



City Council Meeting

December 18, 2023

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Lund called the City Council Meeting of December 18, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present

Mayor Scott Lund
Councilmember Dave Ostwald
Councilmember Tom Tillberry
Councilmember Ryan Evanson
Councilmember Ann Bolkcom

Others Present

Walter Wysopal, City Manager
Jim Kosluchar, Public Works Director
Brandon Brodhag, Assistant City Engineer
Joe Starks, Finance Director

Pledge Of Allegiance

Approval of Proposed Consent Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the proposed Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Approval/Receipt of Minutes

1. Approve the Minutes from the City Council Meeting of December 11, 2023.
2. Receive the Minutes from the City Council Conference Meeting of December 11, 2023.
3. Receive the Minutes from the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting of November 6, 2023.
4. Receive the Minutes from the Housing and Redevelopment Authority Meeting of November 2, 2023.

New Business

5. Ordinance No. 1417, Amending the Nominations and Elections Chapter of the Fridley City Charter (Second Reading).
6. Resolution No 2023-151, Approving a Joint Powers Agreement Between the City of Fridley and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) for Participation in the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force.
7. Resolution No. 2023-152, Approving a ReLeaf Grant Agreement from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
8. Resolution No. 2023-155, Designating Precincts and Polling Locations for the 2024 Election Year.
9. Resolution No. 2023-163, Approving Appointments to the Planning Commission and the Environmental Quality and Energy Commission (EQEC).
10. Resolution No. 2023-164, Approving Gifts, Donations and Sponsorships Received Between November 18, 2023 and December 11, 2023.

Claims

11. Resolution No. 2023-162 Approving Claims for the Period Ending December 13, 2023.

Open Forum, Visitors: (Consideration of Items not on Agenda – 15 minutes.)

No one from the audience spoke.

Adoption of Regular Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt the regular agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda**Public Hearing:**

12. Public Hearing for Improvements for 2024 Street Rehabilitation Project No. ST2024-01 and Resolution No. 2023-157, Ordering Final Plans, Specifications and Calling for Bids for 2024 Street Rehabilitation Project No. ST2024-01.

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Brandon Brodhag, Assistant City Engineer, provided background information on the pavement management plan and road segments proposed to be included in the proposed 2024-01 project. He provided details on the candidate streets, project elements, traffic modifications for Lucia Lane, and tentative schedule. He stated that preliminary public outreach was conducted using a combination of an in-person informational meeting and virtual presentation. He noted that preliminary feedback will be compiled, and any comments and concerns will be addressed in the final design as feasible. He stated that the City Council received the Feasibility Report at its November 27 meeting, and reviewed details of the estimated project cost along with proposed project funding. He provided information on preliminary special assessments and explained how the assessments are calculated. He reviewed the options that would be available for payment of assessments. He asked that Council hold the public hearing and consider adoption of the resolution as presented.

Councilmember Evanson referenced the proposed cul-de-sac for Lucia Lane and asked if that would cause more traffic to migrate to Channel Lane.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that is something that will be considered as they move forward to the final design. He stated that they have a closure setup currently to collect data on traffic migration.

Councilmember Evanson commented that there are side-by-side duplexes on Norton and asked how sewer hookups and assessments would occur for those properties.

Mr. Brodhag commented that he has received input from residents on Norton Avenue related to sewer services and staff is still investigating that issue to determine the number of duplexes that are connected to one service. He clarified that there will not be assessment to individual owners for sewer work.

Councilmember Ostwald asked that staff provide details on how roads are chosen for improvement.

Mr. Brodhag provided details on the City's pavement management plan and the monitoring that is done to schedule road improvement projects and ongoing maintenance.

Mayor Lund invited the public to provide input.

Russell Bergman, 6701 Channel Road, reported that he has been counting vehicle traffic on Channel Road using cameras in his yard and provided some of that data. He stated that he does not like traffic and does not like this increase in traffic. He noted that he witnessed a school bus being passed.

Mayor Lund commented that they are aware of the problem with traffic and are attempting to address traffic on both Lucia Lane and Channel Road.

