

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 July 24, 2017. 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: Council Members Freyberg, Whitlock, Steiner and Norland, Mayor Dehen, City Administrator Harrenstein, Finance Director McCann, Attorney Kennedy, Community Development Director Fischer, Public Works Director Swanson and Deputy City Clerk Anderson.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Steiner stated a second Public Comment period was not on the agenda and should be as the Council has yet to vote on adopting a new public comment policy. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, to amend the agenda to add a Public Comment period after the Business Items. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Whitlock, Steiner, Norland and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes

Council Member Freyberg moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve the minutes of the Council meeting from July 10, 2017. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Whitlock, Steiner, Norland and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Work Session Minutes

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the minutes of the Council Work Session from July 17, 2017. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Whitlock, Steiner, Norland and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Steiner made a motion to remove Item G, Consider Adopting a Resolution Clarifying Public Comments, from the agenda for separate consideration. With no second, the motion died. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Freyberg, to approve the Consent Agenda which included:**

- A. Bills and Appropriations.
- B. Consider Resolution Approving Donations/Contributions/Grants.
- C. Consider Approving Audio Permit for the Circle Inn on July 29, 2017, from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm and Approving Temporary Extension of Patio.
- D. Consider Approving Parade Permit for the Minnesota River Builders Association's 5K Fun Run on September 30, 2017, from 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- E. Consider Approving Parade Permit for the North Mankato Triathlon on August 13, 2017, from 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- F. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving the North Mankato Arts Idea Plan.
- G. Consider Adopting a Resolution Clarifying Public Comments.
- H. Consider Setting Public Hearing for 7:00 p.m. on August 7, 2017 to Consider Adopting Ordinance No. 94, Fourth Series, an Ordinance of the City of North Mankato, Minnesota, Amending North Mankato City Code, Chapter 111, Entitled "Alcoholic Beverages."

Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Whitlock, Norland and Dehen, aye; Steiner, nay. Motion carried.

Public Comments Concerning Business Items on the Agenda

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive, appeared before council and stated his opposition to the Public Comment Resolution. Mayor Dehen asked Mr. Henry to sit down as his comment was not related to Business Items on the agenda.

Business Items**Receive the Belgrade Avenue Master Plan**

Matt Lassonde from Bolton & Menk gave a Power Point presentation outlining the Belgrade Avenue Master Plan which included the Plan Purpose; Vision, Goals and Objectives; Public Involvement; Existing and Emerging Conditions; Implementation and Funding Strategies. City Administrator Harrenstein indicated it has taken three years to get to this point of a shared vision for the downtown and thanked all the members who served on the steering committee and invited the committee chair, Randy Zellmer to speak on the Plan. Mr. Zellmer stated the Master Plan is a live document outlining the wishes of the community and is not meant to be shelved, indicating the plan can be used 5, 10, 20 years out. Mr. Zellmer indicated the perception of Belgrade Avenue is lack of parking but indicated there is plenty of parking, there is simply a need for more signage for directional parking. Mayor Dehen asked Mr. Lassonde to name the top three factors of the plan. Mr. Lassonde indicated preservation, calming traffic and parking appear to be the most relevant. Council Member Freyberg commented it is a good, all-encompassing plan. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the Belgrade Avenue Master Plan. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Whitlock, Steiner, Norland and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Receive the Belgrade Avenue Corridor Study

Angie Bersaw from Bolton & Menk gave a Power Point presentation outlining the Belgrade Avenue Corridor Study which included the Study Process Recap, Public and Business Owner Input, Recommendations and Implementation Sequence and Next Steps. Ms. Bersaw reviewed the consistent themes of the Plan which include improve pedestrian facilities and streetscape appearance, reduce the speed of traffic in the 200 block, enhance pedestrian safety, identify and address parking deficiencies and encourage and promote renovation and rehabilitation of existing buildings. Ms. Bersaw indicated the City will be able to implement and test sections of the study when the timing is right and noted the study dovetails nicely with the Belgrade Master Plan. Mayor Dehen questioned how effective a three lane road coming into lower North Mankato would be in slowing down traffic. Ms. Bersaw indicated when you add lanes and restrict the lane width, drivers tend to naturally slow down. Ms. Bersaw stated MnDOT was supportive of the study and the traffic options. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, to approve the Belgrade Avenue Corridor Study. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Whitlock, Steiner, Norland and Dehen, aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Public Comments

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue, appeared before council stating the new public comment policy isn't right and is not a win for the citizens.

