

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on June 18, 2012. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. asking that everyone join in the Pledge of Allegiance. The following were present for the meeting, Mayor Dehen, Council Members Freyberg, Steiner, Norland and Schindle, Interim City Administrator Fischer, Finance Director Thorne, City Clerk Gehrke, Attorney Kennedy and Engineer Malm.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Schindle, to approve the agenda with the addition of two items under the Mayor: 1) Appointment of Two Citizens to Expanded Personnel Committee and 2) Purchase of Veterans' Trail Maps; and under Council Member Norland: 1) Latest Update on Benson Park Improvements. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Council Member Freyberg moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the minutes of the Council meeting of June 4, 2012. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Correspondence

Thank-You Letter from Lisa Lissimore, MSHSL

The Mayor read a letter from Lisa Lissimore, Minnesota State High School League, thanking Deputy Clerk Peterson and the City staff for their efforts in making the Minnesota State High School Fastpitch Tournament a success.

Thank-You Letter from Lee Ganske, Greater Mankato Bike and Walk Advocates

The Mayor read a letter from Lee Ganske on behalf of the Greater Mankato Bike and Walk Advocates, thanking Mayor Dehen and the City of North Mankato for the support for the recent Bike and Walk Week.

Public Hearing, 7 p.m. – Vacation of Street Right-of-Way (Adjacent to LorRay Drive)

The Mayor opened the public hearing to consider the vacation of the street right-of-way adjacent to LorRay Drive. Interim City Administrator Fischer reported that in April of 2012 Growth Holdings applied for a variance at 1720 Commerce Drive, the former Budget Mart, to reduce side yard setbacks to accommodate parking in conjunction with the renovation and expansion of the building. He reported that in order to create additional parking opportunities, the City offered to vacate a portion of the LorRay Drive right-of-way. The Council set the public hearing for this vacation at their May 21, 2012 Council meeting. The Affidavit of Publication is included in the packet. Interim Administrator Fischer reported that as part of the right-of-way vacation process, it was necessary for the City to contact all utility companies to see if utilities are located in this area. As there are above and below ground utilities in this area, Growth Holdings will be responsible for any relocation of utilities. There being no one else appearing before the Council, the Mayor closed this portion of the meeting.

Res. No. 39-12 Vacating Street Right-of-Way (Adjacent to LorRay Drive)

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Schindle, to adopt Resolution No. 39-12 Vacating Street Right-of-Way (Adjacent to LorRay Drive). Vote on the Resolution: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Open the Meeting to the Public for the First Time**J. D. Burton, Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities – Legislative Session and Highway 14 Partnership Update**

J.D. Burton, Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities, appeared before the Council and reported on the 2012 Legislative Session and the Highway 14 Partnership. He reported the elimination of the Market Value Credit and the creation of the Market Value Exclusion threw the property tax system into chaos and increased property taxes across the state, regardless of local levy decisions. Due to the nature of the Market Value Exclusion, property tax increases varied with Greater Minnesota averaging an 8.1 percent increase compared to 2.6 percent in the metro area. Mr. Burton stated the CGMC's emphasis is on protecting LGA and reported that having LGA frozen as it has been for the past three years versus returning to the formula saved the City of North Mankato \$134,000. Mr. Burton reviewed the successful initiatives of the CGMC economic development role which include 1) Greater Minnesota Internship Program; 2) Enhancement of the Angel Investment Tax Credit in Greater Minnesota; 3) Greater Minnesota Business Development Public Infrastructure (BDPI) Grant; 4) Greater Minnesota Interchange Program and 5) Greater Minnesota New Jobs Training Program. The CGMC formed an Economic Development Advisory Task Force to provide guidance and assistance in the creation and promotion of the Greater Minnesota Economy Recovery Plan which is comprised of city and EDA officials as well as local chambers of commerce.

