

City of Rockford, Minnesota Workshop Meeting Minutes 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 28, 2021

The City Council Workshop was called to Order by Mayor Renee Hafften at approximately 5 p.m. Council members Debbie Buoy, Denise Willenbring and Mike Werman were in attendance. Scott Seymour was absent.

City Administrator / Attorney, Dan Madsen and Finance Director, Jennifer Swendsen were also in attendance.

Members of the Staff and Council reviewed the 2022 Special Funds and Enterprise Funds Budgets. Members of the Council and asked questions regarding the revenues, expenditures and sources of funding for the budgets, including both short and long-range planning.

No formal action was taken, as these matters were set on for informational purposes only.

City of Rockford, Minnesota Council Meeting Minutes 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 28, 2021

The City Council Meeting was called to Order by Mayor Renee Hafften at approximately 6 p.m. Council members Debbie Buoy, Denise Willenbring and Mike Werman were in attendance. Scott Seymour was absent.

City Administrator / Attorney, Dan Madsen was also in attendance.

A motion was made by Buoy, and seconded by Willenbring, to approve the Consent Agenda Items 3A through 3J as listed and set the Agenda for the Council Meeting:

- 3A. Approve Minutes from the December 14, 2021 Workshop and Regular Council Meeting
- 3B. Approve Payment of Claims, Check Number: 33294 through 33321; and 502874E through 502876E, totaling \$26,673.99
- 3C. Resolution Rockford Fire Department Roster as of December 31, 2021
- 3D. Resolution Appointing City Insurance Agent
- 3E. Resolution Transferring Funds to EDA Fund 207
- 3F. Resolution Accepting 2021 Donations
- 3G. Resolution Supporting School Sidewalk in City Right of Way
- 3H. 2022 Employee Compensation
- 3I. Resolution Designating 2022 Polling Place
- 3J. Resolution Approving Recycling Grant

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Buoy, Willenbring and Werman.

New Business: Resolution Adopting 2022 Special Fund and Enterprise Fund Budgets

Administrator / Attorney Madsen reviewed the 2022 Proposed Enterprise and Special Fund Budgets, highlighting revenues, expenses, sources of revenues and big projects or expenditures as proposed for 2022.

After discussion and review, including the difference in budgets and the regulations regarding operation of Enterprise Funds, Motion was made by Hafften, and seconded by Buoy, to approve the Resolution and Budgets as proposed.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Buoy, Willenbring and Werman.

New Business: Public Works General Maintenance Hire

Administrator / Attorney Madsen explained that the vacant position for the Maintenance Mechanic was posted for a period of roughly six weeks on the League of Minnesota Cities Careers page, Indeed, the City's Website and Rockford Facebook Page. Staff received over 50 candidates for this position. The entire Public Works Staff and the City Administrator conducted six first round interviews, three second round interviews and one third interview. After discussion and review of the candidates, their experience, presentation in the interviews and upon review of the needs of the Public Works Department, Staff unanimously recommended Mark Hafften be hired as an entry level employee in the Public Works Department.

Members of the Staff and Council discussed the interview process, candidates and needs of the Public Works Department. Council Member Willenbring raised concerns regarding the proposed hiring of Mr. Hafften based upon his overqualification for the entry-level position and the appearance of impropriety or the potential for a conflict of interest as he is married to Mayor Renee Hafften. Renee Hafften took no part in the discussions, deliberations or review as she is married to the proffered candidate.

Members of the Staff and Council, excluding Mayor Hafften, discussed conflicts of interest, the confidential and non-confidential process of applicants and candidates as they move through the interview process, and the problems with the optics or appearance of hiring a spouse of a sitting member of the Council as a full-time employee. Staff and members of the Council also discussed the legal challenges involved with conflicts of interest and also with not hiring a recommended candidate based upon marital status to a seated member of the Council.

After additional discussion and review, including giving deference to the Public Works Department and trusting the integrity of the interview and application process, Motion was made by Werman, and seconded by Buoy, to hire Mark Hafften at the rate of twenty-six dollars per hour with three weeks of vacation and sick time, having all other benefits as provided for an entry-level hire with the Public Works Department at the City of Rockford.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Buoy and Werman. Opposed; Willenbring. Abstention; Hafften.

Members of the Staff and Council then discussed the conditions of the City's Ice Rinks, reminded people not to park on the streets during snow emergencies, and wished everyone a Safe and Merry New Year.

Motion was then made by Buoy, and seconded by Werman to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Werman, Buoy, and Willenbring, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:43 p.m.

Typed this 5th day of January, 2022.

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. 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:

Renee Hafften
Mayor

Attest:

Dan Madsen
City Administrator, Special Counsel