

Pursuant to the due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on May 15, 2023. Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, asking everyone to join the Pledge of Allegiance. The following were present for roll call: Council Members Steiner, Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, City Administrator McCann, Finance Director Ryan, Public Works Director Arnold, and City Clerk Van Genderen.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Oachs, to approve the agenda as presented. Vote on the motion Peterson, Whitlock, Oachs, Steiner, and Carlson, aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Council Minutes from May 1, 2023, Council Meeting.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Oachs, to approve the Council Meeting Minutes of May 1, 2023. Vote on the motion Peterson, Whitlock, Oachs, Steiner, and Carlson, aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Oachs moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson, to approve the Consent Agenda.

- A. Bills and Appropriations.
- B. Res. No. 35-23 Accepting Donations/Contributions/Grants.
- C. Approved Memorandum of Understandings with the Police Officer Union, Police Secretary Union, and Lieutenant Union, Adding Juneteenth to their Union Contracts as a Recognized Holiday.
- D. Approved Mobile Food License for Tommy's Tacos, 13015 Meadow Creek Drive, New Ulm, MN.
- E. Approved Mobile Food License for AC Donuts, LLC d/b/a DonutNV, 1106 Lor Ray Drive, North Mankato, MN.
- F. Approved Cannabinoid License for BL Worldwide Investments d/b/a PJ's THC Emporium, 315 Cross Street, North Mankato, MN.
- G. Approved Parade Permit for 2Wheels2Heal on June 24, 2023, as part of Mission22 Event.
- H. Res. No. 36-23 Approving Waiting Period Exemption from Lawful Gambling License for Knights of Columbus.

Vote on the motion Peterson, Whitlock, Oachs, Steiner, and Carlson, aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Public Comments Concerning Business Items on the Agenda.

Barb Church, 102, Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and requested that Council not move forward with resolution 37-23 Ordering Preparations of Plans and Specifications Water Meter Replacement City Project No. 23-04.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council and requested that Council not approve resolution 37-23 Ordering Preparations of Plans and Specifications Water Meter Replacement City Project No. 23-04.

Business Items**Set Public Hearing for June 5, 2023, at 7 pm to Consider Adopting Ordinance No. 156, Fourth Series Compiling Certain Ordinances of the City Dealing with the Subjects Embraced in the Code of Ordinances and Providing Penalties for the Violation of the Code of Ordinances.**

Community Development Director Fischer reported that staff has been working on updating the zoning code language to provide additional definitions and clarify the chapter.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, to Set a Public Hearing for June 5, 2023, at 7 pm to Consider Adopting Ordinance No. 156, Fourth Series Compiling Certain Ordinances of the City Dealing with the Subjects Embraced in the Code of Ordinances and Providing Penalties for the Violation of the Code of Ordinances. Vote on the motion Peterson, Whitlock, Oachs, Steiner, and Carlson, aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 37-23 Ordering Preparations of Plans and Specifications Water Meter Replacement City Project No. 23-04.

Public Works Director Arnold stated the resolution formalizes the consensus established at the last work session water meter discussion. The resolution would move forward with the preparation of plans to obtain quotes for the conversion process. He said the Council could decide to move forward or wait. City Administrator McCann stated that during the April 17, 2023, Council Work Session, the staff requested the Council provide directions on how to proceed with the water meter replacement. Staff recommended the second option that was presented, and Council indicated a consensus to move forward. Option 2 would require the replacement of meters at the homeowner's expense, and the City would take over responsibility the next time the meter failed with the installation of a new meter. City Administrator McCann noted that an Ordinance change would possibly need to be made if the Council proceeded with the direction laid out in Option 2, but noted the Resolution only sets in motion obtaining more financial information and a plan. Mayor Carlson requested clarification on if there needs to be a public hearing. City Administrator McCann stated that the process is not an assessment process as established in Chapter 429 of the Minnesota State Statute. The residents would have the option to make a payment plan for the replacement of the meter, and that would be through the utility billing system. Discussion was held concerning the process and whether the Council could still change its mind. City Administrator McCann reported that having the project out for bid and rejecting all the bids was possible. Council Member Oachs requested clarification on how the current process is moving with rental properties being required to change to the new meters along with new builds and any replacements. She noted that the ultimate goal is to change the meters. Finance Director Ryan noted that the City is preparing payment plans from 6 months to several years. City Administrator McCann reminded the Council that moving forward with this resolution does not tie the City to completing the project, it just allows staff to collect more information. Mayor Carlson noted that it would be good to move the project forward and not let it drag on for years, but could still make changes to the current course of action. Council Member Peterson requested information on how many people were on the waiting list to have their meters changed out. Finance Director Ryan reported that there are approximately eighty on the list, which fluctuates. Council Member Carlson noted that it would be good to get firm numbers, but there are items that need to be worked out, and maybe the change will be a budget item in 2024. Council Member Oachs noted that she was interested in slowing down the process. City Administrator McCann reviewed the process to get to this point, reminding the Council of the steps taken in 2022 requiring rentals to obtain new meters before renewing their rental licenses, the past discussion about an additional ordinance that would require residents who sold their homes, obtain a plumbing permit and those not providing water meter readings