Jim Kosluchar, Public Works Director, provided estimated traffic counts prior to the closure of Lucia Lane. He stated that another option was provided to potentially close 68th Avenue, but there were no comments in support of that option during the open house.

Mayor Lund noted that closing 68th Avenue would seem to assist in decreasing traffic.

Bob Wells, 6648 Channel Road, provided input on speeding vehicles and commented that he also witnessed a school bus being passed. He suggested lowering speed limits.

Mayor Lund commented that people have complained about traffic, and the solutions proposed by staff would do a good job in accomplishing that goal. He said lowering the speed limits would not accomplish that goal, as speeding vehicles would continue to speed. He noted that the road improvement is needed, regardless of the posted speed.

Councilmember Evanson asked if Mr. Wells supports the road improvements but is expressing concern with the speed limit.

Mr. Wells confirmed that he does support the project and would also like to see lower speed limits.

Adam Becker, 6600 Lucia Lane, commented that the road is a frontage road for a large apartment building, the school, mosque and other businesses, but it not designed to handle that traffic. He asked for better lighting and also believed sidewalks would be an improvement for pedestrians. He commented that the speed limit should also be posted. He said the bus will not come down Lucia Lane because the buses cannot turn around with the temporary closure, and therefore buses need to be considered. He asked how much the mosque and apartment building would be paying for the road project in assessment.

Mr. Brodhag commented that the mosque and apartments would not be assessed, as part of this project because they do not have assessable frontage.

Mayor Lund provided clarification on the portion of the project that would be assessed to residents and the portion of the project that would be funded through other sources. He explained that the City looks at things that can be done above and beyond the typical street project to address other issues in conjunction with road projects.

Mr. Brodhag commented that the mosque was assessed in 2008 for that road project.

Councilmember Evanson clarified that residents will be assessed for the road improvements and the City is choosing to implement additional traffic control measures in conjunction with the road project, noting that those improvements will not be assessed to residents.

Sarah Kuntz, 1255 66th Avenue, commented that her street was redone in 2008, and she was unsure why she is being included in this project. She commented that the drainage improvements that were added during that project have caused negative results on her property. She asked if the drainage could be corrected and requested communication about project timelines so she can plan accordingly.

Barb Aanestad, 6670 Channel Road, asked for details on the assessment rates for the different apartment buildings.

Mr. Brodhag provided estimates of those assessments.

Ms. Aanestad commented that the mosque traffic will be pushed down Channel Road. She noted that with the temporary closure of Lucia Lane, the buses are picking up the kids on Channel Road.

Tom Majkozak, 6620 Lucia Lane, stated that he supports the cul-de-sac proposal for Lucia Lane, but feels bad for the Channel Road residents, as that will just push the problem there. He commented on the high speed of traffic and noted that the majority of the road use is not from residents.

Dan Christianson, 6640 Lucia Lane, thanked Council for considering the cul-de-sac, as he has noticed considerably less traffic this past week. He commented that there is parking on both sides of the street, even with the no parking signs, and in the private apartment lot for the mosque. He said he had concerns for the residents on Channel Road because that is the path traffic would take. He stated he would support the bump-out on 68th Avenue as that would help to cut down traffic.

Wally Wysopal, City Manager, asked staff to provide details on the option for 68th Avenue and whether that was included in this presented design.

Mr. Brodhag stated that the option was provided at the open house for feedback and was planned to be included as part of this road project to assist in traffic control. The residents who attended the open house did not want to see that design move forward, so it was not included in the proposed project. He confirmed that the residents in opposition to the 68th Avenue option lived on Channel Road.

Councilmember Bolkcom recognized that there are additional residents here providing input and perhaps that could be considered as part of the project.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that the final design has not yet been completed, so it could be added to the project if desired. He noted that they will continue to monitor the data from the temporary Lucia Lane closure and will continue to review measures for traffic calming.

Mayor Lund commented that the cul-de-sac will fix the problem for Lucia but that will push traffic to Channel Road. He believed that the option for 68th Avenue would assist with alleviating the issue on Channel Road.

