

CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 9, 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: Keri Johnson, Darrell Pettis, Ben Ranft, Brad DeVos, Emily Bruflat, Dustin Sharstrom and Mayor Shanon Nowell. 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 September 25, 2023 regular City Council meeting. With all in favor, the minutes were approved. A complete copy of the minutes of the September 25, 2023 regular City Council meeting is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Proceedings 20.

Visitors – Bill Nelsen, 552 North Welco Drive and Rahima Sharma of 2107 Turpin Street, addressed the Council as representatives of the St. Peter Good Neighbor Diversity Council in response to the "false and derogatory" comments made about those of the Islamic faith by former Mayor Peter Rheume at a recent Council meeting.

Nelsen thanked the Mayor and members of the City Council for upholding beliefs that make Saint Peter a caring, supportive and welcoming community to those of all racial, religious and diverse backgrounds and announced an educational program that will be open to all who want to understand the true nature of those of the Islamic faith.

Sharma expressed her objection to the former Mayor's statements regarding the proposal to locate a new Muslim center in the former fire hall building and his implication, among other negative rhetoric, that additional police presence would be required in the area as the Islamic faith would promote violence. Sharma expressed her belief that the former Mayor's statements were unfounded and inflammatory and objected to public figures providing inaccurate information. Sharma urged everyone to fact check the growing amount of rhetoric and closed her statement by saying "our shared humanity far outweighs any differences we may encounter" and encouraging the community to move forward with understanding.

Consent Agenda – In motion by Ranft, seconded by Pettis, Resolution No. 2023–162 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. 2023-162 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Construction Maintenance Worker Job Description – City Administrator Prafke recommended modifications to the job description for Construction Maintenance Worker. Councilmembers had some discussion on possible change to the position title before a motion was made by Sharstrom, seconded by Johnson to introduce Resolution No. 2023-163 entitled "Resolution Adopting Updated Construction Maintenance Worker Position Description". Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-163 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

MMUA Safety Contract Renewal – Public Works Director Moulton recommended authorization for execution of a new fifteen-month contract with the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA) to provide safety program services to the City at a cost of \$34,150 plus an additional \$5,906.25 for specialized Linemen training. Moulton noted that previous contracts were one year in length, but MMUA was transitioning to a calendar year basis so the renewal contract would not expire until December 31, 2024. Moulton also pointed out that there was a five percent (5%) overall cost increase and noted the contract would now be automatically renewed unless either party exercised the opt-out clause. Councilmember Johnson expressed her belief that the City's low experience modification rating, which continues to be below normal for similar employers, was the best evidence the program was beneficial.

In motion by Bruflat, seconded by Sharstrom, Resolution No. 2023-164 entitled "Resolution Authorizing Renewal Of Safety Contract With Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA)" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted.

A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-164 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Request For City Assistance: Halloween Fun Run – City Administrator Prafke recommended approval of the Chamber of Commerce's request for City assistance for the Halloween Fun Run. Prafke reminded the Council the course had been changed from one in the center of the community to the west edge of town through Pine Pointe Subdivision, along the trails adjacent to Jefferson Avenue and through Community Spirit Park. Prafke noted the assistance request included authorization for use of the City's trails, traffic cones, safety vests, flags and two City vehicles. In motion by Johnson, seconded by Ranft, Resolution No. 2023-165 entitled "Resolution Approving Request For City Assistance For St. Peter Area Chamber Of Commerce Halloween Fun Run And Lil Monster Dash" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-165 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Business License Applications – City Administrator Prafke noted nothing had been found in the background investigations on applicants for Tree Worker and Peddler Licenses that would prevent issuance of the licenses. In motion by Sharstrom, seconded by Bruflat, Resolution No. 2023-166 entitled "Resolution Approving Business License Applications" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2023-166 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 24.

Reports

Mayor's Report – Mayor Nowell thanked the visitors from the St. Peter Good Neighbor Diversity Council who addressed the Council earlier in the meeting and recognized October 9th as Indigenous People's Day.

Councilmember Report – Councilmember Bruflat reported her participation, along with Councilmember Johnson, in the SMMPA orientation session which included information on renewable energy sources.

Councilmember Johnson reported on a "Beyond Plastics" webinar she participated in and the harm caused by single use plastics and pesticides that are toxic to humans.

Fire Station Grand Opening – City Administrator Prafke reminded the public of the October 14th grand opening of the new Fire Station and the program at 10:30 a.m.

All-Staff Training Office Closures – City Administrator Prafke reported all non-emergency City offices would be closed until 1:30 p.m. on October 17th for all-staff training.

Grown-Up Book Fair – City Administrator Prafke provided information on a book sale to be held at the Library on October 19-20, 2023 and noted the Library will be selling some gently used books.

City Administrator Prafke recognized the City Council's videographer Anthony Peregrin who, in his full-time position with KEYC-TV, had been nominated for a Midwest Emmy award for a story he worked on about the St. Peter tornado. A round of applause was provided by the City Council and staff in recognition of Mr. Peregrin's nomination.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Ranft, seconded by Sharstrom, to adjourn. With all in favor, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Shanon A. Nowell
Mayor

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke
City Administrator