



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2021  
7:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Mayor Jo Emerson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The clerk took attendance for Councilmembers Doug Biehn, Kevin Edberg, Steven Engstran, Dan Jones and Bill Walsh. Staff in attendance were City Manager Ellen Hiniker, Community Development Director Anne Kane, Public Works Director/City Engineer Paul Kauppi, Finance Director Kerri Kindsvater, City Clerk Kara Coustry and City Attorney Troy Gilchrist.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting on September 14, 2021

It was moved by Councilmember **Walsh** seconded by Councilmember **Engstran**, to approve the Minutes of the September 14, 2021 City Council meeting as presented.

Motion carried. Councilmember Biehn and Edberg abstained.

B. Minutes of the Work Session on September 21, 2021

It was moved by Councilmember **Edberg** seconded by Councilmember **Biehn**, to approve the Minutes of the September 21, 2021 City Council Work Session as presented.

Motion carried.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Councilmember **Biehn** seconded by Councilmember **Jones**, to approve the Agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS**

A. Trane presentation on Sports Center commissioning and City-wide lighting initiative

City Manager Hiniker introduced Thomas Huberty with Trane, a company which has been working with the City for the past three years as an off-shoot of the ClimateSmart initiative.

Mr. Huberty reported on findings from the investment grade audit (IGA) in which the City looked to leverage energy savings to define a financially responsible way to reduce operational

and capital spend while reducing energy consumption and supporting sustainability goals. He proposed the following energy conservation measures at a total project cost of \$1.68 million, an annual savings of \$118,000 and cited a 10.5 year return on investment.

Councilmember Edberg inquired as to guarantees for the estimated performance outcomes. Mr. Huberty explained that cost projections are guaranteed maximum pricing and savings are identified in kilowatt hour rather than dollar savings, which can vary. Mr. Huberty said, if energy savings measurements fall below projections, Trane will write the City a check for the difference.

Councilmember Walsh inquired as to solar panel technology and life cycle. Mr. Huberty felt that 30 years was safe and agreed that solar technology will continue to improve, noting the improvements over the past few years. He explained that solar panels become less productive over time but retirement costs are not calculated in this project.

Trane Associate Josh Waller explained that solar systems in use for 10-15 years are being repowered with the addition of new components in order to extend life. Mr. Waller said there has not been replacement/retirement costs built into the proposed rooftop solar at the Sports Center. He explained that when it is time to re-roof the Sports Center, the solar system would most likely be removed because the racks used to support it would need to be replaced.

Mayor Emerson thanked Trane for their audit work, noting the item will return for a vote at the next City Council meeting.

## 5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Resolution establishing and imposing special assessment for the year 2021 with no interest on taxable property within the Birch Lake Improvement District

Finance Director Kindsvater reported that the Birch Lake Improvement District (BLID) formed in 2006 when lakeshore property owners created their own taxing district by submitting a petition to impose a special assessment on themselves in order to develop, finance and implement projects that ensure continued lake water quality. Ms. Kindsvater stated this year's annual BLID meeting voted on a budget requiring approval of a special service levy of \$21,700 for certification in 2021, collectible in 2022 for revenues to support activities. Property owners pay an equal amount of the annual levy, which equates to an annual service charge of \$350 per property. Ms. Kindsvater explained that the City is holding a public hearing to allow an opportunity for public comment related to the special assessment.

BLID Vice Chair Ryan Hoops referenced the support of lakeshore owners around Birch Lake and the partnership with the Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Organization. He reported that weeds are being removed, the lake is being restocked with fish and the water quality is top notch, although the level is low.

Mayor Emerson opened the public hearing at 7:39 p.m. and closed the public hearing when no one came forward to speak on the matter.

It was moved by Councilmember **Jones** seconded by Councilmember **Engstran**, to adopt **Resolution No. 12849** establishing and imposing special assessment for the year 2021 with no interest on taxable property within the Birch Lake Improvement District.

Motion carried unanimously.

