

CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 13, 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 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Shanon Nowell, Brad DeVos, Keri Johnson, Ben Ranft, Darrell Pettis, Emily Bruflat and Dustin Sharstrom. 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 Ranft, to approve the agenda. With all in favor, the agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Bruflat, seconded by Ranft, to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2023 regular City Council meeting. With all in favor, the minutes were approved. A complete copy of the minutes of the February 27, 2023 regular City Council meeting is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Proceedings 20.

Public Hearing: Windsor Pond Fifth Addition Preliminary/Final Plats – Mayor Nowell reviewed the process for conducting a public hearing and then opened the hearing on the proposed preliminary and final plats for Windsor Pond Fifth Addition at 7:02 p.m. Community Development Director Baker provided the staff report on the proposed preliminary plat, final plat and development agreement. Baker reported the Fifth Addition would be the final addition to the housing development and included 30 acres that would be divided into ten (10) lots for slab on grade patio homes. Baker noted that when the first phase of the development was created, lots were smaller but had increased in size since that time with each addition. Baker indicated the plats had been reviewed by the City Engineer and Public Works Director as well as his office and by the Planning and Zoning Commission with all in agreement that the plats met the standards for development as outlined by the City. There being no further speakers, the hearing was declared closed at 7:05 p.m.

Consent Agenda – In motion by Ranft, seconded by Pettis, Resolution No. 2023–41 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. 2023-41 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Windsor Pond Preliminary/Final Plats/Development Agreement– Community Development Director Baker presented the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation for approval of the preliminary plat for Windsor Pond Fifth Addition. In motion by DeVos, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-42 entitled "Resolution Adopting Windsor Pond Fifth Addition Preliminary Plat" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-42 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Baker also presented the Planning Commission recommendation for approval of the final plat for the Addition and recommended authorization be provided for execution of the development agreement. Baker noted the development agreement specified each party's responsibilities including the developer's parkland dedication fees, payment of the City's legal fees, and other issues. In motion by Johnson, seconded by Pettis, Resolution No. 2023-43 entitled "Resolution Adopting Windsor Pond Fifth Addition Final Plat And Authorizing Execution Of Development

Agreement“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-43 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Revolving Loan Application: YCDHT, LLC – Community Development Director Baker presented the Economic Development Authority’s recommendation for approval of a revolving loan to YCDHT, LLC to be used to finance building improvements at 217-219 West Park Row. Baker noted the loan amount (\$21,960) was 90% of the total project cost, the loan would be amortized over 10 years at zero percent (0%) interest and, if all payments were made on time and in full, the balance of the loan would be forgiven when the principal reached \$5,000.

Councilmember Johnson noted that one of the improvements was tuckpointing and questioned whether staff had worked to help downtown property owners who were having difficulty finding contractors able to do tuckpointing. City Administrator Prafke and Community Development Director Baker noted they had contacted several tuckpointing contractors to gauge interest in doing an aggregate project that would include small and larger jobs for downtown building owners.

In motion by Bruflat, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-44 entitled “Resolution Approving Central Business District Renovation/Accessibility Enhancement Loan To YCDHT, LLC, To Partially Finance Exterior Improvements And ADA Access At 217/219 West Park Row“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-44 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023 Accessibility Improvement Grant Program – Community Development Director Baker presented the Economic Development Authority recommendation to re-authorize the Accessibility Improvement Program begun in 2020 which funds accessibility improvements for local businesses. Baker noted the proposed budget of \$55,000 represented the interest gained from unused loan funds and reminded Councilmembers that the 2022 program had been opened up to all businesses and not just those in the central business district. Baker also reminded Councilmembers that the loans are issued at zero percent (0%) interest and are forgivable at the rate of 1/15th each year.

City Administrator Prafke noted that more than ten percent (10%) of the local population is physically handicapped and the program has been very successful. Prafke also noted that the funding is not released until the project is completed.

In motion by Johnson, seconded by DeVos, Resolution No. 2023-45 entitled “Resolution Authorizing Commercial Accessibility Improvement Grant Program To Finance Building Renovations To Enhance Accessibility For Those With Mobility Impairments For Calendar Year 2023“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-45 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Assessment Policy Modifications – City Administrator Prafke presented a draft assessment policy which had been modified at Council direction, to provide for flat fees for assessments for water, street, and sewer work. Prafke noted the proposed modifications were being considered as the housing market was making it increasingly difficult for local governments to meet the threshold for assessment of costs for public improvements wherein the assessed amount must be equal to or less than the improved valuation of a property after the work was completed.

Prafke reminded Councilmembers that establishing flat fees for assessment would mean the community as a whole would be responsible for making up any difference in project cost from what abutting property owners are assessed.

Councilmember DeVos, citing current market and investment conditions, suggested that the policy be modified to change the tier levels for assessment terms; more specifically that level three of the assessment period (from \$2,501 to \$10,000) be modified to be \$2,501 to \$5,000 and the fourth level be modified to be for all assessments exceeding \$5,000. DeVos expressed his belief that paying less per year in assessments for projects on the top end of the scale would be easier on property owners.