Bosede Akinyelure, 1171 Norton Avenue, asked for details on the project proposed for Norton as well as how the assessment funds will be allocated.

Mr. Brodhag provided details of the proposed improvements and explained that the assessment is only calculated based on the actual street work and none of the additional project elements.

Roger Hoganson, 6870 Channel Road, commented that he supports the bump-out on 68th Avenue, and believes that will assist with the issue on Channel Road. He commented on issues with parking from the mosque.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked if staff is tracking the input tonight to determine if the option for 68th Avenue should be added.

Mr. Brodhag commented that he can conduct a poll to determine whether that option should be added to the final design.

Mr. Kosluchar stated staff has not heard support for the 68th bump-out until tonight. He stated staff will track the input received tonight as well as the comments made online and at the open house in order to make a decision on whether to include that improvement. He noted that because that option is not dependent on the road project, it could always be added at a later time. He provided details on speed analysis that has been done on Channel Road and provided examples of things that can be added to control speed. He stated that the residents on Channel Road need to provide their comments to staff and encouraged them to call the Engineering Department with their comments related to speed.

Barb Aanestad, 6670 Channel Road, said the residents support the road being improved. She asked why the mosque traffic cannot be directed to Highway 65 to alleviate the problems on local roads.

Mayor Lund commented that would be illegal.

Ms. Aanestad commented that Immanuel Church does that and was unsure why the mosque could not do that as well. She stated that the mosque traffic parks where no parking signs are installed and does not obey the traffic signs.

Pam Reynolds, 1241 and 1243 Norton Avenue, commented on the issues with the sewer connections in her area and said she did not believe the sewer was installed per code. She explained problems that she is experiencing with her sewer because of her neighbor and the improper connection. She asked that the City correct the issue. She stated that if the City does not fix the issue, she will pay a contractor to cap off the connection to her neighbor's property at 1239/1237.

Mayor Lund commented that staff will have to look into this issue further.

Ms. Reynolds asked how the property at the end of Norton would be assessed.

Mayor Lund noted that there is a location at which the public road becomes a private driveway.

Mr. Brodhag said that unit is being assessed the same as the other LDR units.

Councilmember Ostwald noted that any interested resident can request that the City view the lines to alert residents to any issues that may exist. He clarified that the line running to the home is the

responsibility of the homeowner but there is a cost savings to addressing issues when the road is open.

Adam Betcker, 6600 Lucia Lane, thanked Council and staff for developing a proposal to address traffic. He commented that mosque traffic already does not obey posted signs and traffic laws and asked how there is confidence that the 68th Avenue option would be obeyed. He asked if the mosque could be required to fund officers to assist with directing traffic during events and times of heavy traffic.

Councilmember Evanson commented that there seems to be three elements tonight, the road project for which there is support, the traffic calming measures for which there seems to be some support, and the assistance of law enforcement. He stated that perhaps staff could hold one additional open house meeting to gain consensus on traffic calming measures. He stated that perhaps public safety could increase patrols in this area during busy times. He stated that the City has received a lot of comments and concerns about this issue, which is why the traffic calming measures are being discussed.

Councilmember Tillberry commented that the option for 68th is not currently included in the proposed project as neighbors did not voice support for that element. He encouraged residents to voice their support if they want that element included.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated that she does not believe an open house meeting is necessary. She reiterated the request from staff that residents reach out to City staff to request that element be included if it is desired by the neighborhood.

Carolyn Perron, 6610 Channel Road, stated that Channel Road has two different sections and acknowledged that the residents that live on the curved parts of the road are more impacted by street parking. She stated that perhaps those residents opposed the option for 68th because that would restrict them from turning right from Highway 65 to get to their home. She stated that she does support the option for 68th.

Roger Hogenson, 6870 Channel Road, commented that people cannot turn into the neighborhood from Highway 65 south as that option was already removed. It was clarified that the previous resident was speaking about north traffic on Highway 65. It was suggested that perhaps it was the businesses that objected to the option for 68th Avenue at the open house.