- B. Resolution adopting an assessment roll for 2021 Mill and Overlay Project, City Project Nos: 21-01, 21-06 & 21-13

City Engineer / Public Works Director Paul Kauppi explained that this public hearing is in consideration of the assessment rolls for the 2021 pavement rehabilitation projects. He reviewed the scope of projects completed and explained that residents can appeal their assessment by written statement submitted by the end of the meeting, then by filing action with District Court within the next 30 days. He added, the final assessment rolls were confirmed by an independent property appraiser and will be subject to an interest rate of 3.29% paid over 10 years for residential properties and 15 years for apartments and commercial properties. Senior hardship deferrals are also an option.

Mr. Kauppi stated that no written appeals have been received prior to the meeting and recommended the City Council hold the public hearing prior to adopting the 2021 assessment roll for assessment on 2022 property taxes.

It was moved by Councilmember **Biehn** seconded by Councilmember **Jones**, to adopt **Resolution No. 12850** adopting an assessment roll for 2021 Mill and Overlay Project, City Project Nos: 21-01, 21-06 & 21-13.

Motion carried unanimously.

- C. Consideration of access change off northbound TH 61 Near Whitaker Street Intersection

City Manager Hiniker explained that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) completed its design layout for Whitaker Street intersection at Highway 61 in coordination with the Rush Line project. She explained that because this redesign involves closure of an access point along TH 61, as well as acquisition of City right-of-way for stormwater treatment, the City is required to host a public hearing, which has been advertised twice in the White Bear Press.

City Engineer / Public Works Director Kauppi provided historical background in which the pedestrian crossing at Whitaker was first proposed in 1974 and has resurfaced several times since. He reported that in the 1990's this pedestrian crossing was added to the City's Strategic Plan as a safety issue needing to be addressed with MnDOT. He noted Council inquiries and staff reports on the topic of this pedestrian crossing in 2011, 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2019.

MnDOT Principal Engineer and Rush Line Project Team Member Sara Pflaum, provided an overview of the Municipal Consent process pursuant to State Statute 161.164. She explained that since the majority of the right-of-way for the Rush Line project is on Highway 61, much of the Rush Line requires MnDOT approval throughout the design process. During the preliminary design phase, MnDOT requires layout approvals, which Ms. Pflaum explained were completed in August and identify potential impacts to infrastructure. She said that Municipal Consent is required in this case because MnDOT's design layout closes access off the TH and requires acquisition of City right-of-way for stormwater management.

Ms. Pflaum stated that plans are 15% complete at this time, and stormwater management is needed to reduce runoff from Highway 61 into Goose Lake. She also said, the railroad crossing is not ADA compliant and reported that from 2017-2019 there were 10 crashes at this crossing, four of which were pedestrian related. She reported that this intersection has a higher crash rate

than the statewide average for similar intersections, although has not yet reached a critical level. The plan is to signalize Whitaker and TH 61 N., which will allow for Whitaker traffic to turn left and head south on Highway 61. North of the signal, the driveway access into Alley Cats from Highway 61 would be closed off as it is too close to the signalized intersection.

Ms. Pflaum explained that within 90 days of this public hearing, the City should pass a resolution either approving the layout, or disapproving the layout. If no action is taken by the City for 90 days, Municipal Consent occurs automatically and the layout is deemed approved per state statute. Ms. Pflaum explained that if the project layout is disapproved by the municipality, MnDOT can go back to the layout design and make changes to satisfy concerns, then hold a new public hearing, or MnDOT can remove aspects of the layout which require municipal consent, or they can follow an appeal process, which is defined in the statute.

Councilmember Walsh inquired about the land acquisition. Ms. Pflaum stated there is a sliver of land north of the platform that would be acquired by the Metropolitan Council rather than MnDOT. He received confirmation that this land meets the definition for acquisition under eminent domain in the event that a negotiated agreement is not reached. Mr. Walsh inquired about removal of the sign that advertises all of the businesses, in which Ms. Pflaum said this is where the station platform would be placed.

City Attorney Gilchrist stated it was his understanding that cities are not proposed to exercise eminent domain associated with this project. He said the details would need to be figured out, and if the sign really is in City right-of-way, perhaps it is not supposed to be, or was never authorized to be there in the first place.