In motion by DeVos, seconded by Bruflat, Resolution No. 2023-46 entitled "Resolution Establishing An Assessment Policy For Certain Construction Projects" was introduced with the proposed changes to the assessment period levels. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted as modified. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-46 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

In motion by Pettis, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-47 entitled "Resolution Adopting Modifications To 2023 Municipal Fee Schedule" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-47 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Tree Worker License Application – City Administrator Prafke noted that nothing had been found in the background investigation of the applicant that would prohibit issuance of a Tree Worker license to Lawnpro Lawn and Tree. In motion by Johnson, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2023-48 entitled "Resolution Approving Tree Worker License Application" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-48 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023 Equipment Certificate Purchase: Pool Painting – Public Works Director Moulton recommended accepting the lowest cost proposal received for work to sandblast and repaint the City's outdoor pools. Moulton noted \$90,000 had been budgeted in the 2023 equipment certificate for this work and the proposal from Paintball LLC was significantly lower at \$44,025. Moulton also noted that Paintball LLC had previously done similar work for the cities of Austin, Albert Lea and several others. In motion by Sharstrom, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2023-49 entitled "Resolution Approving 2023 Equipment Certificate Purchase – Outdoor Pool Sandblasting And Repainting" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-49 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Application – Public Works Director Moulton requested authorization to submit an application in the amount of \$350,000 for Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation Grant program funding to fund some proposed improvements of a larger project in Gorman Park that was expected to cost \$2,000,000. Moulton noted the project required matching funds from the City and the City's share had been earmarked from American Recovery Plan funds received by the City during COVID.

City Administrator Prafke noted that unlike many other grant programs, the DNR grants required formal City Council approval for submission of the application.

In motion by Bruflat, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-50 entitled "Resolution Authorizing Application For The 2023 Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Outdoor Recreation Grant Program" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was

declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-50 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023 Park Row Street and Utility Improvements Assessments – Public Works Director Moulton reported the next steps in possible assessment of costs related to the 2023 Park Row Street and Utility Improvements Project would be for the Council to declare the costs to be assessed (\$236,832 of the expected total project cost of \$844,958) and call for a public hearing as required by M.S. 429. Moulton reported bids had been received and staff was in the process of reviewing the bids and calculating the new proposed assessment amounts for each individual property based on the newly adopted assessment policy.

In response to Council questions, Moulton indicated the formal bid award would be brought before the Council in the next sixty (60) days and mailed notices would be provided to each affected property owner in addition to notice of the hearing being published in the St. Peter Herald.

City Administrator Prafke noted that during the hearing, which was proposed to be held on April 10, 2023, property owners would have the ability to officially object to the proposed assessments and, if there were objections, the City Council would have that information when deciding whether or not to move forward with the project through award of the bid.

Moulton noted that the titles of both resolutions would be corrected to reflect the official project title which is 2023 Park Row Street and Utility Improvements Project.

In motion by Pettis, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-51 entitled "Resolution Declaring Cost To Be Assessed For 2023 Park Row Street And Utility Improvements Project And Ordering Preparation Of Proposed Assessments " was introduced with the corrected title. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-51 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

In motion by Johnson, seconded by Bruffat, Resolution No. 2023-52 entitled "Resolution Calling For A Hearing On The Proposed Assessment Of Costs For 2023 Park Row Street And Utility Improvements Project" was introduced with the corrected title. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-52 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Reports

Mayor's Report – Mayor Nowell proclaimed March, 2023 as "Women's History Month" and March 29, 2023 as "Vietnam Veteran's Day".

Mayor Nowell reported on the League of Minnesota Cities elected leaders training she had recently attended in Mankato.

Mayor Nowell expressed her condolences to the family of former City Councilmember and long-time Saint Peter community volunteer Jerry Pfeifer.

Highway 22 Corridor Study Open House – Public Works Director Moulton invited the public to attend the Highway 22 Corridor Study open house that was being hosted by the City, County and MnDOT on March 15th at the Senior Center. Moulton noted the study had been jointly commissioned by the three entities to consider roadway improvements to make the portion of highway between Highway 169 and Country Road 20 safer for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycle riders.

APPA Legislative Rally – Councilmembers Sharstrom and Ranft provided a report on their attendance at the American Public Power Association (APPA) Legislative Rally in Washington D.C. which gave all members opportunity to meet with Minnesota’s legislators and/or staff to discuss electric utility issues. Members noted discussion included solar panels, grid reliability, environmental sustainability, the need for federal funding, supply chain issues especially for new transformers; small issue exceptions for local banks, and electric vehicle charging. Public Works Director Moulton also mentioned substantial discussion took place related to cybersecurity needs for utilities following recent attacks on utility system facilities in parts of the country.

League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference – City Administrator Prafke encouraged Councilmembers interested in attending the annual League of Minnesota Cities conference in Duluth to register and reserve hotel rooms sooner rather than later.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Bruflat, seconded by Ranft, to adjourn. With all in favor, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Shanon A. Nowell
Mayor

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke
City Administrator