

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

St. Francis Area Schools District Office 4115 Ambassador Blvd. NW

July 15, 2024

6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The regular City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Joe Muehlbauer.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Joe Muehlbauer, Councilmembers Kevin Robinson, Crystal Kreklow, and Sarah Udvig.

Also present: City Administrator Kate Thunstrom, Deputy City Administrator/City Clerk Jenni Wida, Community Development Director Jessica Rieland, Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), Public Works Director Paul Carpenter, Fire Chief Dave Schmidt, Finance Director Darcy Mulvihill, City Engineer Craig Jochum (Hakanson Associates, Inc.), and Police Chief Todd Schwieger.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: UDVIG APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Ayes: Kreklow, Udvig, Robinson, and Mayor Muehlbauer.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 4-0

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. City Council Minutes - July 1, 2024
- B. City Council Work Session Minutes - July 1, 2024
- C. City Council Work Session Minutes - June 24, 2024
- D. Stahl Construction – Pay Applications No. 10 – Labor & Material
- E. Police Department Policy Manual
- F. City Hall/Fire Station Drainage Basin Fencing
- G. Routine sewer system cleaning (Jetting) and Televising
- H. Appointment of Election Judges
- I. Payment of Claims

MOTION BY: KREKLOW SECOND: UDVIG APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA

Ayes: Kreklow, Udvig, Robinson, and Mayor Muehlbauer.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 4-0

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Muehlbauer asked City Clerk Wida if they had anyone wanting to speak. She said they did not.

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS - NONE

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

8. OLD BUSINESS - NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Compensation Study

City Administrator Thunstrom reviewed the Staff report in regard to the proposal for a compensation study from Abdo.

Udvig noted that she believes that the City is at a point where they need to catch up with the compensation of surrounding cities and that this study will be very beneficial.

Robinson asked if there are other cities in the area that also do not have updated compensation studies. Thunstrom explained that several cities are currently going through a compensation study or have just completed one within the last few years. She noted that with the changes from COVID-19, a lot of cities realized that a compensation study was necessary.

Robinson asked if other cities have paid a similar price for their compensation studies. Thunstrom shared that she knows there is another firm that offers these services that is more costly; however, she did not compare the costs of all firms who offer this kind of service. He added that the cost varies depending on the amount of positions that are being included in the study.

Robinson asked if the League of Minnesota Cities has any guidelines for this. He asked what guidelines they used for hiring over the past few years if they did not have an updated compensation study at that time. Thunstrom shared that the League of Minnesota Cities does provide some baseline data; however, it is typically about 18 months behind. She noted that they are able to see where things are trending based on the Leagues data. She added that they have not been hiring anyone with Step 1 as it is not within the market range. She noted that the data from the study will be based on similar sized cities. She said this study will have several moving components.

Robinson asked if any of the City's current salaries are competitive with the market or if they think all are behind. Thunstrom stated that she did a comparison to other cities 2022 numbers, and she found that there are a handful of positions that are right where they should be. She shared that where she sees the greatest

deficiencies is with the later steps as someone moves up within their position. She added that she does not think the differences found in the study will be drastic.

Robinson asked how long the compensation study will remain relevant. Thunstrom said they typically last around five to 10 years. She suggested that they start budgeting for a compensation study every 10 years to make sure they are staying competitive.

Robinson asked if this study will take benefits into consideration as well as salaries. Thunstrom stated they will review benefits as a part of this as well.

Robinson asked if the study also takes into consideration those working from home and the benefits that remote jobs have. Thunstrom explained that they did not discuss this with Abdo as a majority of City employees cannot work at home. She noted that there are a handful of employees in Administration that have some flexibility with their role.

Robinson asked if the proposed amount of \$16,300 is the whole amount they will be paying for the study or if it could end up costing more than this. Thunstrom stated that Adbo is not to exceed the \$16,300 budget set.

Mayor Muehlbauer agreed that they are behind on this and the study will be beneficial.

MOTION BY: KREKLOW SECOND: ROBINSON APPROVING THE COMPENSATION STUDY.

