

CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2022**

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 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Shanon Nowell, Keri Johnson, Brad DeVos, Darrell Pettis, Ben Ranft, and Dustin Sharstrom. Absent was Councilmember Emily Bruflat. The following officials were also present: City Administrator Todd Prafke and City Attorney James Brandt.

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

Public Hearing: SCDP Grant Application – Park View Manor – Mayor Nowell opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. to receive comments on a grant application to the Department of Employment and Economic Development, Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) for funding for a rehabilitation project at Park View Manor, the City's low-moderate income rental housing facility.

Joel Hollerich, Program and Lending Underwriter with the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership, the company that had been retained to assist with application to the State's SCDP grant program, reported the \$500,000 grant request would be used to partly finance repairs to the roof and air make-up system for Park View Manor at 1010 South Fourth Street. Hollerich reported the building was originally constructed in 1970 and major repairs to the roof were last completed following the 1998 tornado. Hollerich identified the total project cost at an estimated \$750,000 and noted any additional funds which may be needed above any grant amount would be funded by the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority with cash on hand. Hollerich indicated the grant would be a ten (10) year, zero percent (0%) interest deferred loan that would be forgiven one-tenth each year.

Hollerich provided background on the SWMHP staff who will assist with the project including himself (Program Lending Underwriter with over twenty years financial services experience); Jesse Schott, Director of Construction Services (over 15 years' experience in residential and commercial construction and inspections); Ali Joens, Director of Homeownership and residential lending since 2001 who will handle all fair housing requirements; and Construction Services Manager Barb Kirchner (20 years' experience with the SCDP program) who will oversee labor standards, environmental and general SCDP questions.

Hollerich also outlined the timetable with grant award announcements expected in June followed by execution of agreements for administration of the grant and for the City to act as legal sponsor and other federal requirements during the next two months; receipt of funds in the fall, and finally, the beginning of construction. Hollerich noted that while the project must be completed by December, 2024, plans are for a much earlier completion date.

City Administrator Prafke noted that as one of the few preliminary applications invited to submit a full application, staff believed the possibility of being awarded grant funds was high. Prafke also acknowledged the efforts of Park View Manor Executive Director Michelle Connor in putting together the documents needed for submission of the grant application.

There being no further speakers, the hearing was declared closed at 7:07 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Pettis, seconded by Sharstrom, to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2022 regular City Council meeting. With all in favor, the minutes were approved. A complete copy of the minutes of the January 24, 2022 regular City Council meeting is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Proceedings 20.

Consent Agenda – In motion by Pettis, seconded by Johnson, Resolution No. 2022–23 entitled "Resolution Approving Consent Agenda" was introduced. Councilmember Johnson questioned if the second School Resource Officer (SRO) would begin work once both Police Officer vacancies are filled. City Administrator Prafke noted that the second SRO would not begin school duties until the new Police Officers had completed their Field Training which, depending on the experience the new Officer's bring to the position, could be up to twelve (12) weeks after

they begin work. Councilmember Pettis questioned why the consent agenda contained two disbursement lists. Finance Director Vogel noted that at the beginning of each year a second list is often included as bills from the prior year are processed. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022–23 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

SCDP Grant Application – Park View Manor – City Administrator Prafke recommended approval of the resolution supporting a Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) grant application to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Security. Councilmember Johnson asked what the funding plan would be if the grant was not awarded. Prafke reported Plan “B” would be to issue debt at a much higher cost than the forgivable SCDP grant funds. Prafke reminded the City Council that the project, as outlined in the grant application, met a defined housing need within the community and would eliminate blight from moisture leakage in the low to moderate income housing facility. Prafke also noted the average income of residents in the building was only \$18,000.

