

CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 27, 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 7:04 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, City Attorney James Brandt, and City Engineer Jeff Domras.

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

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Pettis, to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2023 regular City Council meeting. With all in favor, the minutes were approved. A complete copy of the minutes of the March 13, 2023 regular City Council meeting is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Proceedings 20.

Consent Agenda – In motion by Ranft, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023–53 entitled "Resolution Approving Consent Agenda" was introduced. Councilmember DeVos questioned how much was budgeted for the basketball court improvements at Veteran's Field. Public Works Director Moulton reported \$50,000 had been budgeted and although the project was under budget, additional expenses would be incurred for new basketball hoops. DeVos further questioned how the proposed surplus property would be disposed of. City Administrator Prafke noted that, as per the City Code, the materials may be publicly sold, or if there was no value other than salvage, would be sold for scrap. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-53 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

City Code Modification: Weed/Tall Grass Regulations – City Administrator Prafke reviewed the proposed changes to the City Code weeds and tall grass regulations as requested by the City Council. Prafke noted that if approved, property owners would, except for eradicating noxious weeds, be allowed to maintain the portion of their lawn that is outside of four feet (4') from the City-owned boulevard in most any manner they see it. Prafke reminded the Council they had requested a simplified ordinance be drafted which gives property owners the opportunity to use their yards as they desired.

Councilmember Sharstrom, noting his conversations with City staff and members of the public who had all addressed concerns about allowing grass to achieve 12" in height before mowing, asked for the action to be tabled for further discussion. Sharstrom also stated that allowing for grass over 12" would allow the problem properties that much longer to be a problem.

A motion was made by Sharstrom, seconded by DeVos, to table action on the proposed City Code modifications to allow for additional Council discussion at the next workshop. With all in favor, the motion carried and action was tabled.

Furnishing An Electric Power Transformer Bid Award – Public Works Director Moulton requested award of the bid for a 10,500 kVA transformer for the Front Street Substation to low bidder Pennsylvania Transformer Technology, Inc. at the purchase price of \$989,398. Moulton noted that the bids were evaluated using the purchase price as well as the “owning” price and Pennsylvania Transformer was the lowest cost in both categories. Moulton noted that the purchase would be funded by a future bond issuance and was just one part of the improvements recommended in the substation with switchgear also being replaced and installation of both switchgear and the new transformer would be scheduled for the months of October-February when the City’s electric load was lighter.

Councilmember DeVos asked if the 1965 transformer that is being replaced would be refurbished or if there was value to it. Moulton noted that while there may be value left in the old transformer, the size would make moving the equipment risky and it was unlikely that other utilities would be interested. Moulton did note that the oil in the old transformer, which at one time contained PCB’s, had been replaced with non-PCB oil.

In motion by Pettis, seconded by DeVos, Resolution No. 2023-54 entitled “Resolution Awarding Bid For Furnishing An Electric Power Transformer” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-54 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023 Seal Coat Project Bid Award – Public Works Director Moulton recommended award of the bid for the 2023 Seal Coat Project to low bidder Allied, Inc. in the amount of \$3.61 per gallon with expenditure of up to \$184,351.87. Moulton noted that approximately 100 blocks would be seal coated. In motion by Ranft, seconded by Johnson, Resolution No. 2023-55 entitled “Resolution Awarding Bid For 2023 Street Seal Coat Project” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-55 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

2023 Day Care Task Force – Recreation and Leisure Services Director Schugel requested establishment of a day care task force to investigate ways the City may be able to help ease the difficulties parents have in finding local day care services. Schugel presented a list of twelve individuals to be appointed to the task force representing the City, County, center-based day cares, home providers, and a member at large. Schugel also noted that the City Council had previously created a day care task force that had been successful in providing additional opportunities. Councilmember DeVos indicated his desire to move the resolution but requested the phrase “day care” be changed to “child care”. In motion by DeVos, seconded by Johnson, the resolution initially entitled “Resolution Establishing 2023 Day Care Task Force” was introduced with the requested change to the phrase child care. Upon roll call of Resolution No. 2023-56 now formally named “Resolution Establishing 2023 Child Care Task Force”, and with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-56 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Tree Worker License Applications – City Administrator Prafke recommended approval of three new Tree Worker license applications. Prafke noted nothing had been found in the background investigations of the applicants that would prohibit issuance of the licenses. In motion by Sharstrom, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2023-57 entitled “Resolution Approving New Tree Worker License Applications” was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-57 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Reports

Mayor's Report – Mayor Nowell had no reports.

Councilmember Reports – Councilmember DeVos reported on a Region Nine Development Commission event he had attended that hosted a delegation from Germany where discussion centered on business and government issues, circular economy for recycling, and strategic planning.

MnDOT Highways 169/99/22 Project Open House – City Administrator Prafke reminded the public of the April 5th open house being hosted by MnDOT to provide public information on the upcoming project to improve the intersections of Highways 169/99/22 on the south end of Saint Peter.

Hallett's Based Nature Park – City Administrator Prafke reported on upcoming public information sessions to be held on March 29th and March 30th to receive public input on a proposed nature-based park at Hallett's Pond. Public Works Director Moulton noted that the public will have an opportunity to comment on proposed features of the park which will help the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board narrow down their recommendation. In response to a question from Councilmember Johnson, Recreation and Leisure Services Director Schugel reported that those who were unable to attend either session could provide comments to the Public Works or Recreation and Leisure Services Departments.

Closed Sessions – City Administrator Prafke requested closed sessions, as authorized by State Statute, to discuss two proposed real estate transactions related to City-owned property at Outlot A, Traverse Green Subdivision and 107 West Nassau Street. In motion by Ranft, seconded by Bruflat, Resolution No. 2023-58 entitled "Resolution Calling For Closed Sessions" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-58 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

The Council recessed at 7:45 p.m.

The Council adjourned to closed session in the Nicollet Room at 7:54 p.m. to discuss an offer to purchase the City owned property identified as Outlot A in Traverse Green Subdivision. The closed session ended at 8:25 p.m.

The Council began the second closed session to discuss the request to lease the City-owned property at 107 West Nassau Street at 8:25 p.m. The closed session ended at 8:33 p.m.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Sharstrom, to adjourn. With all in favor, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Shanon A. Nowell
Mayor

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke
City Administrator