Mr. Brodhag commented that it was the residents on Channel Road who objected to that option.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to close the public hearing, Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Brodhag commented that staff will continue to work with residents as they work to develop the final design for the project.

Councilmember Evanson asked if staff feels confident that the issue of the sewer could be worked out.

Mr. Wysopal commented that they can move forward with the project and there will be opportunities for further discussion and decision as they move forward with final design and bidding.

Mr. Brodhag commented that staff will work on the final design through the end of January and noted that the option for 68th Avenue could even be added as a change order if it is not included in the final design.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked if a letter could be sent to residents in the project area asking for input on the option.

Mr. Brodhag said it could be done.

Mr. Wysopal commented that staff could also pursue a temporary option to see how the option for 68th Avenue would work, similar to Lucia Lane.

New Business

13. Resolution No. 2023-156, Approving Budget Reappropriation for Certain Funds for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023.

Joe Starks, Finance Director, provided an overview and background information on the authority of Council to make amendments to the budget. He provided a brief overview of 2023 budget amendments and recommended adoption of the resolution as proposed.

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt Resolution No. 2023-156, Approving Budget Reappropriation for Certain Funds for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

14. Resolution No. 2023-158, Approving Change Order No. 1 for 53rd Avenue Trail and Walk Improvements Project No. ST2023-21

Mr. Brodhag identified the project location and provided background information on the project. He provided a summary of the proposed change order and described how that would be split between the cities of Fridley and Columbia Heights. He stated that staff recommends adoption of the resolution as presented.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked if a utility company can leave an abandoned gas pipe.

Mr. Brodhag replied the City does request that a utility company remove abandoned lines, but noted that this line was on the Columbia Heights side, and perhaps that city did not request that to be done.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt Resolution No. 2023-158, Approving Change Order No. 1 for the 53rd Avenue Trail and Walk Improvements Project No. ST2023-01. Seconded by Councilmember Bolkcom.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

15. Resolution No. 2023-159, Approving a Joint Powers Agreement with Anoka County for the Improvements at the Intersection of County Road 132 and Evergreen Boulevard/Springbrook Nature Center Entrance.

Mr. Kosluchar stated that there are two Joint Powers Agreements and resolutions to consider for the same project. He provided details on the proposed 85th Avenue roundabout project. He presented the proposed project design and shared details on the proposed cost split between Anoka County, Fridley and Coon Rapids. He also provided details on the proposed JPA between Fridley and Coon Rapids including the responsibilities that each city would claim. He stated that staff recommends approval of the proposed resolutions as presented.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked if the road would be closed during the construction. She also asked if the roundabout would be irrigated.

Mr. Kosluchar commented that access to the businesses and the Nature Center would remain open during the project. He noted that there may be times when access will be limited for a number of days, similar to other road projects. He commented that irrigation would not be necessary for the roundabout landscaping.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated that perhaps this would be an opportunity to incorporate public art.

Mr. Kosluchar stated that the County has expressed previous concern with structures in the roundabout as they do not want to distract drivers but noted that position may have changed, and he will discuss that option with the County.

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt Resolution No. 2023-159, Approving a Joint Powers Agreement with Anoka County for the Improvements at the Intersection of County Road 132 and Evergreen Boulevard/Springbrook Nature Center Entrance. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

16. Resolution No. 2023-161, Approving a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Coon Rapids for Lighting and Landscaping Improvements at the Intersection of County Road 132 and Evergreen Boulevard (Springbrook Nature Center Entrance)

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt Resolution No. 2023-161, Approving a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Coon Rapids for Lighting and Landscaping Improvements at the Intersection of County Road 132 and Evergreen Boulevard/Springbrook Nature Center Entrance. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Informal Status Reports

Councilmember Ostwald stated that the Fridley holiday light contest is going on, and encouraged residents to follow the map available to view the homes.

Councilmember Bolkcom noted that residents can recycle holiday lights at City Hall.

Adjourn

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Moore
City Clerk

Scott J. Lund
Mayor