On behalf of the property owner, Councilmember Walsh asked if there was a reason the station platform couldn't be moved further south. Ms. Pflaum stated that one of the reasons is that it is more preferable to have a platform on the far side of an intersection. Ramsey County Senior Transportation Planner Andy Gitzlaf, clarified that a station further south starts to get too far away from the destinations.

Councilmember Edberg sought clarification on the importance of aligning Whitaker Street to Lincoln Avenue at the intersection. Mr. Gitzlaf stated that in speaking with City staff and stakeholders, the message was to align these intersections for possible future throughway. He explained that it also aligns well with the railroad crossing right now, which has ADA and grading issues.

Councilmember Jones received confirmation that there is no stormwater treatment of runoff into Goose Lake currently. He inquired as to the "deemed approved" process and pointed out that related to Rush Line, the City Council has been presented with limited options. For example, the Council was given a 1,000 foot radius from which to pick the recommended location of the bus terminus. Ms. Pflaum reiterated, if the layout is disapproved by the municipality, MnDOT can make changes to the layout that satisfies concerns, or remove aspects of the layout which require municipal consent, or follow the state statute appeals process, in which three members are appointed to a Board.

Mayor Emerson opened the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

Lisa Brock at 2291 10<sup>th</sup> Street spoke in support of the pedestrian and safety improvements at Whitaker. As a resident for 26 years, she has seen this area get increasingly busy and more dangerous, which will only increase as the area becomes more activated with expressed desire

for improvements at this location. She has been commuting by bus for 11 years and finds them safe and efficient. She also fully supports the Rush Line. Given the climate crisis, which is only worsening she said, expanded transit opportunities for White Bear Lake is long overdue as it is infrequent and inadequate. She expressed dismay by the fear, confusion and misinformation that has characterized this conversation. Regarding the impact on traffic, 80+ daily buses are a drop in the bucket compared to 20,000+ vehicles per day. She thought it was premature to make predictions about COVID and its impact on transportation, and mentioned that after the 1918 pandemic, transportation increased for the next 12 years until the Great Depression.

Greg Lees at 3666 McKnight Road, supports Richard Eitel, the property owner at this location. He mentioned an article in Money Magazine which voted Chanhassen as the best place to live with the last line in the article stating, the City is still trying really hard to maintain that quaint, hometown community feel. At Marketfest 2021, he described a passion displayed by White Bear Lake residents, sometimes 3-4 deep at the booth, with 100's signing a petition objecting to the incursion of the Rush Line BRT into White Bear Lake. He stated there were residents, senior citizens, and new residents who had just moved to White Bear Lake because of "the quaint, hometown community feel" of the City.

Kit Artig at 4495 Lake Avenue South in the Boatworks Commons has been against the Rush Line BRT from the get-go, stating it is a wasteful and unnecessary project and even the people that it is supposed to serve do not want it. She said, the opposition to this project is massive and is being ignored. She stated, this stoplight is just the first drip that leads under the radar to the Rush Line BRT. This stoplight is intended to serve a bus station and it will snarl traffic on Highway 61 even further and place three stoplights within half a mile of each other. Instead of using existing roads, she said, this Rush Line forces development costing half a billion dollars on new roads with seven (7) bridges and numerous unnecessary stations and the expense alone is reason to nix this project. Ms. Artig said The Rush Line project will turn the Bruce Vento green corridor into a cement corridor. This trail provides a sound barrier and a visual barrier in a quiet neighborhood, which will be replaced by a two-lane highway running day and night through seven miles of residential streets. She reported "the ridership is projected to be 97,000 people per year, which is absolutely incomprehensible math when literally thousands of people have signed a petition" against this project and the project's own survey says that only 9% of the people asked intend to ride this bus daily or weekly. She assumed the same methodology was used when calculating ridership on the North Star Line which is down 95%. She mentioned the need for huge subsidies to make this project financially viable. She believed the statistics used for this project have been dumbed down to convince the people of its need, when folks object, intimidation is used, objections are not dealt with, and instead they are generally dismissed. Ms. Artig personally audited 50 buses and they are empty – there is no need. She said no adjustments have been made since COVID has changed work habits.

