

City of Rockford, Minnesota Workshop Meeting Minutes 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 11th, 2022

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

City Administrator / Attorney, Dan Madsen; and City Engineer, Steve Hegland were also in attendance.

Members of the City Council and Staff discussed the Fire Department PERA, Veolia Agreement; and the Employee Covid Illness Policy. No formal action was taken, as this matter was set on for discussion purposes only.

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

City Administrator / Attorney, Dan Madsen; and City Engineer, Steve Hegland; Tom Weineck, Keith Wighern, Jason Frost, Patrick Christiansen, Michael Beyer, Chase Peyton, Adam Boeddecker from the Rockford Fire Department; Kelly Irving, John Seifert, Ruth Click from Viola; Nadine Schoen, candidate for Wright County Commissioner; and Wyatt Gutzke, Rockford City Council Candidate, were also in attendance.

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

3A. Approve Minutes from the September 13th, 2022 Workshop and Council Meeting; Minutes from the September 26th, 2022 Special Council Budget Workshop; Minutes from the September 27th, 2022 Council Workshop and Meeting; and Minutes from the October 3rd, 2022 Special Council Meeting;

3B. Approve Payment of Claims, Check Number: 34,447 through 34,512485 totaling \$776,860.76

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

Updates: Wright County Sheriff Update

A representative from the Wright County Sheriff's Department provided a general update on the criminal activity in Rockford over the past few weeks, including calls for service that were mostly traffic violation based. Additionally, members of the Council shared a concern about the potential for drag racing on Maple Street now that the road improvement project was completed. No formal action was taken as this matter was set on for discussion purposes only.

Updates: Nadine Schoen, Candidate for Wright County Commissioner

Ms. Schoen appeared and shared her experience with employment and public service on the St. Michael City Council, highlighting why she would be a good fit for the Wright County Board of Commissioners. No formal action was taken as this matter was set on for discussion purposes only.

New Business: Discuss or take appropriate action on Veolia Resolution

Administrator / Attorney Madsen reviewed the Veolia Agreement with the Council and discussed the various provisions and how they would relate to water and wastewater utility operations under the newly proposed Agreement. Members of the Staff and Council discussed the Agreement and reviewed the cost of staffing, challenges in hiring staff and the likelihood of a failed search for a Water / Wastewater Operator; and compared the same to the cost and benefits provided in having Veolia provide those services for the City. It was also discussed and considered how this Agreement would benefit the workload of existing Public Works Staff and support overall better operations in the Public Works Department. After additional discussion and review, Motion was made by Seymour, and seconded by Hafften, to approve the Agreement.

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

New Business: Resolution Fire Department PERA

Patrick Christiansen of the Rockford Fire Department reviewed the PERA explanation and process provided to the Council at the September 27th, 2022 Council Meeting. Administrator / Attorney Madsen reviewed the history of Fire Relief investment and the current levels of funding. It was proposed that funding be provided at the amount of \$3,600 per year for Fire Fighters, with the Resolution attached to the Memorandum with an in-depth explanation and review. After additional discussion and review, Motion was made by Hafften, and seconded by Willenbring, to approve the Resolution.

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

New Business: Employee Covid Illness Policy

Administrator / Attorney Madsen explained that newly hired City Staff accrue vacation and sick time per paycheck as they move along their employment. As such, anyone on staff becoming ill would go negative in their sick and vacation time if they were to contract Covid-19. Members of the Council and Staff discussed the impact of this on employees, how such an absence could trigger unwanted consequences with the Personnel Policy, and was bad for employee retention. After discussion and review, Madsen stated that he could draft a Resolution that would allow employees to run up to 40 hours negative in their sick time if they had insufficient sick time to cover a Covid-19 related absence upon being provided with a positive Covid-19 test. After additional discussion and review, Motion was made by Willenbring, and seconded by Buoy, to approve the policy and to direct Madsen to draft a Resolution outlining the policy for approval at the next Council Meeting.

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

Members of the Staff and Council then provided updates regarding general happenings from around the city, including Fire Prevention Week, the Assistant Fire Chief Position Posting, Kindergartener tour of the Fire Station, the fire Department Open House, and recent challenges dealing or addressing negative posts on Facebook. Madsen explained that there had been a series of negative posts, misinformation and untruths likely shared by drunk people on Facebook that were taking their toll on Staff and tarnishing the reputation of the City. It was discussed that this is unfortunate, and hopefully people's social media behavior will change.

Motion was then made by Seymour, and seconded by Willenbring, to adjourn the meeting.

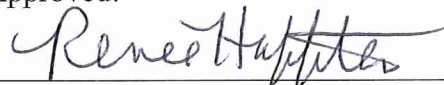
Motion Carried: Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Buoy, Seymour, and Willenbring, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Typed this 25th day of October, 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