



City Council Meeting

September 25, 2023

7:00 P.M.

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Lund called the City Council Meeting of September 25, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present

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

Others Present

Walter Wysopal, City Manager
Joe Starks, Finance Director

Pledge Of Allegiance

Proclamations/Presentations

Approval of Proposed Consent Agenda

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

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 September 11, 2023.
2. Receive the Minutes from the City Council Conference Meeting of September 11, 2023.
3. Receive the Minutes from the Housing and Redevelopment Authority Meeting of August 3, 2023.
4. Receive the Minutes from the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting of August 7, 2023.
5. Receive the Minutes from the Environmental Quality and Energy Commission (EQEC) Meeting of July 11, 2023.

New Business

6. Resolution No. 2023-110, Approving State of Minnesota Grant Contract Agreement OR24-010.
7. Resolution No. 2023-114, Approving Change Order No. 1 for the 53rd Avenue Roundabout Safety Project No. ST2023-22.
8. Resolution No. 2023-115, Approving Gifts, Donations and Sponsorships Received Between August 19, 2023 and September 15, 2023.
9. Resolution No. 2023-117, Approving Amendment to Agreement for Construction Management Services for Moore Lake Park Community Building and Site Improvements Project.
10. Resolution No. 2023-118, Approving the Issuance and Sale of Multifamily Housing Revenue Bonds (Moon Plaza Project), Taxable Subseries 2023B-1-2.

Old Business

11. Ordinance No. 1416, Amending the Fridley City Code Chapter 205, Zoning, to Allow Interim Use Permits, and Authorizing Publication of Summary Ordinance No. 1416 (Second Reading).

Licenses

12. Resolution No. 2023-109, Approving City Licenses.

Claims

13. Resolution No. 2023-116 Approving Claims for the Period Ending September 20, 2023.

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

Julie Houle, Columbia Heights School Board, introduced Superintendent Zena Stenvik. Ms. Houle provided information on the upcoming special election for the School Board as well as referendum questions.

Superintendent Zena Stenvik reviewed the mission of the School District and also provided information on the funding the schools receive from different entities. She noted that since 2003, the State funding has not kept up with inflation which leaves a gap between the funding provided and the cost of services to educate children. She provided information on enrollment, budgeting and fiscal responsibility, and cross subsidies. She provided information on the funding they receive from the local tax base, noting that their levy has not been raised in the past 18 years. She provided information on the operating levy and capital projects levy.

Mayor Lund asked and received confirmation that the levy would increase by \$500, which would be more comparative to other communities. He asked if the School District is currently experiencing an operating deficit.

Ms. Stenvik replied that they currently are not experiencing an operating deficit but are trying to get out of the hole from the pandemic.

Ms. Houle commented that the School Board has been clear that they need to increase the fund balance in order to meet the policy requirements.

Ms. Stenvik replied that they have made as many cuts as they can, and they need additional staff to support the children.

Councilmember Evanson asked what the cost was per student to provide services.

Ms. Stenvik provided more information on the different categories of students and related funding.

Councilmember Evanson noted that the amount being spent per pupil in Columbia Heights is higher than Orono, even though the levy amounts largely differ, noting that the school receives other revenue to assist in filling that gap.

Ms. Stenvik commented that those additional funds are restricted and cannot be used for other operational costs. She also acknowledged the higher needs for transportation, English learners and poverty in Columbia Heights compared to Orono.

Mayor Lund commented that comparisons often do not tell the whole story as communities can be very different.

Derek Lind, Ramsey resident, commented that he is an advocate for election reform. He noted that his group is composed of 15 to 20 people and has focused on the Anoka County level. He highlighted issues that he believes exist in the current format of elections and the actions that his group would like to see done to protect elections.

Adoption of Regular Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adopt the regular agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Bolkcom.

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

Regular Agenda

New Business

14. Resolution No. 2023-111, Approving the Proposed Property Tax Levy for 2023, Collectible in 2024, for the City of Fridley

Joe Starks, Finance Director, reviewed the budget goals and objectives and the City's financial strengths. He provided an overview of the proposed budget and levy, noting a proposed levy increase of 4.88 percent. He commented that a median value home could see a reduction in the City portion

of property taxes of \$55, which is a result in a shift of the tax base of the community. He provided information on economic expectations, general assumptions, general fund revenues, local government aid, general fund expenditures, general fund balance history, and debt service fund arbitrage. He provided an overview on the property tax levy as proposed and its related impacts. He also highlighted 2023 taxation legislative changes.

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to adopt Resolution No. 2023-111, Approving the Proposed Property Tax Levy for 2023, Collectible in 2024, for the City of Fridley. Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

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

15. Resolution No. 2023-112, Approving the Proposed 2024 General Fund Budget for the City of Fridley

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt Resolution No. 2023-112, Approving the Proposed 2024 General Fund Budget for the City of Fridley. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

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

16. Resolution No. 2023-113, Consenting to the Property Tax Levy for 2023, Collectible in 2024, for the Housing and Redevelopment Authority in and for the City of Fridley

Joe Starks, Finance Director, provided background information on the property tax levy of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), reviewing the recommendation from the HRA to continue its approach to levy as allowed under State Statute.

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adopt Resolution No. 2023-113, Consenting to the Property Tax Levy for 2023, Collectible in 2024, for the Housing and Redevelopment Authority in and for the City of Fridley. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

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

Informal Status Reports

Councilmember Bolkcom thanked the volunteers who assisted with planting pollinator friendly plants this past weekend. She also noted the new hours for the North Suburban Center for the Arts.

Wally Wysopal, City Manager, acknowledged Ms. Workin for her work in making events such as the planting event a success.

Councilmember Bolkcom thanked the residents who attended the meetings related to the 2024 street improvement projects.

Mayor Lund noted the second of three public workshops was held related to public art. He hoped that more residents would continue to attend and provide input as the City begins this program. It was noted that they do provide a summary at the beginning of the workshop, therefore someone would not feel behind if they chose to attend.

Councilmember Evanson provided details on the upcoming Pumpkin Night in the Park on Saturday, October 21, noting that tickets are available for sale and no tickets will be available at the gate.

Councilmember Ostwald noted the upcoming Fire Department open house which will take place on Saturday, October 7.

Adjourn

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

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Moore
City Clerk

Scott J. Lund
Mayor