Olivia Ford of 2539 Manitou Island stated this is an important issue that requires more research. She said since the pandemic, many more people want to work from home. Ms. Ford said, if we end up with a transportation system wrecking our quaint and beautiful, old, cared-for and loved City, we are going to be the losers. She said that if the bus must come into White Bear Lake at all, perhaps consider making Whitaker the terminus.

Paul Bolstad of 2303 4<sup>th</sup> Street is a 30-year resident who often bikes the Bruce Vento Trail to and from work in St. Paul. He reported no issues with bikes sharing lanes with buses and provided the following statistics: 8,000 pedestrians / bicyclist killed every year in interactions with automobiles; 1% chance of living if they get hit by a car going 40 mph; 0 number of safe ways to get from downtown White Bear Lake to St. Paul on a bicycle. He mentioned the safety and

health benefits. He thinks the Rush Line is a good idea and has no issue with buses, believing them to have very little impact on traffic amounting to 40,000 cars per day. He explained that this is really a plan for the future in which growth further north of White Bear Lake will continue to negatively impact traffic through White Bear Lake.

Kelly Tapkan of 4380 Whitaker Court supports improvements in cross-walk safety as she crosses this intersection frequently. She explained that cars at this intersection do not know if they should stop or not and are subject to being rear-ended. She was concerned with Rush Line, the proposed widening of the road and close proximity of the light further south will increase congestion and add to safety challenges. She expressed concern in the viability of the Rush Line and did not believe the ridership would actually reduce traffic.

Pam Putzier at 1803 ½ County Road E. identified with the quaint, small town and she asked if the Council lived in White Bear Lake and if they actually had a vote on the Rush Line because it will destroy the City. She noted the parking ramp at Maplewood Mall for the Express bus into St. Paul is never full. She said, why you would want to go two miles north and add this whole thing.

John Hann at 1856 2<sup>nd</sup> Street does not support the Rush Line or the semaphore proposed here. Being a newer resident, he was not aware of the potential problems with the pedestrian crossing at this location. He mentioned the MnDOT solution appears clunky and suggested a pedestrian bridge as the solution without disrupting the entire area.

Helen Peterson of 4615 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue stated she loves the small town and benefits of White Bear Lake. She said people come to our town because it is a tourist town with quaint small shops and the loving care given by the businesses and the education system. She does not believe that Rush Line will help in any way. She mentioned many other Cerenity residents would be happy to sign the petition against the Rush Line.

Diana Longrie attorney at law represented Richard Eitel the property owner of 1971 Whitaker Street. She relayed that Mr. Eitel is not opposed to the safety measures, however, the layout proposal is premature and impacts seven (7) local businesses. The proposal takes away the ingress and egress directly onto Highway 61 for customers of these tenants. She relayed that access, parking and signage are critical to small businesses. An unspecified number of parking stalls will be lost, further aggravating the poor parking situation created by the City or to be created by the Rush Line. As a result of this proposed plan, the signs for these businesses are to be removed for the BRT platform. Provided ridership estimates are accurate, Mr. Eitel believes that cars will not park across the highway as suggested, rather they will wait in the parking lots for buses to pick up or drop off riders, which takes valuable parking away from these merchants. Ms. Longrie noted the remedies for Mr. Eitel involve time, expensive commercial appraisals and negotiations with lawyers that usually end up in court. She relayed Mr. Eitel's request that the City disapprove the Municipal Consent, then follow through by evaluating the plans and adjusting them for minimal impact such that parking, access and signage are not lost, while improving the pedestrian crossing.

Greg McNeely, owner of the building at 4910 Highway 61, expressed concern that the market and the ridership has changed. He said he was not opposed to public transportation, but was not in support of the Rush Line. He's conducted his own research revealing 8-10 years from now we will all be in self-driving cars. He explained White Bear Lake does not have high-rises, nor the density to support the Rush Line and indicated the tax payers will need to maintain this thing after it is built. He questioned there would be enough riders for this to be self-sustained.