Mr. Burton reviewed upcoming events including the CGMC Breakfast at the LMC Annual Conference in Duluth on June 22, 2012, the CGMC Summer Conference in Owatonna July 25-27, 2012 and the CGMC Fall Conference in Alexandria November 14-16, 2012. He thanked the City of North Mankato for being an active member of CGMC and encouraged all elected officials to contact their representatives reporting that due to redistricting 201 Legislative seats are up for election this fall.

Mr. Burton thanked Mayor Dehen for his work on the Highway 14 Partnership Board. He reported the Minnesota Department of Transportation is drafting their 20-year funding plan with the draft due in September and the final plan adopted in January 2013. He stated that CGMC has taken a pro-active strategy on the improvements to Highway 14 by taking messages directly to the Governor and testifying at the capitol stating the need for the Highway 14 improvements to be the top priority in the 20-year funding plan. The CGMC has asked all cities to contact the Governor regarding this issue.

Jay Weir, Weir Insurance Agency

Jay Weir, Weir Insurance Agency, appeared before the Council and presented the renewal rates from the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for the property and casualty insurance and workers' compensation insurance for 2012-13. Mr. Weir reported the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust has provided insurance for the City since 1980 and has been returning dividends since 1987. The experience modification for workers' compensation increased from 0.86 to 0.91 for 2012-13. Property/casualty and workers' compensation insurance premiums for 2012-13 total \$250,659 compared to a budget of \$265,523, and represent an increase in premiums of \$7,357 from the prior year. **Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland to approve the property and casualty insurance renewal and the workers' compensation renewal for 2012-13. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Jim Santori, 2102 Rolling Green Lane

Jim Santori, 2102 Rolling Green Lane, and former member of the Parks & Green Spaces Advisory Committee appeared before the Council and expressed his displeasure about the proposed placement of playground equipment in the southwest corner of Benson Park adjacent to the picnic area

and parking lot. He stated the Master Plan does not include playground equipment in this area. He requested the playground equipment not be installed and for the Council to work toward fulfilling the Master Plan for Benson Park and a reliable funding mechanism for development of the Benson Park Master Plan. He also asked the Council to appoint a long-term Park Committee.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before the Council and stated his support for the Benson Park Master Plan. He also asked what the method was for controlling audio in residential parks. He reported that the music was very loud on Sunday and with City offices closed, there was no one to call. The Mayor informed him that he could call the Police Department at 911 when City offices are closed and they will respond. Some discussion was held about the decibel level allowed in residential neighborhood parks.

Chris Corley, 617 Range Street

Chris Corley, 617 Range Street, appeared before the Council stating he believed adjacent property owners should have been notified of the playground equipment that was going to be installed near their homes.

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue, appeared before the Council and asked who put the initiative forward on the playground equipment.

Bess Tsaouse, 136 Mary Circle

Bess Tsaouse, 136 Mary Circle, appeared before the Council and gave the Council a summary of the Park & Green Spaces Committee and the process for finalizing the Master Plan for Benson Park. She expressed her support for the comments made by Jim Santori.

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive, appeared before the Council and stated he recently visited an 80-acre park in St. Louis that employed 500 people and had 2,000 volunteers. He stated the City should spend more money on Benson Park and skip the soccer fields.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Schindle moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve the Consent Agenda which includes:

- a. Resolution No. 40-12 Approving Donations/Contributions.
- b. Audio and Large Group Permit for Precision Press Company Picnic, Spring Lake Park, Saturday, September 22, from 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- c. Large Group Permit for Cub Foods Picnic, Spring Lake Park, Wednesday, August 8, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- d. Large Group Permit for Grace Baptist Church Picnic, Spring Lake Park, Sunday, July 22, from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Staff Reports**City Planner****Minutes of June 14, 2012 Planning Commission Meeting**

The Council accepted the minutes of the June 14, 2012 Planning Commission meeting.

