

**CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA**  
**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

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 Zieman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Councilmembers Ed Johnson, Shanon Nowell, Keri Johnson, Brad DeVos, Emily Bruflat and Mayor Chuck Zieman. Absent was Councilmember Stephan Grams. 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 Nowell, seconded by Bruflat, to approve the agenda. With all in favor, the agenda was approved.

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Johnson (K), seconded by Johnson (E), to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2021 regular City Council meeting. With all in favor, the minutes were approved. A complete copy of the minutes of the October 25, 2021 regular City Council meeting is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Proceedings 20.

**Public Hearing: Assessment of Unpaid Utility Charges** – Mayor Zieman reviewed the process for conducting public hearings and opened the hearing on assessment of unpaid utility charges at 7:02 p.m. Finance Director Vogel presented the proposed assessments in the total assessable amount of \$13,752.39 and the unassessable amount of \$4,803.08 which represented utility charges to renters, amounts under \$10, and amounts remaining unpaid due to bankruptcy or death of the account holder. Vogel also read a letter from Jenny Severson, owner of the rental property at 424 North Fifth Street, objecting to the assessment of \$568.81. Vogel noted a portion of the unpaid charges for Severson's property were already being written off as being unassessable. There being no further speakers, the hearing was declared closed at 7:06 p.m.

**Public Hearing: Assessment of Unpaid Miscellaneous Charges** – Mayor Zieman opened the hearing on assessment of unpaid miscellaneous charges at 7:07 p.m. Finance Director Vogel presented the proposed assessments in the total amount of \$191,094.28 which included charges for improvement projects for which the City had received waiver of assessment forms from all but one property owner; unpaid snow removal and lawn mowing charges; unpaid charges for private sewer installation and frozen water meter repairs; and charges related to the fire response, demolition and site clean-up following the bowling alley fire from early 2021. There being no further speakers, the hearing was declared closed at 7:09 p.m.

**Consent Agenda** – In motion by Johnson (E), seconded by Nowell, Resolution No. 2021-152 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. 2021-152 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

**Assessment Of Unpaid Utility Charges** – Finance Director Vogel requested authorization to proceed with assessment of unpaid utility charges as of May 31, 2021. Councilmember Johnson (K) questioned if the Finance Director had had any personal communication with the rental property owner who had submitted the objection letter. Vogel reported her office had sent monthly delinquent/disconnect notices to both the renter and the landlord beginning when the account was two months delinquent, but she had not personally talked to the property owner.

Councilmember Nowell questioned if there was any precedence for extending the term of the assessment to help out the landlord. City Administrator Prafke indicated that the term is set based on the assessment policy previously adopted by the City Council and noted that the City works with property owners in advance of the assessment process to provide options for payment assistance including establishing payment plans.

Councilmember DeVos, who has been/is a rental property owner, expressed his belief that being stuck with a renter's utility bill is a risk all landlords take and he noted Ms. Severson hadn't offered an option to pay off the charges which she would now be allowed to pay in two installments over the next year.

In motion by DeVos, seconded by Nowell, Resolution No. 2021-153 entitled "Resolution Adopting Assessments For Unpaid Charges For Municipal Utilities And Writing Off Of Bad Debt

Utility Charges“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-153 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

**Assessment of Unpaid Miscellaneous Charges** – Finance Director Vogel requested authorization to proceed with assessment of unpaid miscellaneous charges and noted the interest rate is based on the City’s assessment policy at one percent (1%) over the prime rate. In motion by Johnson (K), seconded by Nowell, Resolution No. 2021-154 entitled “Resolution Adopting Assessment Of Unpaid Miscellaneous Charges“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-154 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

**Canvass of 2021 Election Results** – City Administrator Prafke recommended adoption of a resolution certifying the election results from the November 2, 2021 general election. Mayor Zieman extended his congratulations to all of the candidates. In motion by Bruflat, seconded by Johnson (K), Resolution No. 2021-155 entitled “Resolution Canvassing 2021 Municipal Election Returns“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-155 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

**Community Center Lease Renewal: Kid’s Corner Room #110** – City Administrator Prafke recommended execution of a renewal lease with Kid’s Corner for Room #110 in the Community Center. Prafke noted the current one-year lease expires on December 31, 2021 and Kid’s Corner would like to renew the lease through December 31, 2024 which would coincide with their large space lease. Prafke pointed out the lease provided for a three percent (3%) increase in rent each year which would generate approximately \$13,000 in revenue. In motion by Nowell, seconded by Johnson (E), Resolution No. 2021-156 entitled “Resolution Approving Execution Of Renewal Lease With Kid’s Corner Child Center For Room #110 In The Community Center“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-156 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

**Parkview Manor DEED Application** – City Administrator Prafke recommended adoption of a resolution of support for an application by Parkview Manor for grant funds from the Small Cities Development Program to make repairs to the building’s roof and mechanical systems. Prafke noted the total project cost is expected to be \$750,000 and if grant funds are awarded, Parkview would be required to provide a thirty percent (30%) local match that could be achieved by 2022 budgeted and reserve funds. Mayor Zieman, the City Council’s representative to the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, indicated Parkview Manor contains 63 units and for the past year or so has been one hundred percent (100%) occupied. In motion by Johnson (E), seconded by Bruflat, Resolution No. 2021-157 entitled “Resolution Supporting Application For Small Cities Development Program Funds By Saint Peter Housing Redevelopment Authority“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-157 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

**Soft Drink License Application** – City Administrator Prafke presented an application for a soft drink license by Smolder Cigar Emporium. Due to the unique type of business, Prafke noted that City Attorney Brandt was asked to review whether soft drink sales were allowed in the establishment with the resulting conclusion as reported by Prafke that State Statutes are not specific on the question. In motion by Nowell, seconded by Johnson (E), Resolution No. 2021-158 entitled “Resolution Approving Business License Application“ was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-158 is contained in the City Administrator’s book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

## **Reports**

**Mayor’s Report** – Mayor Zieman pointed out that the information staff had provided at the October 25<sup>th</sup> Council meeting regarding the number of residential units (34) included in the new mixed use commercial/residential buildings to be built on the 400 block of South Minnesota Avenue was incorrect because he had counted 37 units with 35 parking stalls.

**Minnesota River Valley Transit Meeting Schedule** – City Administrator Prafke reminded everyone of the Minnesota River Valley Transit Board meeting scheduled for November 9, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. at City Hall.

**Veteran's Day Closures** – City Administrator Prafke reported all non-emergency City offices would be closed on November 11<sup>th</sup> in recognition of the Veteran's Day holiday.

**Closed Session – Union Contract Negotiations** – In motion by Nowell, seconded by Bruflat, Resolution No. 2021-159 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. 2021-159 is contained in the City Administrator's book entitled Council Resolutions 23.

The Council meeting recessed at 7:37 p.m. at which time Mayor Zieman left the meeting.

The remaining members of the City Council convened in closed session in the Traverse des Sioux Room at 7:45 p.m. to discuss Utilities Union negotiations. The Council returned to open session at 8:04 p.m.

The Council returned to closed session to discuss Streets Union negotiations at 8:05 p.m. The Council returned to open session at 8:22 p.m.

The Council returned to closed session to discuss Police Officer Union negotiations at 8:23 p.m. The Council returned to open session at 8:39 p.m.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Nowell, seconded by Bruflat, to adjourn. With all in favor, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

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Charles Zieman  
Mayor

ATTEST:

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Todd Prafke  
City Administrator