would include construction work on the front entry and rework and bump out of the curb.

Council Member Postma stated he reached out to the Paramount Theater and he and Council Member Baskin were able to tour the theater to better understand the project. He is happy to support this project.

Tom Robbins, Director of the Austin Area Arts, addressed the Council and thanked them for taking the time to better understand this project. He also appreciated Council's time and effort in reviewing this request for funding.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Baskin, approving funding for the Paramount Theater ADA entrance in the amount of $46,500 out of contingency. Carried 7-0.

Public Works Director Steven Lang discussed the intersections of Main Street and 2nd Avenue NW and Main Street and 4th Avenue NW. He is proposing installing temporary bump outs and stop signs instead of the flashing lights that are currently positioned at these intersections. Mr. Lang stated this would involve a four-way stop at Main Street and 4th Avenue NW, and a two-way stop at Main Street and 2nd Avenue NW.

Moved by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, approving the placement of temporary bump outs on Main Street. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adopting a resolution accepting donations to the City of Austin. Carried 7-0.

Moved by Council Member Fisher, seconded by Council Member Waller, to grant the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 506 6th Avenue SW, Toscano Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Fisher, seconded by Council Member Baskin, to grant the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 408 2nd Street SE, Neri Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Postma, to grant the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 406 2nd Street SE, Raygor Property. Carried.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Council Member Poshusta thanked her colleagues, the citizens of Austin and the City staff. She stated it has been a pleasure working with everyone.

Mayor King thanked Joyce for her service to the City of Austin.

Council Member Helle congratulated Council Member Poshusta on her new endeavors and thanked her for her service to the City of Austin. She stated Council Member Poshusta was a great voice for the employees of the City and did a good job bringing their concerns forward. Council Member Helle stated Fourth Avenue Fest is coming up on Wednesday, June 4th.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated the library will be closed on April 28th. Library staff will begin implementing the new system changes and will continue to work through this on April 29th through May 1st. Communication is being shared with the public with what they can and can't do during the transition. He also thanked Council Member Poshusta for her service. He stated Council Member Poshusta has been an outstanding and excellent voice representing the people of the 3rd Ward as well as all citizens of Austin and he wishes her well in her endeavors.

Council Member Postma stated there are a lot of activities happening this weekend in Austin. There is the citywide cleanup and there are still volunteer opportunities available for this activity in the morning. He stated Beer, Bacon and Beignets is happening in the afternoon, and they're looking for people to attend and or volunteer for this event. He expressed his thanks to Council Member Poshusta for all the work that she's done for the City of Austin.

Council Member Baskin enjoyed his conversation with the School Board and the County commissioners last week at the meeting Council attended with these boards. He expressed his appreciation and support for their work. He stated this is not easy work, but he believes that people have the community's best interests in mind. He appreciates everybody's time, energy, and work to ensure we represent Austin in the best possible way, most positively and proactively. He thanked Council Member Poshusta for her service. He wished her the best of luck on her next chapter.

Council Member Waller wished Council Member Poshusta the best of luck in her future.

Mayor King thanked the sentenced to serve program. They went around Mill Pond and picked up 380lbs of trash and still have more to do. He thanked everyone who will be picking up trash in Austin this weekend and making the community look better. He thanked Council Member Poshusta for her service on the Council. He stated we are all aware this job isn't easy and comes with a certain level of stress and Council Member Poshusta has done an admirable job.

Council Member Postma stated the Third Ward Council seat will be open for applications on Wednesday, April 23rd to the public through May 13th and information will be available on the City website.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Helle, adjourning the meeting to May 5, 2025. Carried.

Adjourned: 5:54 p.m.

Approved: May 5, 2025

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____