

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

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

April 17, 2023

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 Pro Tem Joe Muehlbauer.

2. ROLL CALL

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

Members Absent: Mayor Steve Feldman and Councilmember Robert Bauer.

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

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Ayes: Udvig, Robinson, and Muehlbauer. Nays: None
Motion carries: 3-0

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. City Council Minutes - April 3, 2023
- B. Authorization for Partial Joint Response and Training with Bethel
- C. URRWMO Annual Report
- D. Rental License Approvals
- E. Payment of Claims

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

Ayes: Udvig, Robinson, and Muehlbauer. Nays: None
Motion carries: 3-0

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

8. OLD BUSINESS - NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bottle Shop Market Study

City Administrator Thunstrom reviewed the Staff report and proposal for contract services for the market study at the municipal bottle shop. She explained that this study would evaluate the site and general facility overview, including financial and orientation access and visibility. She stated that they will also look at demographics to identify competition and the market share.

Robinson stated that he is not for this market study. He said that part of the study is to evaluate the location, which cannot be changed. He stated that he would like to move this discussion to a work session and have Liquor Store Manager Schmidt share his opinions. He asked Schmidt if he had seen a decline in sales. Schmidt stated that sales continue to grow, but not at the rates he would like to see. Robinson shared that this could be due to the cost of having full time employees and being farther out of the pandemic where everyone has at home. He stated that he would like to see some more consistent social media marketing. He noted that they are also coming out of a cold winter into the summer and the sales should pick up. He reiterated that he would like to table this item and move it to a work session. He stated that Schmidt is doing a great job at running the store.

Udvig agreed with Robinson that the location of the store cannot be changed so the study may not be beneficial. She asked if anything like this study has been done in the past. Thunstrom explained that this has not been done in the past to this degree. She stated that with a new store on Highway 47, but there is also a new one being built on County Road 7 and the study could help understand the impacts of the liquor store. Udvig stated that she would like to see this moved to a work session so there can be more discussion surrounding this.

Robinson asked for more information on the new store of County Road 7. Liquor Store Manager John Schmidt stated that the city of Anoka is building a new store across from the Anoka Ice Arena.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer shared that a lot of the issues seems to be the cost, or representation of higher costs. He stated that if this moves forward, it is always good to have more information.

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: UDVIG TO TABLE THIS DISCUSSION TO

BE MOVED TO A WORK SESSION

Ayes: Udvig, Robinson, and Muehlbauer. Nays: None

Motion carries: 3-0

B. Police Department UAV Program

Police Chief Todd Schwieger reviewed the Staff report and more information in regard to the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle program. He discussed the enhanced capabilities and the benefit that this will have to the safety of the City.

Police Sergeant Larson added that this is an excellent tool that can be used for public safety as well as the Public Works department and Fire Department. He shared two examples of times in just the last week that this device would have been beneficial.

Udvig stated that since the funding is available now seems like a good time for this. She said that even if it only helps save one resident then it will be well worth it. She also wanted to make sure that the police officers feel confident and stay safe in the field. She added that she does not see the Police Department abusing this tool as some residents expressed concerns with. She shared that she has heard from residents that they are excited at the possibility of bringing this tool to the City.

Robinson stated that he would like this to be tabled until the two absent members are present in order to also get their input. He asked how many of these devices Anoka County currently has. Schwieger stated that he believes the County has two drones. Robinson stated that if other departments can use this device, he would be in favor of a shared cost and shared training of this device. He shared concern that the forfeiture fund is a special source of revenue and is wondering if there are other things the department might need down the road more than a drone. He asked about the battery life of the drone. Schwieger explained that the battery life is around 42 minutes and after that the batteries need to be changed. Robinson asked if the drone will be insured. Thunstrom stated that she was not sure about the insurance. Schwieger added that this is something that they could pursue.

Robinson reiterated the concern with the Police Department spending all of their funds on this when there could be something that is more needed down the road. He added that there are legal fees associated with processing the forfeiture funds.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer shared that he is always in favor of small government. He asked what the ramifications if the State Statute is violated. Schwieger stated that it would depend on how the Statute was violated, but it could come down to criminal penalties. Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer asked if the department is flying the drone and looking for a person and they happen to see something else, but they do not have a warrant, would this discovery be grounds for getting a warrant. Schwieger said it would be a rare occasion but the possibility would be there. He explained that the steps would be deferred to investigations to see how to proceed

with this. He noted that they would not be stumbling across any of these sorts of things intentionally.

