

CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS
DAKOTA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Held Tuesday, June 20, 2023

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the City Council, City of Mendota Heights, Minnesota was held at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights, Minnesota.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Levine called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilors Lorberbaum, Paper, and Mazzitello were also present. Councilor Miller was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council, the audience, and staff recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Levine presented the agenda for adoption. Councilor Paper moved adoption of the agenda. Councilor Mazzitello seconded the motion.

Councilor Mazzitello moved to amend the agenda to add Item M, under the Consent Agenda, Approval of Police Officer Resignation and Authorizing a Position Posting. Councilor Paper seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4
Nays: 0

Ayes: 4
Nays: 0

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Levine presented the consent calendar and explained the procedure for discussion and approval. Councilor Mazzitello moved approval of the consent calendar as presented, pulling items F and G.

- a. Approval of June 6, 2023 City Council Minutes
- b. Approval of June 6, 2023 Council Work Session Minutes
- c. Accept Fire Department Training Officer Resignation and Authorize Internal Position Posting
- d. Resolution 2023-35 Approving an Administrative MRCCA Minor Development Permit for 1588 Victoria Road (Planning Case 2023-08)
- e. Resolution 2023-36 Approving an Administrative MRCCA Minor Development Permit for 1155 Kingsley Road (Planning Case 2023-09)

- ~~f. Resolution 2023-37 Approving an Administrative MRCCA Minor Development Permit for 1164 Kingsley Road (Planning Case 2023-10)~~
- ~~g. Approve Resolution 2023-38 Accepting a Park Bench Donation – Mary Jane Cronin~~
- h. Approve Resolution 2023-31 Accepting a Donation to Valley View Heights Park Playground Grant Opening
- i. Approve Technology Updates to the City Council Chambers
- j. Approve Purchase of Replacement Street Light Poles
- k. Acknowledge April 2023 Fire Synopsis
- l. Approval of Claims List
- m. Approval of Police Officer Resignation and Authorizing a Position Posting

Councilor Paper seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

PULLED CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

F) RESOLUTION 2023-37 APPROVING AN ADMINISTRATIVE MRCCA MINOR DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR 1164 KINGSLEY ROAD (PLANNING CASE 2023-10)

Councilor Lorberbaum referenced a statement related to the landscaping plan and stated that it would be helpful to see those details.

Planning Consultant Jennifer Haskamp commented that there are existing plantings around the existing deck, and this is a deck replacement. She noted that the existing plantings would be replaced at a ratio of one to one with what is there.

Councilor Lorberbaum moved to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 2023-37 APPROVING AN ADMINISTRATIVE MRCCA MINOR DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR 1164 KINGSLEY ROAD.

Councilor Mazzitello seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

G) APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-38 ACCEPTING A PARK BENCH DONATION – MARY JANE CRONIN

Councilor Lorberbaum recognized the donation of \$1,000 but noted that the bench costs more than that and asked the maximum amount that would be spent on this.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek replied that the most recent costs have been around \$3,200 in total. He noted that if the Council desires, staff could review the park bench donation policy as the donation does not cover one third of the cost. He stated that the remaining funds come from the park maintenance fund.

Councilor Lorberbaum moved to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 2023-38 ACCEPTING A PARK BENCH DONATION FROM MARY JANE CRONIN.

Councilor Mazzitello seconded the motion.

Further discussion: Mayor Levine asked that the park bench donation policy be placed on the agenda for the next review of the fee schedule.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one from the public wished to be heard.

PRESENTATIONS

A) CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS FY2022 AUDIT REPORT

Matt Mayer, KDV, presented the results of the Annual Audit Report for 2022, reporting a clean or unmodified opinion. He reported no findings related to legal compliance or uniform guidance report on federal program compliance. He stated that there was one finding related to government audit standards related to the lack of segregation of accounting duties which is common for many cities of this size. He commended the Finance Director for her continued excellent work and cooperative manner. He provided an overview of the different City funds.

Mayor Levine thanked Mr. Mayer for the presentation and commended Finance Director Kristen Schabacker for her excellent work.

Councilor Mazzitello acknowledged that the City is very lucky to have Finance Director Kristen Schabacker.

B) 2023 LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW AND RECAP

City Administrator Cheryl Jacobson provided an overview and recap of the 2023 State Legislative Session which began on January 3 and adjourned on May 22.

Mayor Levine thanked City Administrator Cheryl Jacobson for the thorough update.

Councilor Lorberbaum also commended City Administrator Cheryl Jacobson for staying up to date throughout the legislative session and communicating updates to the Council.

Mayor Levine noted the funds allocated to Oheyawahe which is the first time Mendota Heights has received bonding funds. She commented that this has been an exciting journey and there will be more to come.

PUBLIC HEARING

No items scheduled.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence explained that the Council was being asked to consider amendments to the Mendota Heights Recreation Scholarship Program, which provides financial assistance to eligible Mendota Heights residents for participation in City sponsored recreation programs.

Councilor Lorberbaum stated that she was not aware of the scholarship program and asked if it has been included in Friday News.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence reviewed the marketing the City has done for this program, acknowledging that they have not done much to advertise this in the past year.

Councilor Lorberbaum asked if it was different residents that applied in 2018 and 2019.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence replied that they were different families and noted that all application information remains confidential.

Councilor Lorberbaum asked for details on the annual income of \$124,950 and whether that would be a family of four.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence provided additional details on the household income limits and confirmed that the number of household members is also a factor. She stated that under the HUD income guidelines, the annual income of \$124,950 would be for a family of eight. She noted that households would need to fall under those income limits in order to qualify for funding.

