

CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2023

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Saint Peter was conducted in the Governors' Room of the Community Center.

A quorum present, Mayor Nowell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The following members were present: Shanon Nowell, Brad DeVos, Darrell Pettis, Keri Johnson, Ben Ranft, Dustin Sharstrom, and Emily Bruflat. The following officials were also present: City Administrator Todd Prafke, Assistant City Attorney Steven Winkler, and City Engineer Jeff Domras.

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Sharstrom, to approve the agenda. With all in favor, the agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Bruflat, seconded by Sharstrom, to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2023 regular City Council meeting. With all in favor, the minutes were approved. A complete copy of the minutes of the January 9, 2023 regular City Council meeting is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Proceedings 20.

Public Hearing: Township 361 Right-of-Way Plat – Mayor Nowell reviewed the process for conducting a public hearing and then opened the public hearing on adoption of a right-of-way plat for Township 361st Avenue at 7:05 p.m. Community Development Director Baker reviewed the need for adoption of a right-of-way plat for Township Road 361st Avenue which is a gravel road located directly west of the High School. Baker noted the City, in conjunction with Oshawa and Traverse Townships, had applied for Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) grant funds to improve the Avenue to an urban roadway and had been awarded \$1.25 million for the approximately \$2 million project. In order to proceed with the improvement, Baker stated it was necessary to acquire eight (8) parcels to be used as right-of-way for the proposed 80' collector street and that five of the six property owners had already agreed to the sale with the remaining property owner still in negotiations. Baker recommended, and the Planning and Zoning Commission concurred, that the right-of-way plat be adopted.

Bob Lambert, 36233 Fort Road, addressed the Council to speak not about the proposed plat, but about an area drainage issue that has resulted in possible developers walking away from his 36-acre property located west of the roadway. Lambert noted he was putting the City on record that he is against any drainage system and expressed his belief that there should be a series of ponds constructed to slow runoff and direct water away from his property.

There being no further speakers, the hearing was declared closed at 7:16 p.m.

Consent Agenda – In motion by Ranft, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023–14 entitled "Resolution Approving Consent Agenda" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-14 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Township 361 Right-Of-Way Plat –Community Development Director Baker presented the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation for approval of Right-Of-Way Plat No. 5 Township 361st Avenue. Baker noted that parcels identified as 4A and 6A will be used as planned stormwater detention ponds. Councilmember Bruflat asked that the plans for development of the roadway include native plantings alongside the non-permeable surface due to their longer root systems. Councilmembers had extensive discussion regarding drainage, especially from agriculture uses to the west of the roadway. City Engineer Domras indicated that allowing all of the rural drainage from the west into the City's stormwater system would overwhelm the City's system, but the water runoff issue had nothing to do with the right-of-way plat being considered. Domras indicated the City was working to ensure the flow rate from the west didn't increase.

City Administrator Prafke noted that because the parcels proposed for purchase fall under a prescriptive easement, it was important to note that the roadway improvement can move ahead without buying the land, but purchase of the parcels was the preferred method.

In motion by Ranft, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-15 entitled "Resolution Approving Right-Of-Way Plat No. 5, 361st Avenue" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-15 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Request For Proposals: City Branding Project – City Administrator Prafke reported that as directed by the City Council, a Request For Proposals for a City re-branding project had been prepared. Prafke noted that should a consultant be hired to provide for a rebrand of the City, the expected cost would be \$10,000. In motion by Johnson, seconded by DeVos, Resolution No. 2023-16 entitled “Resolution Authorizing Issuance Of Request For Proposals For City Rebranding Effort” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-16 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023-2024 Water Fund Budgets – Finance Director Vogel presented the proposed 2023 (\$3,337,608) and 2024 (\$3,463,951) Water Fund budgets and recommendations for a one percent (1%) rate increase effective April 1, 2023 and another one percent (1%) rate increase effective January 1, 2024. Vogel reviewed the proposed budgets which included a 6.5% annual transfer to the General Fund and funding for capital improvements/purchases in each budget year.

Councilmember Pettis questioned why the base and meter charges would be decreased by \$6 per month during 2024. Vogel noted those amounts were in error and instead of \$10.56, the correct amount was \$16.56.

