

LAUDERDALE CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Lauderdale City Hall  
1891 Walnut Street  
Lauderdale, MN 55113

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October 8, 2024

**Call to Order**

Mayor Gaasch called the Regular City Council meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Councilors present: Evan Sayre, Jeff Dains, Sharon Kelly, Duane Pulford via Zoom, 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. There being none, Councilor Kelly moved and seconded by Councilor Sayre to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were corrections to the minutes of the September 24, 2024 City Council meeting. There being none, Councilor Dains moved and seconded by Councilor Kelly to approve the September 24, 2024 City Council meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any questions on the claims. There being none, Councilor Dains moved and seconded by Councilor Kelly to approve the claims totaling \$67,305.85. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Hearings**

A. Ordinance No. 24-02 Amending Title 2, Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances Regarding the Environment and Sustainability Commission

Butkowski told the Council that they received eight applications for the Environment and Sustainability Commission. This is exciting news as it exceeds the five appointments set out by the original ordinance. The Council discussed rewriting the ordinance to allow for eight commissioners. After the public hearing, the Council can adopt the revised ordinance and the resolution allowing for publication by title and summary.

Councilor Dains made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 24-02 Amending Title 2, Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances Regarding the Environment and Sustainability Commission. This was seconded by Councilor Sayre and carried unanimously.

B. Resolution No. 100824A Authorizing Publication of Ordinance No. 24-02 by Title and Summary

Councilor Sayre moved to adopt Resolution No. 100824A Authorizing Publication of Ordinance No. 24-02 by Title and Summary. This was seconded by Councilor Dains; carried unanimously.

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**Discussion/Action Item**

**A. Environmental and Sustainability Commission Appointments**

Butkowski said that since the Council rewrote the ordinance to allow for eight Commissioners, they can be appointed. The names of the eight commissioners are Bryan Carlson, Monika Davis, Josh Keller, Mindy Nakamoto, Ewa Prochniewicz, Ann Sisel, Gregory Williams, and Jessica Winkelaar.

Councilor Pulford made a motion to appoint the eight applicants to the Environment and Sustainability Commission. This was seconded by Councilor Kelly and carried unanimously.

**B. Credit Card Processing Company and Fees**

Butkowski explained that staff have been research credit card processors with the goals of selecting one that allows for online payment of building permits, cuts costs, and puts PCI compliance on the processor.

Our current transactions are through a terminal without an online option. Rum River has been integrating an online payment option into the building permit software they rolled out at the start of the year. They would integrate the credit card processing into the software so that those applying for building permits can complete the entire permit application process without having to call us during business hours to make a payment.

Many government entities require the customer to pay the credit card fees. Our current provider puts the fees on the City. The City had to decide whether to charge the customer. The City has been paying credit card fees which run about \$150-\$250 per month depending on the volume. Switching to a processor that charges the customer would save about \$2,000 a year.

The City currently is responsible for Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance. This has been arduous for staff and Metro-Inet staff and put the network at risk. The risk would be eliminated by a system where the credit card processor manages the PCI compliance and just deposits funds into the City's account.

The downfall to this change is that all persons paying by credit card have to pay the fees. We couldn't continue to cover the cost of credit card charges for residents buying City merchandise, history books, and reserving the social room.

If the Council is on board with changing to a new vendor, staff will work with Rum River to integrate it into the building permit software. Once that is in place, Rum River will set up a portal so that staff can process in-person payments through the new platform.

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C. Ramsey County Master Agreement for the Maintenance of Traffic Control Signal Systems Agreement No. PW2023-06M

D. Ramsey County Cooperative Agreement with the City of Lauderdale for Right-of-Way Acquisition for 2025 Eustis Street Improvements

Ramsey County Public Works sent over two agreements for Council consideration. The first is an agreement for the traffic signals at Eustis Street and Larpenteur Avenue as the City now owns one leg of the intersection. The other agreement is for the ROW needed to complete the southern portion of Eustis Street. Ramsey County staff have completed the plan for permanent and temporary right-of-way acquisition. The right-of-way agreement reflects the County's 50/50 cost share policy. The City's expected contribution is \$246,860.43. The question before the Council is how to pay for the City's cost share and whether to sign the traffic signal and right-of-way agreements.

As previously discussed, the cost-share expected by the County exceeds the dollars the City has on-hand. The Council discussed bonding for the funds. At the time, the cost share was expected to be \$1,143,480 or an annual debt levy of \$169,704. Since the County revised the scope of the work, the cost is now about half of that amount at \$665,196. This number is based on the 60% plan set cost estimate; the 95% plan set is expected soon, and the costs will be revised.

Mayor Gaasch asked staff to research how other metro county cost share policies compare to Ramsey County's. Specifically, she asked us to look at whether other counties have separate policies for cities under 5,000 population that don't receive municipal state aid (MSA). Staff asked the City Engineer, Kellie Schlegel, to compile that information and then calculate what the City's cost share for the Eustis Street project would be in each county.

Schlegel's calculations were included in the packet. In summary, each of the seven counties in the metro area give special consideration to non MSA cities except Scott County and Ramsey County. Scott County has no non-MSA cities, so their policy is essentially irrelevant. What we learned from this exercise is that the City's cost share would be less if Lauderdale were in any other county. On the low end, Dakota County does not ask for a cost share from non-MSA cities. On the higher end, Carver County would ask \$433,511 for the same project. Staff haven't asked non-MSA cities around the metro whether these policies are adhered to.

While doing the research, we found out some cities negotiate alternate cost share arrangements while some pay what the counties ask. Staff assume the primary reason for that is because cities are not legally bound by county cost-share policies. The amounts cities pay seems to be derived from what they get from the project and their relationship with the counties they are in.

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Staff included the most recent MSA allocations in the packet. Allocation is based on population and demonstrated need so per capita revenue varies in the \$40-55 per person range. As a non-MSA city, Lauderdale only has received \$60,294 for transportation funding since 2017. This is the breakdown by year: 2017: \$8,235.00; 2018: \$8,223.50; 2021: \$18,709.00; 2024: \$25,126.50.

After discussing, the Council directed to draft letters to the county commissioners to start the conversation around Lauderdale's expected cost share considering it is a non-MSA city.

**Set Agenda for Next Meeting**

Butkowski stated that the October 22 council meeting might include a draft of the storm water ordinances, diseased tree abatements, and sewer cleaning and televising quotes.

**Work Session**

A. Community Development Update

Butkowski stated the City has the opportunity to be a partner on a Catholic Eldercare project. In exchange for using the City's bank qualified debt for the year, they would compensate the City \$50,000. Butkowski updated the Council on police agreement discussions between St. Anthony and Falcon Heights.

B. Opportunity for the Public to Address the City Council

Mayor Gaasch opened the floor to those in attendance interested in addressing the Council. There being nobody interested in speaking, Mayor Gaasch closed the floor.

**Adjournment**

Councilor Dains moved and seconded by Councilor Kelly to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Miles Cline  
Deputy City Clerk