Mayor Levine commented that she understands why the Parks and Recreation Commission would want to add the staff discretion option but also understands why staff would not be comfortable with that.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence stated that staff like to have the criteria in order to implement programs under the direction of the Council. She stated that staff would be much more comfortable following the criteria created by the direction of the Commission and Council. She noted that if the program is underutilized, staff could bring back additional amendments in the future.

Mayor Levine asked what would happen if there was to be an explosion of requests and whether there would be a maximum amount budgeted for this.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence stated that would be a question of the Council as to what they are comfortable with in terms of budget.

Mayor Levine commented that the program has been underutilized and the changes could result in overutilization of the program.

Councilor Paper commented that problem does not yet exist.

Mayor Levine commented that if there is a rush of applications perhaps staff could provide that update to the Council.

Councilor Lorberbaum asked who would make the decision of discretion in other cities.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence provided details on the criteria used by other cities, noting that she was not aware of a city that used staff discretion as they each have their own criteria for applications.

Councilor Mazzitello commented that under the current program a child would either need to have a parent in the military or be a student of ISD #197, which would exclude children that attend other institutions. He commented that he likes opening this up to more students and residents of all ages. He stated that he is also not comfortable including the option for staff discretion. He noted that if a case were to come forward that did not meet eligibility, they could look to amend the policy.

Mayor Levine confirmed the consensus of the Council not to include an option for staff discretion.

Councilor Mazzitello commented that during the budget discussions they should discuss the amount of funding that should be allocated for this program in the future.

Councilor Paper moved to approve AMENDMENTS TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Councilor Mazzitello seconded the motion.

Further discussion: Councilor Mazzitello asked and received confirmation that the language allowing staff discretion was not included.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

B) RESOLUTION 2023-34 ACCEPTING BIDS AND AWARDING CONTRACT FOR THE VICTORIA CURVE STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Larry Poppler, TKDA, provided a brief background on this item. The Council was being asked to accept the bids and award the contract for the Victoria Curve Street Improvement Project.

Mayor Levine referenced the proposed trail which residents previously had questions about. She noted that residents also had questions about breaking the assessments out for the two different areas of the project and asked staff to address that.

Mr. Poppler commented that the trail work would only replace the existing trail on Victoria Curve and no additional trails will be added, although there will be striping to make more space for pedestrians west of Hunter Lane. He stated that staff did the calculations and the difference between assessing the properties as one or breaking them apart was less than \$1,000. He noted that would also set a precedent and staff would like to remain consistent in assessing entire projects the same. He stated that the assessment decision does not have to be made tonight as the assessment hearing will occur this fall.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek stated that if the Council does desire to split assessments, that would be helpful to know so that staff can do the appropriate fieldwork.

Councilor Mazzitello noted that at a previous meeting a resident made a request to separate Orchard Hills from Victoria Curve as they felt the assessment would be lower if that were done.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek replied that if split apart, the Orchard Hill assessments would increase.

Councilor Mazzitello asked if the amount of MSA funds were reduced would that impact the proposed assessment to the residents.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek replied that would reduce the City's bonding share and would not impact the amount of the assessments. He stated that in speaking to finance, if they use that much state aid the bonding would be so little that they would perhaps use the general fund for the remainder.

Councilor Mazzitello asked the approximate balance of the MSA account.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek replied that he was unsure but noted that there are new projects coming up that can use MSA funds, and those funds could perhaps be better used on those projects.

Councilor Lorberbaum asked for details on the issue of precedent in terms of the assessments being joined or separated.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek stated that the City is using its street rehabilitation policy for assessment. He noted that everyone gets the same use of the street in a neighborhood and therefore a unit assessment makes the most sense and it the fairest. He commented that the unit assessment has been used in every project for residential areas.

Councilor Paper referenced the completion dates and thanked staff for being mindful of September 15th. He stated that it would not be a good day to pave on September 25th. He asked if staff is confident that paving would be done by September 15th.

Mr. Poppler commented that is how the contract has been set up.

Councilor Mazzitello extended compliments to the consultant and staff noting that the five bids are very close together which lends to the plans being excellently drafted.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek commented that when the schedule is received from the contractor, staff would provide that to residents. He also reviewed the proposed assessment amount for households, which has been decreased from the feasibility report.

Councilor Mazzitello moved to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 2023-34 ACCEPTING BIDS AND AWARDING CONTRACT FOR THE VICTORIA CURVE STREET IMPROVEMENTS.

Councilor Paper seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Administrator Cheryl Jacobson announced upcoming events and activities.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Paper looked forward to the 4th of July fireworks.

Councilor Lorberbaum encouraged residents to attend the fireworks. She commented that the 4th of July is more than just fireworks and they need to celebrate it safely and in a meaningful manner.

Councilor Mazzitello commented that earlier tonight he complimented Finance Director Kristen Schabacker for the audit and acknowledged that it takes more than just the finance department and therefore commended all of City staff. He thanked everyone that attended his wedding reception.

Mayor Levine thanked staff for their hard work on the audit and noted that the next Council meeting will be on a Wednesday because of the 4th of July holiday.

ADJOURN

Councilor Paper moved to adjourn.

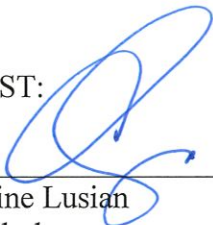
Councilor Mazzitello seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4

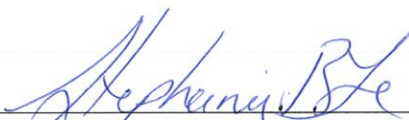
Nays: 0

Mayor Levine adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

ATTEST:



Christine Lusian
City Clerk



Stephanie B. Levine
Mayor