Final Plat of North Ridge Estates Phase XIV

Planner Fischer presented a request from Octavian Properties, LLC to replat Lot 1, Block 5, North Ridge Estates Phase XI to accommodate six single-family residential lots including the addition of Pleasant View Court. He reported the preliminary plat was approved by the Planning Commission and City Council in April 2012 subject to the addition of a storm water holding pond. The final plat will consist of six single-family lots and Outlot A which will be the location of a future storm water detention pond. **Council Member Schindle moved, seconded by Council Member Freyberg, to approve the final plat of North Ridge Estates Phase XIV. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Interim City Administrator**Res. No. 41-12 Approving Plans and Specifications and Setting Bid Opening for Project No. 12-02ABC, Caswell North Soccer Fields**

Interim City Administrator Fischer reported staff has been working with Independent School District 77 and the Mankato United Soccer Club (MUSC) and after planning for several years are now in a position to begin the construction of 10 various sized soccer fields on the western half of the elementary school property. He reported the fields would be built in three phases with the first phase of the project to include grading, site work, tiling, installation of water/sewer, irrigation, seeding and electrical at an estimated cost of \$518,000. A Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Mankato United Soccer Club (MUSC) has been drafted whereby MUSC would contribute \$150,000 toward Phase I of the project with the remainder funded through the Local Option Sales Tax Fund. The construction schedule calls for Phase 2, consisting of parking and concession stand construction to occur in 2013 with the fields playable in 2014. Paul Gaspar, Vice President of Administration for MUSC, appeared before the Council and thanked the City of North Mankato for stepping up and building the soccer fields. The Mayor thanked MUSC for their help in funding and preparing the soccer field layout. **Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to adopt Resolution No. 41-12 Approving Plans and Specifications and Setting Bid Opening for Project No. 12-02ABC, Caswell North Soccer Fields. Vote on the Resolution: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

LorRay Drive Off-Street Parking Improvement Report

Interim City Administrator Fischer reported that as part of the recent striping on the north end of LorRay Drive, on-street parking was eliminated. In response to parking concerns from area residents, the addition of off-street parking areas was discussed at a previous Council meeting. He presented two off-street parking options prepared by the City Engineer. Location A is south of Timm Road and Location B was within the Monarch Meadows site. He reported that representatives of Monarch Meadows have since decided they do not want a parking area constructed on their property; however, residents may still park in the Monarch Meadows parking lot. A second parking area could be located on the Good Shepherd Church site. After some discussion of the parking areas, the Council directed staff to notify the residents in the immediate area of the proposal for a parking area.

Brush Pick-Up Report

Interim City Administrator Fischer presented a recommendation regarding the brush pick-up issue which was discussed at the previous two Council meetings. He reported he met with the

appropriate department heads about past and current brush pick-up and drop-off policies. In summary, brush pick-up can be accomplished at a cost of approximately \$1,000 to \$1,200 per month. Staff recommends either continuing with the existing policy of the residents dropping brush at the compost site or resuming monthly curbside pick-up during the spring, summer and fall months. The Council requested this item be referred to a future Budget Workshop.

Review of Benson Park Playground Equipment

The Mayor stated for the public's information that to date \$1,630,000 has been expended for the purchase of the land and improvements to Benson Park. Council Member Norland recapped the improvements that have taken place at Benson Park which include land purchase, west detention pond, trails, Ladybug Lake, parking lots, trees, oak savanna seeding, benches/trash cans, flag pole, boulders, signs and drinking fountain. She reported that Bolton & Menk is working on the plans for infrastructure of Little Bug Bay and stated the Master Plan is being followed. The Council discussed the playground equipment which was recently approved by the Council for installation at Benson Park. Council Member Freyberg asked about the resident input for the playground equipment. It was noted the original Master Plan called for natural playground equipment to be installed in the northern portion of Benson Park. The Council reviewed the parks in the area and the closest neighborhood park for residents in the Benson Park area is Walter Farm Park. Engineer Malm reported the underground work would occur in the northern portion of Benson Park and suggested that no playground equipment be installed where the work is to take place. In response to a question from the Council, Interim City Administrator Fischer reported no funds were budgeted for 2012 for improvements in Benson Park. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to suspend installation of the playground equipment in the southwest corner of Benson Park until further research has been completed. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