Councilmember Johnson asked about the facility vacancy rate. Executive Director Michelle Connor indicated the building was 100% occupied with a waiting list. In motion by Ranft, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2022-24 entitled “Resolution In Support Of A Small Cities Development Program Project For Improvement Of Park View Manor At 1010 South Fourth Street” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-24 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Fire Relief Association Benefit Increase Request – City Administrator Prafke recommended approval of a request by the Fire Relief Association to increase the annual service benefit amount to \$3,900 effective April 1, 2022. Prafke noted the fund, which is a separate 501C3 entity, is funded by the two percent (2%) tax on fire insurance which is collected by the State of Minnesota and then redistributed to Fire Relief Associations. Prafke indicated the fund can comfortably support the increase, but if that were to change, the City has a fiduciary responsibility to make the fund whole. Prafke also requested a change to the first “whereas” to eliminate the phrase “....provided the City makes a contribution...” In motion by DeVos, seconded by Johnson, Resolution No. 2022-25 entitled “Resolution Approving Increase In Lump Sum Pension Benefit For The Saint Peter Fire Relief Association” was introduced with the proposed language change. Upon roll call, Councilmembers Sharstrom, DeVos, Johnson, Ranft and Mayor Nowell voting aye, Councilmember Pettis abstaining, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-25 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Hallet Pond Second Addition Preliminary/Final Plats – Community Development Director Wille presented the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation for approval of the preliminary plat of Hallet Pond Second Addition. Wille noted the 5.42 acre site was platted in 2022 as Outlot B and the preliminary plat would create Block 1, Lot 1 and Block 1 Outlet A which would need to be replatted for future development. Wille reported the Planning Commission had conducted a public hearing and only one written comment was received asking questions about setbacks (required setback will be 50’ from the high water line of Hallett’s Pond the same as Hy-Vee) and light pollution (“dark sky” compliant lighting will be required). Councilmember Pettis questioned who was responsible for maintaining the stormwater pond depicted on the plat. Wille noted the temporary pond is currently maintained by the City

In motion by DeVos, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2022-26 entitled “Resolution Approving Preliminary Plat Of Hallet Pond Second Addition As Petitioned By The Ruth Ann Weelborg Revocable Trust” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-26 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Community Development Director Wille also presented the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation for approval of the final plat of Hallet Pond Second Addition. In motion by Ranft, seconded by Johnson, Resolution No. 2022-27 entitled “Resolution Approving Final Plat Of Hallet Pond Second Addition As Petitioned By The Ruth Ann Weelborg Revocable Trust And Recommended By The Planning Commission” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-27 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

ADA Grant Program Renewal – Community Development Director Wille presented the Economic Development Authority (EDA) recommendation to re-authorize the ADA accessibility grant program that has been so successful in the past two years. Wille also pointed out the

EDA recommendation is to expand the program to include all commercial properties and not just those in the Central Business District. Wille indicated \$25,400 in interest from the revolving loan funds was available to finance this year's program. Councilmember DeVos encouraged the EDA to consider funding the project at a level similar to the previous year. In motion by Sharstrom, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2022-28 entitled "Resolution Reauthorizing Central Business District Accessibility Improvement Grant Program In 2022" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-28 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24. Councilmember Johnson commended local resident Eileen Holz whose accessibility study a few years prior had "moved the needle" on establishment of the grant program.

Calling For Closed Session – Utilities Union Contract Negotiations – City Administrator Prafke asked for a closed session as authorized by State Statute to discuss labor services contract negotiations with the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 70 (Utilities). In motion by Johnson, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2022-29 entitled "Resolution Calling For Closed Session" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-29 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

The Council adjourned to closed session at 7:41 p.m. to discuss the Utilities union contract.

The closed session was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

The Council returned to open session at 8:04 p.m.

2022-2023 International Union of Operating Engineers Local 70 (Utilities) Contract – City Administrator Prafke recommended execution of the 2022-2023 union contract with the Utilities union which would provide for a three percent (3%) across the board wage increase; an additional \$1 per hour in each year of the agreement for Electric Linemen; an increase in on-call pay of \$25 for each year of the contract and modifications to dates and any typos in the contract. Prafke noted the settlement would be approximately \$13,000 over the 2022 budget amount. In motion by Pettis, seconded by DeVos, Resolution No. 2022-30 entitled "Resolution Approving Contract By And Between The City of Saint Peter And International Union of Operating Engineers Local 70 (Utilities) For Calendar Years 2022 And 2023" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2022-30 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Reports

Mayor's Report – Mayor Nowell thanked the St. Peter Firefighters (members of the Fire Relief Association) for their efforts to protect the community.

Newly Elected Officials Conference – Councilmember Sharstrom reported on his attendance at the League of Minnesota Cities conference for newly elected officials. Sharstrom said the "very beneficial" conference included topics on the Open Meeting Law, use of social media, and budgeting among other things and that he was able to immediately utilize some of the information he learned.

Councilmember Pettis also provided a report on his attendance at the conference and highlighted the League's advice to "ask your City Attorney when in doubt", being careful when using social media; data practices, the Open Meeting Law, and the current legislative session. Pettis expressed his belief the conference was "well worth it".

Chief Peters – City Administrator Prafke expressed sympathies to the family of former Chief of Police Matt Peters who passed away unexpectedly.

There being no further business, a motion was made by DeVos, seconded by Ranft, to adjourn. With all in favor, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Shanon A. Nowell
Mayor

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke
City Administrator