

LAUDERDALE CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
HELD REMOTELY VIA TELECONFERENCE

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April 28, 2020

Call to Order

Mayor Gaasch called the Regular City Council meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Roll Call

Councilors present: Andi Moffatt, Jeff Dains, Roxanne Grove, Kelly Dolphin, and Mayor Mary Gaasch.

Councilors absent: None.

Staff present: Heather Butkowski, City Administrator; Jim Bownik, Assistant to the City Administrator; and Miles Cline, Deputy City Clerk.

Approvals

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any additions to the meeting agenda. Mayor Gaasch stated that she was moving the Community Development Update ahead of the public input portion of the agenda. Councilor Dains asked for an update on the budgetary impact of the coronavirus. There being nothing else, Councilor Dains moved and seconded by Councilor Moffatt to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the April 14, 2020 city council meeting. There being none, Councilor Grove moved and seconded by Councilor Dolphin to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2020 city council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any questions on the claims. There being none, Councilor Dains moved and seconded by Councilor Grove to approve the claims totaling \$22,764.03. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent

Councilor Grove moved and seconded by Councilor Dains to approve the Consent Agenda thereby acknowledging the February Financial Report. Motion carried unanimously.

Informational Presentations/Reports

A. Update by Ling Becker, Director of Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

Ling is part of the County's Economic Growth and Community Investment Service Team; her team is working towards the County's goals to strengthen well-being, cultivate prosperity, enhance opportunity, and model accountability. Ling Becker delivered an online PowerPoint presentation highlighting programs for Ramsey County job seekers and businesses. Of special note, the County is working with private and public organizations to create a new job board that will be available soon. They also will be shifting priorities to help address job losses due to the coronavirus.

B. City Council Updates

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Councilor Dains stated that Metro Mobility is offering free food delivery services to those who are eligible. Councilor Moffatt shared that the Suburban Rate Authority met last week for their

Quarterly meeting. Mayor Gaasch added that the Minnesota Mayors Association and the Regional Council of Mayors have been discussing constructive ways of dealing with the pandemic. Finally, Councilor Dolphin added that the Ramsey County Jail is releasing non-violent offenders, not holding juvenile detainees, and avoiding issuing warrants during this time.

Set Agenda for Next Meeting

Administrator Butkowski stated that the May 12 council meeting may include a quotation from Midwest Playscapes for the purchase of playground equipment for Skyview Park, and a presentation from Ashley Shiwarski of the National League of Cities HomeServe program.

Work Session

A. Community Development Updates

Butkowski mentioned that Ramsey County Elections is currently working on options for the primary and general elections if the legislature doesn't approve absentee voting by mail for everyone. Ramsey County plans to promote absentee voting through a multi-media campaign. Staff has already started a similar effort in the recent newsletter to let residents know that everyone can absentee vote already.

Butkowski continued by stating that the Luther Seminary Pond project is moving ahead. Recently, staff met with representatives of Greenway Village Apartments, Lauderdale Hollows Apartments, and Luther Seminary to discuss site access and easement agreements. A future meeting is planned with members of the Rosehill Townhome Association to discuss a permanent easement for the portion of the eroding ravine that needs stabilizing. The city/county project partners will review the agreement soon and finalize plans before the bid is released.

Butkowski shared that MnDOT removed diseased ash trees near Skyview Park. The City will remove five small, diseased ash trees before the installation of playground equipment. City staff is confirming with MnDOT staff that we can install playground surfacing up to the fence line.

Bob Jacobson, 1747 Carl Street, asked about the loud explosions on April 27. The officer on duty warned the resident about lighting illegal fireworks.

Butkowski stated that the planning consultant and city attorney will prepare a schedule for processing Real Estate Equities' land use applications even though bond markets are in a state of flux due to the pandemic. That is expected to resolve soon.

Butkowski said that rental-housing license applications were sent out the previous week. Inspections will not occur until the stay-at-home order is lifted. As single-family homes and apartments don't allow for social distancing, owners have been told that tenants may not be in the units at time of inspection.

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Butkowski asked the Council whether they would allow Diane Galvin's bee hive permit application to proceed to the public hearing as she is not able to make physical contact with the neighbors who have yet to respond, and for which phone numbers were unavailable. If the Council agrees, staff would send notice of the public hearing to all neighbors within 100 feet, whether or not they have already responded.

Butkowski suggested that social room and park reservations should not be accepted for the month of May and possibly the summer. She reasoned that it does not make sense to accept applications for group use until the governor removes the restrictions on gatherings. Staff will add the topic to a future agenda.

Butkowski continued on the topic of city finances and Ramsey County's policy allowing non-escrow homeowners to defer paying their first half property taxes. Butkowski said the deferred tax payments would not be an issue as the City has adequate reserves to manage cash flow. There would be a financial impact if the legislature unallotted local government aid. To date, the governor has said he plans to protect that as it funds public safety.

Roseville resident Dave Borgman e-mailed the Council regarding group use at Community Park, especially around the basketball courts. The Council affirmed their belief that park facilities should remain closed.

B. Opportunity for the Public to Address the City Council

Mayor Gaasch opened the floor to anyone that had comments or questions for the Council.

Gary Brandenburg and Leslie Kratz, 1773 Carl Street, shared their support for Diane Galvin's beehive application with the Council. They own the property where the hive is proposed. They also shared their support for park amenities remaining closed.

As there were no additional parties interested in speaking, Mayor Gaasch closed the floor.

Adjournment

Councilor Moffatt moved and seconded by Councilor Dolphin to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Miles Cline
Deputy City Clerk