In motion by Ranft, seconded by DeVos, Resolution No. 2023-17 entitled “Resolution Adopting The 2023-2024 Water Fund Budgets” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-17 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

In motion by Bruflat, seconded by Johnson, Resolution No. 2023-18 entitled “Resolution Adopting Water Rates” was introduced with the changes noted to the 2024 base and meter rates. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted as corrected. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-18 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023-2024 Wastewater Fund Budgets – Finance Director Vogel presented the proposed 2023 (\$3,900,846) and 2024 (\$4,104,916) Wastewater Fund budgets and recommendations for one percent (1%) rate increases in 2023 (effective April 1st) and 2024 (effective January 1st). Vogel noted that with one exception, all debt had been paid off in the Wastewater Fund and the two-year budget cycle included a 6.5% plus \$200,000 transfer to the General Fund in each year and \$550,000 transfers to the Water Fund in each of the two years.

Councilmember DeVos announced his intention to modify the Wastewater budgets by authorizing additional transfers of \$100,000 in each budget year to the Stormwater fund as a means of addressing the Stormwater fund deficit. DeVos indicated that the Water Fund reserve level would still be \$550,000 over the established reserve goal for the Water Fund if the Stormwater transfer was authorized.

Councilmember Johnson asked if doing so would establish a precedence and asked what other alternatives there would be to such an action.

City Administrator Prafke, who indicated the transfers between the Water and Wastewater Funds were connected by how those utilities are billed, expressed his concern that no such connection established between Wastewater charges and Stormwater charges so there would be no basis for the transfer. Prafke expressed a preference for seeing different actions in the Stormwater Fund if the Council was concerned about the deficit.

DeVos noted that there was no such concern between transfers from Water/Wastewater to the General Fund and stated he was looking at the transfer from a planning perspective to tackle large rate increases in the Stormwater Fund.

Prafke outlined the options available to the Council which included approving the budget as proposed; approving the budget with direction to staff to transfer the funds to Stormwater as requested by Councilmember DeVos or doing nothing.

In motion by DeVos, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2023-19 entitled “Resolution Adopting The 2023-2024 Wastewater Fund Budgets” was introduced with the addition of directing staff to provide for \$100,000 transfers to the Stormwater Fund in each budget year. Upon roll call, Councilmembers Sharstrom, Bruflat, DeVos, Johnson, Pettis, and Ranft voting aye, Mayor Nowell voting nay, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted as modified. A complete

copy of Resolution No. 2023-19 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

In motion by Pettis, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2023-20 entitled "Resolution Adopting Wastewater Rates" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-20 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Request For City Assistance: St. Patrick's Day Parade – City Administrator Prafke recommended approval of a request submitted by the St. Peter Ambassador's for City assistance for the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Prafke noted the request included parking restrictions along the parade route (South Third Street from West Broadway Avenue to West Mulberry Street); use of barricades which would be delivered and collected by the Public Works Department; and Police traffic control along the parade route. In motion by Sharstrom, seconded by Bruflat, Resolution No. 2023-21 entitled "Resolution Authorizing City Assistance For St. Patrick's Day Parade" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-21 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Bond Reimbursement Resolution – City Administrator Prafke recommended adoption of a resolution declaring the City's intent to reimburse itself for expenditures related to projects to be funded by future debt (bond) issuance. Prafke noted the process is authorized in State Statute.

Councilmember Pettis asked if replacement of the TREEmendous play structure should be included in the list of projects included in the Resolution. Prafke stated the playground project would not be funded by debt issuance. In motion by Johnson, seconded by Pettis, Resolution No. 2023-22 entitled "Resolution Declaring The Official Intent Of The City Of Saint Peter To Reimburse Certain Expenditures From The Proceeds Of Bonds To Be Issued By The City" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-22 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Reports

Mayor's Report – Mayor Nowell had no reports.

Councilmember Pettis reported on funding and programs available through the ATP grants which included projects focusing on solar charging, energy efficiency and carbon reduction.

Christmas Tree Collection Report – Public Works Director Moulton reported 100 Christmas trees had been collected during the curbside collection. City Administrator Prafke reminded the public the service is funded by the Environmental Services fee on utility bills and that those who had missed the collection could take trees to the yard waste drop-off site.

Nixle/City Information Line – City Administrator Prafke encouraged those who wish to be notified of snow emergencies and other public safety issues to sign up for the free community notification system through Nixle. Prafke also reminded the public of the City information line (507-934-0675) that, among other notices, includes snow emergency information.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Sharstrom, seconded by Ranft, to adjourn. With all in favor, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Bradley DeVos
Mayor pro tem

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke
City Administrator