Lucy Lowry, 2263 North Ridge Drive, appeared before Council to comment on the City's work environment. Mayor Dehen called Point of Order indicating her comments were off limits and involved a privacy issue.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council stating he believed the new public comment policy was a way to quiet certain citizens. Mr. Hagen began speaking about the City's work environment and Point of Order was called by Mayor Dehen.

Rich O'Brien, 281 Cliff Drive, appeared before Council stating he feels the public comment policy is censorship and agrees with Tom Hagen.

Matthias Leyrer, 526 Wall Street, appeared before Council and indicated he felt there was no consistency in the treatment of residents who spoke at the Public Comment section. Mr. Leyrer asked whether there will or will not be a second Public Comment section under the new public comment policy. Mayor Dehen responded there will not. Mr. Leyrer thanked the Council for approving the Belgrade Avenue Master Plan.

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council stating she was very disappointed in the Council's public comment policy decision.

Caleb Wunderlich, 921 Lake Street, appeared before Council stating he hoped Council would reconsider the public comment policy.

Suzanne Beetsch, 925 Lake Street, appeared before Council stating she wants more discussion between the Council and residents.

City Administrator and Staff Comments

Dogs on Leashes in Spring Lake Park

City Administrator Harrenstein reported that dogs will be allowed on leashes in Spring Lake Park as long as residents follow the leash rule and pick up after their dogs. Mayor Dehen asked about dog waste bags. Public Works Director reported that bag stations would be installed within the week.

Finance Director McCann reported he is working on the Draft Budget and will be making a presentation in the near future.

Mayor and Council Comments

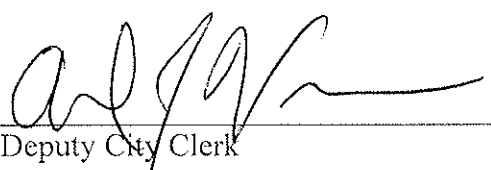
Council Member Norland made a public apology to convenience store owners for comments she made at the Council Workshop while discussing the tobacco policy. Council Member Norland explained she had stated that business owners are in the business of selling tobacco and in retrospect she feels she demonized them as they don't just sell tobacco, they provide many more services. Council Member Norland indicated that tobacco use is a public health issue and is easy to get addicted to but it does not mean she can demonize those that sell it.

Council Member Whitlock reported that this year Blues on Belgrade had the most visitor turnout so far. He noted Music in the Park has been a success and the last show this year will be Thursday night.

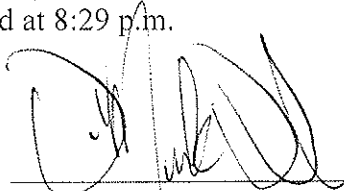
Council Member Steiner stated he does not agree with the new public comment period and feels public opinion is being suppressed.

Mayor Dehen reported the U.S Hwy 14 Partnership report was in the packet for review and stated there is still an ongoing need for financing. Mayor Dehen stated the new Public Comment policy is a way for residents to let the council know in advance what they wish to speak about so items can be added to the agenda for discussion; indicating the Public Comment period was not for residents to debate with the Council. Mayor Dehen indicated the Public Comment policy would be on a trial basis and the Council can revisit and revise the policy as needed.

There being no further business, on a motion by Council Member Norland, seconded by Council Member Steiner, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.



Deputy City Clerk



Mayor