

***REGULAR ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 5, 2023
MINUTES***

The Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Bukkila, July 5, 2023, 7:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Jamie Barthel, Ted Butler, Rick Engelhardt, and Randy Nelson

Councilmember absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Jim Dickinson
 Human Resources Manager, Dana Makinen

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESIDENT FORUM

No one came forward to address the Council.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Barthel, Seconded by Engelhardt, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 20, 2023, Regular Meeting and June 20, 2023, Closed Session Meeting: Correct as written.

Motion by Nelson, Seconded by Engelhardt, to approve the June 20, 2023, Regular meeting minutes and the June 20, 2023 Closed Session meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

- Item 2 Approve Payment of Claims
- Item 3 Approve Therapeutic Massage License
- Item 4 Approve Appointment Streets Maintenance Worker
- Item 5 Accept Contribution/Andover Youth Hockey Association (See Resolution R051-23)
- Item 6 Award Bid for Replacement of Water Heater System for the Andover Community Center/23-26
- Item 7 Award Bid of a Water Softener System for the Andover Community Center/23-27
- Item 8 Approve Application for Exempt Permit

Motion by Barthel, Seconded by Nelson, to approve of the Consent Agenda as read. Motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

City Staff updated the Council on the administration and city department activities, legislative updates, updates on development/CIP projects, and meeting reminders/community events.

(Administrative Staff Report) Mr. Dickinson shared that the hiring process for the City is continual. He noted the 2024 budget is in the full development stage and the Finance Department has consolidated all of the department requests and they have begun reviewing. He shared that at the next City Council meeting he will be requesting a Workshop meeting in place of the EDA meeting. He stated they are working on health insurance reviews. He added the Finance Department continues to work on financial reporting, including tax increment finance reports. He explained they have been working with the MPCA on the Red Oaks Neighborhood to go through a grant award process through the State. He stated this will be done on a reimbursement basis. He shared they are working through this process and hope to schedule a neighborhood meeting at the end of July or early August. He added they will be meeting with the MPCA tomorrow for updates.

(Other Reports) On behalf of Mr. Berkowitz, Mr. Dickinson reviewed the Public Works/Engineering Department report. He shared that the primary focus is getting the grounds ready for Fun Fest. He added they are also working on the reconstruction projects for the streets. He stated all of the sewer and water parts of those projects are done. He added the reclamation, mill and overlay, and parking lot projects are very active throughout the community. He stated they are working through the timing of getting these surfaces prepped and getting a crew out to the site. He noted there are 34 new single-family homes in the City, as well as a number of commercial projects that are moving along. He gave an update on the progress of the apartment building off 7th Avenue and Bunker Lake Boulevard and they anticipate being able to start renting units in September or October of this year. He gave an updated on Westgate and shared that they are operational at this time and added that the Taco Bell is also open. He added the Fire Department had seven new candidates through the Academy. He announced they are looking for volunteers for the Fun Fest. He stated the link to sign up can be found online or by calling the City.

(Community Development Department Report) On behalf of Mr. Janish, Mr. Dickinson reviewed the Community Development Department report and shared that it has been a busy season for code

enforcement, primarily related to grass, cars, and parking. He added they have been seeking applicants for the community development block grant opportunity for households that are not yet connected to city water where there is a waterline in front of the house. He noted that Community Development Staff has gone door-to-door and targeted neighborhoods to secure applicants. He shared that the Community Development Department have also been working on something that was decided during the last legislative session, which is the requirement for accepting native landscapes. He explained this will come into play when looking at long grass and Code Enforcement concerns. He stated because of this, they will be updating City Code and will put in place a new process on how to determine whether or not landscaping is native. He added there are many applications that are being worked through the review process within the City for different items and permits.

Councilmember Nelson asked about the grant for the Red Oaks neighborhood project and if they would have to pay for the project then be reimbursed. Mr. Dickinson said that is correct.

Councilmember Nelson asked where this money would come from. Mr. Dickinson stated they will utilize city cash flow. He explained they will never be out of funds for a long period of time as they can apply on a regular basis for reimbursement.

Councilmember Nelson asked about the native landscaping and if people now do not have to mow their lawn if it gets over three inches. Mr. Dickinson stated if it is a planned natural landscape then they do not need to mow it. He stated there will be a definition of ‘native landscape’ at the State level that this grass would have to meet you just can’t neglect your yard.

Mayor Bukkila asked if it has to be more than just grass and weeds. Mr. Dickinson said yes and that it has to be a planned native landscape.

Councilmember Nelson stated he has seen properties in the City that have areas of milkweed, but these areas are contained. Mayor Bukkila added it has to be intentional and cannot be the result of neglect.

Mr. Dickinson stated this is why they will have the two criteria that must be met. He noted they generally do not see these types of landscaping in the urban area, but they do in the rural area which is where it makes sense. He stated the code amendments will be brought to Council within the next month.

MAYOR/COUNCIL INPUT

Mayor Bukkila reiterated the need for volunteers for Fun Fest and shared that they are in desperate need of volunteers for bingo. She discussed front lawn parking and stated she has been seeing a lot of vehicles, boats, and other items parking in front lawns which is prohibited. She requested that everyone use an approved surface for parking. She added in regard to dogs, when out walking the owner must have control of their dog. She stated it is not acceptable to let dogs run free in the streets and into neighbors' yards.

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Councilmember Nelson stated before anyone starts digging to make sure to call 811, as it is a State law.

RECESS

Mayor Bukkila recessed the regular City Council meeting at 7:17 p.m. to a Closed Session of the City Council to discuss union negotiation updates.

RECONVENE

The City Council reconvened at 7:47 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Barthel, Seconded by Butler, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ava Rokosz, Recording Secretary

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