Udvig asked how this would differ from police being able to see things on the ground. Schwieger stated that it is due to this device being in the air, which is a very new concept and there is not hundreds of years of evidence to rely on like there is with police work on the ground.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer asked if there are any ramifications if this is tabled to another meeting. He asked if there is more information that can be brought forward. He shared that he loves the idea that this can be used by different departments. Schwieger stated that there is no timeline for this and the discussion can wait until the full Council is present. Schwieger reiterated the need for this device. Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer asked if structures can be seen into with the thermal capabilities of the device. Schwieger said no.

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: UDVIG TO CONTINUE THIS DISCUSSION TO A WORK SESSION OR UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETING

Ayes: Udvig, Robinson, and Muehlbauer. Nays: None
Motion carries: 3-0

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – NONE

11. REPORTS

A. Police Department - First Quarter Report

Schwieger reviewed the Police Department quarterly report, highlighting the addition of two new officers, 1,427 incident crime reports, and 195 hours of training in this quarter. He noted the success of community outreach events like Winning With Cops, and noted the upcoming events of Citizens Academy, Bike Rodeo, Cone with a Cop and National Night Out.

Robinson commended Schwieger for the great community outreach as it brings confidence to the residents. He added that it is great to see new officers come on board. He said to keep up the good work and stated that the City is lucky to have Schwieger and his staff.

Udvig shared that it was a good report and stated. She stated that she was intrigued by the prescription drug disposal and ammunition disposal numbers and shared how beneficial this is. She said the department does such an excellent job and shared that she has seen several of the officers out and about and they are always willing to engage with the public.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer thanked Schwieger and his department for all that they do. He asked how many participants there are for the Citizens Academy this year. Schwieger shared that they are up to 13 participants. Mayor Pro Tem

Muehlbauer thanked the department for all that they do, including their community outreach.

Robinson asked if there has been any more discussion with the new superintendent about an SRO. Schwieger stated that they met in February and discussed the top and the superintendent seems in favor of putting an SRO back in the school and he was going to have the financial discussions with the board and would follow up with him. He stated that the likelihood of having one in place for this upcoming school year is slim, but they will look towards having one by the beginning of the 2024 school year. Robinson asked if there have been an increase in calls or challenges since the SRO had been taken away. Schwieger stated that everything was to be expected with over 260 incidents reported from the schools. He stated that each call at the school takes quite a long time. Robinson noted the work that SROs do behind the scenes for prevention.

B. Public Works - First Quarter Report

Public Works Director Paul Carpenter reviewed the Public Works quarterly report, highlighting the plowing of City street, totaling over 1257 miles. He noted that repairs bills were also very high at over \$42,000. He stated that ice rink numbers were up substantially this year. He mentioned that the Spring Recycling Event was coming up on April 29th and this event will add recycled oil, given that the necessary equipment arrives in time. He shared that they are currently working on redesigning the stormwater website. He added that they are working on three projects including the Dellwood River project with the Anoka Conservation District and the Upper Rum River Watershed District, a project with St. Francis High School for the area between Rum River Boulevard and the school, and the stormwater retrofit project in the River Shores Neighborhood. He stated that they are still waiting to hear on the MS4 permit. He thanked the wastewater department for their work. He noted that some of the fire hydrants in town have red bags over them and that those will be removed when the hydrants are flushed the second week of May. He stated that the yearly cleaning of the tank at the water plant was finished. He stated that the backwash flow rate controller at the water plant needed to be replaced. He shared that they are continuing to work with Bethel and things are going well. He highlighted that the St. Francis wastewater operators received the MPCA award for excellence.

Udvig stated that it was a great report and awesome to see wastewater operators get such a great award. She thanked the department for all of their work with plowing this season.