to obtain new water meters. The Council was interested in additional ways to speed up the process of changing meters, so staff and Council had several discussions during Work Sessions to review potential options, and during the April 17, 2023, Council Work Session, Council requested staff move forward. Council Member Oachs requested information on how the current process of changing out the rentals was going. Finance Director Ryan reported that Lower North has approximately 200 rental properties remaining to switch out. Upper North has to complete its conversion by the end of 2024. Finance Director Ryan noted that a reminder would be sent to all landlords as Lower North's conversion as the end of 2023 comes closer. City Administrator McCann noted that the City's ARPA funds were used for the Lor Ray Drive Improvement Project, covering the project's water, sewer, and stormwater portion. Mayor Carlson requested that staff provide residents with a bullet point update on how the project is going. Council Member Whitlock noted that there are many valid questions, but the step forward will provide numbers and information.

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to Adopt Res. No. 37-23 Ordering Preparations of Plans and Specifications Water Meter Replacement City Project No. 23-04. Vote on the motion Peterson, Whitlock, Oachs, Steiner, and Carlson, aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Open Forum

Sarah Scheffert from Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) appeared before Council and reported that they have been focusing on early childhood and community vitality. She noted the Foundation has been working to support childcare providers through free continuing education programs and grants for early literacy initiatives. The Foundation's community vitality commitment can be seen in the Paint the Town grants and entrepreneur support. Ms. Scheffert noted that \$13.00 is invested in the community for every dollar donated. She noted that the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation was interested in being placed back in the City's budget. City Administrator McCann reported that the Council could consider the item during the budget season, and the City has funds in the gambling fund that could be used. Mayor Carlson requested SMIF consider a local business incubator in Nicollet County. Ms. Scheffert stated it could probably work.

City Administrator and Staff Comments

City Administrator McCann reviewed the All Season's Arena Board meeting information, noting that Knutson Construction provided estimates for the needed improvements. Some of the improvements included reducing the size of the rink from Olympic to NHL, improving the HVAC, and the parking lot. He noted they estimate the cost to be between \$5-9 million. Council Member Oachs noted that it is nearly double the original estimate. Mayor Carlson requested clarification on if MAHA has gambling funds. City Administrator McCann noted that they do, but the plan was to use the money for a new rink. Council Member Oachs stated that the board was shocked at the proposed expense but was informed of fundraising opportunities and potential partners.

Public Works Director Arnold noted that Judson Bottom Road was closed the evening of May 15, 2023, due to flooding. He noted that the river would continue to rise in the next few days and crest on the 17th or 18th of May.

Public Works Director Arnold reported that street crews would be completing patching and filling pot holes soon.

City Administrator McCann stated Bookin' on Belgrade would be held on May 20th.

City Administrator McCann noted that the week of May 15th is National Police Week which recognizes those who have lost their lives in the line of duty and those that continue to serve. He recognized Reserve Officer Eugene L Cousins, who died in the line of duty on Friday, May 4, 1979.

City Administrator McCann reported that the City Hall and North Mankato Taylor Library would be closed on Monday, May 29th, in observance of Memorial Day.

City Administrator McCann noted that the swim facility is getting close to opening for the 2023 season and invited residents to check out the website for details.

Mayor and Council Comments

Council Member Oachs thanked all those who donated.

Council Member Peterson requested clarification on where residents could discharge their sump pump water. Public Works Director Arnold stated the water could go into their own lawn and be discharged over the curb onto the street, but it must not run over a sidewalk, or it could be tied into the underdrains. He did note that if you are discharging your sump pump water into the ravine, it must be pumped all the way to the bottom of the ravine.

Mayor Carlson thanked the Public Works for their work on getting the pool ready. He also stated he attended the fishing opener, and it was a great event and thanked the staff that assisted with the event.

Mayor Carlson commented that he put out some social media on the Minnemishinona falls and showed how the water fell, commenting that it was a local asset.

At 7:52 pm, on a motion by Council Member Steiner, seconded by Council Member Oachs the Council Meeting was adjourned.

Mayor

City Clerk