

City of Rockford, Minnesota Council Workshop Minutes  
5:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017

The meeting was called to Order by Mayor *Pro Tem* Rick Martinson at 5:00 p.m. Council members Debbie Buoy, Scott Seymour and Ted Hill were present. Mayor Renee Hafften was absent.

City Administrator / Special Counsel, Dan Madsen; Jennifer Swendsen, Finance Clerk; Trevor Brummer, Public Works Director; and Jared Ward, City Engineer were also in attendance.

Madsen and Swendsen reviewed the proposed Preliminary Property Tax levy providing that it could still be set as low as a 1.39% increase, and could be set as high as a 4% increase over the 2017 Final Property Tax Levy. Staff reviewed the difference in potential preliminary levies and the Council held a policy discussion regarding bond debt payments and funding future capital improvement projects. No action was taken, as this matter was set on for discussion and informational purposes only.

Madsen explained that Lennar had asked for a reduction in their permit fees for the remainder of their unplatted lots in the Parkwood development. Council discussed the policy implications of granting a reduction in permit fees, the impact of fee reduction on future developers, and the benefit of taxable property base expansion in Rockford. In weighing these benefits and detriments, the Council also discussed the perceived need for reduced permit fees to spur development by Lennar and whether or not any reduction was appropriate. It was discussed that Lennar should be invited to meet with the Council in the future to explain their desire for permit reductions and discuss whether or not any reduction is necessary. No action was taken, as this matter was set on for discussion and informational purposes only.

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City Administrator / Special Counsel, Dan Madsen; Trevor Brummer, Public Works Director; and Jared Ward, City Engineer were also in attendance.

A **MOTION** was made by Seymour, and seconded by Buoy, to approve the Consent Agenda Items 3A through 3C, and set the agenda for the Council Meeting as listed:

- 3A. Approve Minutes from the September 12, 2017 Regular Council Meeting
- 3B. Approve Payment of Claims, Check Number 27789 through Check Number 27834 totaling \$74,231.88
- 3C. Holiday Sale at Rockford City Center Mall

Motion Carried: voting in favor; Hill, Seymour, Martinson and Buoy.

**New Business: Resolution #17-31 Certify Preliminary Property Tax Levy**

Madsen explained that the Council had met twice in workshop and had reviewed the 2018 preliminary budgets, bond debt and proposed property tax levy. After discussion and review of long-term bond debt, increases in health insurance and other expenses, and factoring in the City's ability to work to lower the property tax levy prior to December when the final levy is set, **MOTION** was made by Hill, and seconded by Seymour, to approve Resolution #17-31 approving the Ad Valorem Preliminary Property Tax Levy in the amount of \$1,331,025; and the Debt Service Preliminary Levy in the amount of \$348,492; for a total Preliminary Property Tax Levy of \$1,679,517 which constitutes an increase of 3.85% over the Final 2017 Property Tax Levy.

Motion Carried: voting in favor; Hill, Seymour, Martinson and Buoy.

**New Business: 8905 Highway 55 Property**

Madsen explained that the City had previously discussed selling the city-owned property located at 8905 State Highway 55. After discussion and review, Staff thought a conversation and consideration should be had regarding retaining the property and continuing to rent it as a residence. The prevailing rationale, as explained by Staff, was that the property is zoned as Commercial and the current use is grandfathered in as an existing non-conforming use. Staff felt city ownership of the property, with its corner location with great visibility from Highway 55, would support future commercial development better than if it were privately owned. After discussion and review, Staff was directed to complete estimates for repair and updating of the property and return to the Economic Development Authority for review and potential approval of the repairs. No formal action was taken, as only discussion and review occurred.

**New Business: Delano Youth Hockey, City Rink Use**

Madsen explained that the City received a request from the Delano Youth Hockey Association to use the city's hockey rink again this year on Thursday evenings from 5 to 9 p.m. for outdoor youth hockey practices and games. Delano Youth Hockey has

Rockford kids playing in their league, and they hope holding outdoor practices here will help increase their participation. During all practices, they will have staff working the warming houses and understand the practices are weather dependent and rink condition dependent. After additional discussion and review, **MOTION** was made by Martinson, and seconded by Hill, to approve the rink use request.

Motion Carried: voting in favor; Hill, Seymour, Martinson and Buoy.

**New Business: Public Works Maintenance Mechanic**

Madsen explained that the City recently concluded the interview process for the Public Works Mechanic Position. Based upon the interviews, review of the application materials and other qualifications of the candidates, the Personnel Committee recommended offering the position to Robert Paulson. After additional discussion and review, including starting wage and start date, **MOTION** was made by Buoy, and seconded by Seymour, to offer the position to Mr. Paulson at a wage of twenty-four dollars per hour with all standard new hire benefits.

Motion Carried: voting in favor; Hill, Seymour, Martinson and Buoy.

**Staff and Council Updates:**

Staff and the Council then discussed what to do with the rental house property, and whether the City should consider selling the house, demolishing the house and marketing the property for development, re-renting the house or re-entering into a future agreement with Sand Companies for a potential workforce housing project at some time in the future. After discussion and review, it was understood that Staff would put together options, repair costs and a plan for the potential sale of the house.

Staff and the Council presented updates regarding the Rockford Mall, Rocktoberfest II, Hurst Woods housing development and other updates pertaining to city events.

A **MOTION** was then made by Hill to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Buoy.

Motion Carried: voting in favor; Hill, Martinson, Seymour and Buoy and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:39 p.m.

Typed this 4th<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2017.

Dan Madsen

City Administrator, Special Counsel  
City of Rockford Minnesota

All meetings of the Rockford City Council are video recorded and available for viewing on-line at [www.cityofrockford.org](http://www.cityofrockford.org). Meeting minutes are intended to be a general synopsis of the meetings of the City Council, and more detail regarding discussions and policy considerations is provided by watching the recording of the meeting.

Approved:

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Rick Martinson  
*Pro Tem* Mayor

Attest:

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Dan Madsen  
City Administrator, Special Counsel