Ayes: Kreklow, Udvig, Robinson, and Mayor Muehlbauer.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 4-0

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - NONE

11. REPORTS

A. Police Department Quarterly Report - 2nd Quarter

Police Chief Schwieger reviewed the quarterly report for the Police Department. He shared that calls for service were up for the quarter, along with increases in drug offenses, domestic assaults, and thefts. He added that traffic stops were also up for the quarter. He shared that officers participated in many Toward Zero Death events throughout the quarter. He noted that the Police Department was very active with different types of training during the quarter, completing 176 hours of training. He shared that they held their annual award ceremony in April where several officers and Staff received awards for actions taken in 2023. He added that they also hosted many community events, including the Citizens Academy, the Bike Rodeo, and Free Dog License Day. He noted that they have a number of events scheduled for the rest of the year, including the National Night Out, Cone with a Cop and Santa at the Police Department.

The Council thanked Schwieger for his report and the great work from him and his Staff.

Robinson asked if they have been seeing a lot more drug use in their DWIs. Schwieger explained that they are seeing a consistent number of drug stops for DWIs.

Robinson asked if they are still seeing most of their traffic stops be for people who are passing through town rather than St. Francis residents. Schwieger said yes and noted that a majority of drivers stopped in these traffic stops are visitors to town.

Kreklow shared great appreciation for the Police Department for their help in handling a situation where her daughter was being followed home from work.

Mayor Muehlbauer shared that it is great to see the number of great community events that are held by the Police Department.

12. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

The Council shared the meetings and events they attended in the past few weeks, as well as highlighting upcoming events.

Robinson asked how the building meetings are going for the new City Hall Fire Station. Thunstrom shared that the building process is going very well. She noted that the unexpected storms have caused some issues with the project but they are still looking at substantial completion of the building by the end of October. She shared that she will be bringing forward requests for furniture and appliances to the Council shortly.

Robinson asked how they are doing budget wise for this project. Thunstrom stated that the furniture costs are more than they had anticipated so they have been getting creative to find ways to lessen this amount. She explained that they are working with three different furniture vendors to keep this price as low as possible. She shared that they are getting good bids on the fire equipment. She noted that everything is at or below budget.

Robinson asked if the auction has already taken place for the Rum River Inn. Thunstrom shared that the foreclosure auction took place back in December and has now gone through its redemption period. She noted that she has talked to a realtor who is working on getting the property listed. She added that they are working with Code Enforcement to get the property cleaned up.

Robinson asked if they are working with a lender in terms of the Code Enforcement request. Thunstrom stated that it is an asset manager and they have been sending letters letting them know that the property needs to be mowed and taken care of.

Robinson asked if there are any updates on the Highway 47 project. Thunstrom explained that they are waiting for the Met Council to formally announce the grant for this project. She shared that they have been told that they are getting \$7,000,000 in federal funds. She noted that she had an extensive conversation with MnDOT on who is going to be doing the pre-design and engineering for the project. She added that their appropriations request is still on the floor and is stuck in the legislative process. She said there is a lot of waiting going on.

Mayor Muehlbauer welcomed Jessica Rieland as the City's new Community Development Director. He shared that he is praying for everyone who was involved in the shooting at the Trump Rally in Pennsylvania this weekend.

13. UPCOMING EVENTS

- July 17 - Planning Commission Meeting @ 7:00 pm
- July 20 - Recycling Event @ 8:00 am - 12:00 pm
- July 29 - City Council Special Meeting - Council Vacancy
- August 5 - City Council Meeting @6:00 pm
- August 6 - National Night Out
- August 13 - Election Day - State Primary Election
- August 19 - City Council Meeting @ 6:00 pm
- August 21 - Planning Commission Meeting @ 7:00 pm
- August 22 - Cone with a Cop

14. ADJOURNMENT

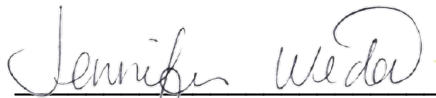
MOTION BY: UDVIG SECOND: KREKLOW TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Ayes: Kreklow, Udvig, Robinson, and Mayor Muehlbauer.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 4-0

There being no further business, Mayor Muehlbauer adjourned the regular City Council at 6:29 p.m.



Jennifer Wida, City Clerk