Robinson acknowledged how great it was that the operators received such a great award. He noted the enthusiasm of these workers. He stated he is glad to hear that the ice rink attendance this season was very high. He added that he did not realize the Bethel assistance consumed so much time and asked if they are being compensated for this. Carpenter said yes and that this is a great learning experience. Robinson asked Carpenter to thank his Staff for all that they do and

showed his appreciation for them.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer stated that it is awesome to see that they got such a great award. He said that working with Bethel helps the City in other departments as well to create a neighborly feel. He thanked Carpenter for all he does.

C. Community Development - First Quarter Report

Community Development Director Colette Baumgardner revered the Community Development department quarterly report highlighting the economic development projects of the Bridge Street corridor, Highway 47 corridor, and the addition of the farmer's markets this summer. She noted that they are still looking for more vendors for the farmer's markets. She shared that there are currently 72 vacant lots in the City, 30 of which are buildable but none are currently for sale. She discussed the five residential developments that are to take place in the City, The Bluffs of Rum River, Eagle Point/Vista Prairie - Senior Living Project, Rivers Edge Development, Serenity at Seelye Brook, and Turtle Ponds 6th Addition. She also noted the two commercial developments projects, Meadows 4th Addition and Patriots Parkway. She noted that there have been five new construction permits in the first quarter, which is slightly behind the number of new permits from 2021 and 2022. She stated that there have been 70 permits submitted in the first quarter. She said that there are 21 properties that are active within Code Enforcement. She explained that the rental and vacant program has seen an increase in the first quarter. She stated that there are three vacant buildings within the City. She added that the Planning Commission met twice in the first quarter and most of the items discussed at these meetings have already come forward to the Council. She shared the two administrative projects that the department has been working on, the BS&A Transition and closing permits.

Robinson thanked Baumgardner for a thorough report. He asked if the department looks at houses that are currently for sale or houses that have recently closed. Baumgardner stated that she does pay attention to what the listings look like within the City and she added that the sales seem to be comparable to the surrounding communities. Robinson asked if Baumgardner feels good about any of the other vendors that she has communicated with who have interest in the farmer's market. Baumgardner stated that there are three more vendors that she feels confident will come forward with an application in the next few weeks. She added that one of the challenges is that they have implemented the requirement for having general liability insurance. Robinson asked if there is any benefit to going out and talking to existing businesses in town as a way to extend the welcoming hand from the City. Baumgardner stated that this is something she would like to do and would like to add this into the list of duties for the Community Development department.

Udvig stated that it was an excellent report. She shared that there is quite a bit of buzz on Facebook surrounding the farmer's market and hopes that will continue. She stated that the word of mouth will be a benefit for this once the farmer's markets get going. She added that it is great that Baumgardner goes out and has

open communication with businesses within the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer noted that he is interested to see what happens with the farmer's markets. He asked about the issue with financing for Vista Prairie. Baumgardner stated that the issue was with banking at the end of last year, and in the new year she is not sure what the financing issue is. Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer asked if there are any concerns with them. Baumgardner explained that she will not have any concerns once Vista Prairie has secured their financing.

12. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Udvig shared that she helped with the Community Egg Hunt on April 8th and she thanked the St. Francis ambassadors who were there helping with this event. She stated that she attended the work session on April 11th. She reminded the residents about Pioneer Days and noted that the City is still looking for parade participants and they still need volunteers.

Robinson stated that he also attended the last work session. He added that he attended the Bethel fire meeting and stated that this program will aid in public safety and benefit both communities. He stated that he attended the building meeting where they had the discussion with five members from Stahl, the construction company working on the City Hall Fire Station project. He noted that there is another work session scheduled for this Monday.

Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer shared that he attended the meeting with Stahl, as well as the previous work session. He shared his appreciation for all Staff and all that they do in their departments.

13. UPCOMING EVENTS

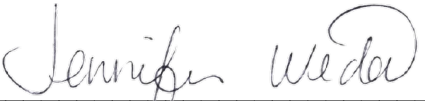
April 19 - Planning Commission Meeting
April 24 - City Council Work Session
April 22 - National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day
April 29 - Recycling Event
May 1 - City Council Meeting
May 3 - Economic Development Authority Meeting
May 8 - City Council Work Session

14. ADJOURNMENT

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

Ayes: Udvig, Robinson, and Muehlbauer. Nays: None
Motion carries: 3-0

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Muehlbauer adjourned the regular City Council at 7:31 p.m.



Jennifer Wida, City Clerk