

M I N U T E S
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
June 17, 2024
5:30 PM
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Steve King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Laura Helle, Michael Postma, Joyce Poshusta, Geoff Baker and Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Jason Baskin

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Police Chief David McKichan, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, Park and Rec Director Jason Sehon, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, City Attorney Craig Byram, Human Resources Director Tricia Wiechmann, and City Clerk Brianne Wolf

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, Alex Bumgardner from Austin Utilities, SEH representatives Bob Cohrs & Brea Grace, Val Sheedy from Mower County, Nick Novotny from Impact Austin

Mayor Steve King called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving the agenda. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, approving Council minutes from June 3, 2024. Carried.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Steve King announced Sargent Kim Lenz will be leaving the Austin Police Department. Police Chief David McKichan thanked Sargent Lenz for her years of service and for her work within the department. Sargent Lenz has been with the City of Austin Police Department for 17 years and will be leaving for a position in Red Wing, MN. Sargent Lenz gave a speech and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Mayor King thanked all the officers that also showed up in support of Sargent Lenz.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, approving the consent agenda as follows:

Licenses:

Exempt Gambling (bingo): United Way of Mower County on August 16, 2024

Mobile Business: Recreational Rentals of New Mexico, Wichita, KS

Right of Way: North Star Concrete LLC, 57369 227th Street

Claims:

- a. Pre-list of Bills
- b. Investment Report
- c. Financial Report
- d. Settlement and Release Agreement

Event Applications:

Pro Horseshoe Tour on June 22 & 23, 2024

Kids Fishing Contest on July 6, 2024

Darren Dash Freedom Fest 5k Run on July 6, 2024

Employee Recognition Event on July 18, 2024

Carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

City Administrator Craig Clark has requested approval of a resolution in support of an extension for Nu-Tek for their job creation requirements they must meet to receive Minnesota Investment Funding. Mr. Clark stated Nu-Tek relayed they will accomplish their employment goals over this next year.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, to adopt a resolution approving a MIF/MN DEED Extension Request for Nu-Tek Biosciences. Carried 6-0.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated there was an amendment for construction administration, construction contractor bid, and additional administration fees for the Airport fuel system upgrades.

Mr. Lang stated there is a new revised grant amount of \$913,486.10 and off that the MNDOT grant will cover 70% and city will cover 30%. The City's amount will be approximately \$275,00.00. Mr. Lang is requesting approval to sign the agreement.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, approving authorization to sign a state grant amendment for the Airport Fuel System Upgrade. Carried.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert requested a motion to approve calling for a public hearing for the Amendment of Tax Increment Financing District #16 YMCA Redevelopment – Stencil Development. Mayor King asked if council has any questions.

Council Member Baker asked Mr. Dankert why the amounts were 4% for both the original rate and the discounted rate. Mr. Dankert stated they may have used that percentage amount to maximize all the available dollars available for use or total eligible TIF dollar. Phase one was 4% and that was what we use in Phase two. That was the request.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, approving calling for a public hearing on July 15, 2024 for the Amendment of Tax Increment Financing District #16 YMCA Redevelopment – Stencil Development. Carried.

Steven Lang requested approval of the Change Order Number Four. He stated there have been a few changes from Council's last presentation. Work change directive 56 & 65 have been eliminated and removed. They may come back in change order #5 in the future. This reduces the number of change orders to nine. The current change order costs are \$753,830.00. These costs are split between the Domestic and Industrial Budget. Currently cost increase to the Domestic Budget are 2.58 % and the cost increase to the Industrial Budget are 1.17%. The overall project cost increase is 1.84%.

Council Member Baker stated he had the opportunity to go and see the Wastewater Treatment Plant to view the project and it was a fascinating trip with Mr. Lang. He encouraged other Council members to tour the plant. Mr. Baker stated the challenge in front of us is to make sure we are running this new plant with minimal staffing. We need to have eyes wide open discussions about where are we going to add staff and we need to do this in that plant.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, approving a resolution for Change Order Number Four for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project. Carried 6-0.

Mayor King reviewed a Natural Gas Prepay Ordinance with Minnesota Municipal Gas Agency. He requested a motion for preparation of the ordinance.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, for preparation of the ordinance. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, for adoption of the ordinance. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, for summary publication of the ordinance. Carried 6-0.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace stated the City of Austin, Impact Austin and Mower County have collaborated on a joint project to review a Comprehensive Plan and a Downtown Master Plan for Mower County and the City of Austin.

The committee reviewed six proposals. They chose three to interview. They chose SEH as the consultant for the plan. SEH stood out because of their work and partnership within the community and they have worked with various organizations. The Memorandum of Agreement was developed to address how the project will be paid for by various entities. They will be able to do more with their collaborations than a lone entity.

Brea Grace from SEH gave a presentation on the direction of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Grace will be the project manager from this project. She stated they will be engaging the public on this project and gaining feedback from people within the city. The process timeline will be from now until December of 2025. Ms. Wallace is requesting approval of the Memorandum of Agreement. There were no questions or comments from council.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, approving a resolution for the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan MOA. Carried 6-0.

City Clerk Brienne Wolf requested Council approve a resolution for the expansion of the on-sale liquor license for Hoot & Ole's LLC to include their patio area.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin approving a resolution for an expansion to Hoot & Ole's on-sale liquor license to include the patio area. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Postma, accepting donations to the City of Austin. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baker, approving a resolution declaring 1008 7th Avenue NE as a hazardous property. Carried 6-0.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baker, to grant the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 503 8th Avenue SE, Wakefield Property. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Helle, seconded by Council Member Fischer, to grant the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 506 11th Avenue SW, Wendroth Property. Carried.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Steven Lang followed up on Council Member Baker's comments about the tour at the WWTP. If anyone would like a tour, he is planning a group tour for late July or early August.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated there was a Library Board meeting last week. The library will be hosting a Skateboard Art Class on June 21st. The Library Board is also looking at having a social worker being present in the library. The library provided hot spots to the community and there is a six to eight week waiting list for them at the moment as the Austin Aspire Hot Spots were deactivated for the summer. The library offering of open hours on Sunday in the spring did not yield high enough participation so there will be no Sunday hours in the fall.

Council Member Baker told the Downtown Comprehensive Plan committee to act with urgency. There are a number of buildings that are empty on Main Street and we need big ideas.

Council Member Postma stated the HRA/Riverland partner house is for sale. He stated Discover Austin is hosting the Horseshoe Tour this weekend and starting now is the Hormel Foods AGEA Golf Tournament at the County Club.

Council Member Helle thanked the employees and the elected officials that have been working with the Sicora group. She appreciates people taking their time and engaging in this. She thanked all the departments that supported 4th Avenue Fest last week. She stated Park and Rec, Library, Fire, and Engineering put in a lot of hours on this event. She thanked the public that came out to the event.

Mayor King stated he and Craig were at the celebratory meeting at Riverland for the Wastewater Treatment Certification courses that will be offered at Riverland. The City of Austin will be the fiscal host of this for the next three years. He stated that approximately 260 people will be going through this certification.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Postma, adjourning the meeting to July 1, 2024. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:08 p.m.

Approved: July 1, 2024

Mayor: _____

City Recorder: _____