School and Conference

Council Member Schindle moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve actual and necessary expenses for the following school and conference:

1. Effective Communications, St. Paul, August 29, for Emergency Management Director.

Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Finance Director

2013 Budget Calendar

Finance Director Thorne presented the 2013 Budget Calendar detailing the Council Budget Workshops to be held starting August 6, 2012 at 5 p.m. with the Department Heads and outlining the deadlines for budgetary purposes. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the 2013 Budget Calendar. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

City Attorney

Attorney Kennedy reported the responses he received from other cities regarding the Statement of Values was given to the Council for their review. Council Member Norland reported she has been receiving positive feedback about the idea of the Council adopting a Statement of Values.

City Engineer

The Mayor congratulated City Engineer Brian Malm who received the 2012 Engineer of the Year Award.

Report from the Mayor**Schedule Council Workshop**

Mayor Dehen reported he met with Human Resource Specialist, Bonnie Bennett of Turning Point, who will aid the Council in the hiring process for the City Administrator position. He requested that Ms. Bennett be invited to a Council Workshop along with the citizens who will be named to the Expanded Personnel Committee. **Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to set a Council Workshop for 6 p.m. on Monday, July 2, 2012. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Appointment of Citizens to Expanded Personnel Committee

Mayor Dehen reported he is proposing two names for the Expanded Personnel Committee. Both candidates have human resource experience in hiring and have agreed to serve. The two candidates are Trudie Gustafson, General Manager of Navitor Folders, and Keith Hamm, Human Resource Coordinator for Minnesota Valley Action Council. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Schindle, to appoint Trudie Gustafson and Keith Hamm to serve on the Expanded Personnel Committee. Vote on the motion: Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; Freyberg abstained, no nays. Motion carried.**

Veterans' Trail Maps

Mayor Dehen presented a request for funding of a map which would depict the trails connecting the veterans' memorials. He reported the maps would be purchased jointly with the Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau and the maps would be available at the dedication of the new Veterans' Memorial on July 4, 2012. Copies would also be placed at the service clubs and libraries. **Council Member Freyberg moved, seconded by Council Member Norland to authorize funding in the amount of \$350 for the veterans' trail maps. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Open the Meeting to the Public for the Second Time**Jim Santori, 2102 Rolling Green Lane**

Jim Santori, 2102 Rolling Green Lane, again appeared before the Council and reported that there has never been playground equipment in Benson Park and that wooden playground equipment can be sealed so that splinters are not a problem. Several members of the previous Park & Green Spaces Committee appeared in support of Santori's comments.

Bess Tsaouse, 136 Mary Circle

Bess Tsaouse, 136 Mary Circle, appeared before the Council and stated the veterans' memorial trail map should be made available on the City's website.

Chris Corley, 617 Range Street

Chris Corley appeared before the Council and encouraged the playground equipment that was purchased for Benson Park be placed in a park that needs the playground equipment updated.

Chris Boyer, North Mankato Police Chief

Police Chief Chris Boyer appeared before the Council and reported the Police Department does not have decibel meters but responds to noise complaints and determines whether the music should be

turned down based on disruption of the neighborhood. He also reported the noise this past weekend was from the Solstice event at Riverfront Park and not from an event in Wheeler Park.

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue, appeared before the Council and questioned whether the City was paying Bonnie Bennett to assist with the hiring of the City Administrator, questioned the plowing and seeding of the soccer fields, and asked the Mayor for a report showing the return the City receives from sport complexes. The Mayor reported the City will not be paying Bonnie Bennett.

Bills and Appropriations

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve all bills and appropriations in the amount of (\$103,112.14). Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m. on a motion by Council Member Norland, seconded by Council Member Steiner. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland, Schindle and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Mayor

City Clerk