Katherine Nicholson at 50 Peninsula in Dellwood said that as a member of the St. Paul Garden Club she has been actively participating in the evaluation of the Rush Line through Swede Hollow and the Bruce Vento Trail. She relayed concern for the Rush Line buses traveling on the old rail line planned for the Bruce Vento Trail. She asked why this isn't being put on Interstate 35E rather than on highly congested Highway 61. She expressed concern that post-COVID ridership estimates are not the same as initial ridership and said it should be re-evaluated. She was frightened at the amount of funding the federal government would be throwing at this project. As lovers of White Bear Lake we are going to have buses, pollution, or individuals who can jump on the bus and ride up to our neighborhoods - it may not be the element we are looking for. She hoped the Council could put a pause on this because the community is uncomfortable about the effects and we need a new evaluation. And maybe the costs are prohibitive and other alternatives could provide the desired services.

Tim David at 5294 Bald Eagle Boulevard East in the Township supported Richard Eitel and his tenants. He represents a coalition opposed to the Rush Line project and polled the audience. He said they do not oppose public transportation, nor does he oppose safety at an intersection like Whitaker. He said the Rush Line is not a good fit for the community. It is too large and ridership numbers are outdated and this is not a good use of \$475 million dollars. There will be 89 buses every weekday, 76 buses on Saturday and 68 buses on Sunday, which are 60 foot articulated buses, maybe electric, maybe diesel. He claimed the Rush Line will take away 48 parking spaces in White Bear Lake. He said the ridership numbers and entire design is pre-COVID. He reported that the American Public Transportation Association has gone on record stating that post-COVID public transportation will come back differently - we'll have to adapt to changes. Mr. David reported that in 2018 a petition was started by an attorney in White Bear Lake and collected over 4,000 signatures. He reported that in the past four (4) months, 1,300 people signed, in-person, a petition in strong opposition to this project and another 1,200 signed the online petition. He said his coalition talked to the owners or managers of 103 mostly White Bear Lake businesses along the corridor and found 100 to be opposed to the Rush Line project with 73 of those in White Bear Lake. He asked the City to delay action on the Municipal Consent until Ramsey County and the Metropolitan Council conduct a reassessment of the ridership estimates post-COVID and present a revised design that fits the community - has fewer buses, smaller buses, uses existing roadways, terminates at Whitaker, Buerkle or Mapelwood Mall, or expand use of three (3) existing public transportation options.

Fran Knothe at 5196 Elk Street in the Township said none of her neighbors are in favor of the Rush Line Project. She belongs to the White Bear Area Chamber in which one of the main goals is to support local businesses. She believes the intersection at Whitaker Street needs to be fixed, but we cannot do it at the expense of the all businesses at Whitaker who will lose their access to Highway 61. It is always a very congested area and she will not be able to get to her doctor in this location properly. She believed the point of the Rush Line is to connect people in St. Paul to jobs in White Bear Lake, but if the access is removed from Highway 61, that will kill all of the jobs. Please reconsider.

Michael Brass of 2533 8<sup>th</sup> Street of White Bear Township relayed the message that the County and the Metropolitan Council are trying to build a big transportation system for a handful of people at the expense of all tax payers. It does not make sense and he questioned what would happen if the City voted no.

Mayor Emerson closed the public hearing at 9:00 p.m. and explained that the City Council will take action until the next City Council meeting on October 12, 2021.

NOTE: Additional written public comments received for this item will be saved as part of the official record in LaserFiche.

**6. LAND USE**

A. Consent

1. Consideration of a resolution granting a one year time extension for a setback variance at 2687 County Road D (Bruggeman Builders – Case No. 19-9-Ve2). **Resolution No. 12851**

It was moved by Councilmember **Walsh** seconded by Councilmember **Jones**, to approve the Land Use Consent Agenda as presented.

Councilmember Edberg inquired as to the number of extensions generally permitted. Ms. Kane stated the art center project took 4-5 extensions, but 2-3 is not uncommon. She said Mr. Bruggeman had two concrete guys tell him they could not start until fall 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Non-Consent

Nothing scheduled

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Nothing scheduled

**8. ORDINANCES**

Nothing scheduled

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Resolution approving the proposed preliminary 2021 tax levy collectible in 2022 and establishing December 14, 2021 as the date for the City’s Truth-in-Taxation Hearing

City Manager Hiniker referenced two recent work sessions in which the City Council reviewed various tax levy scenarios. She said, the City is obligated to set its preliminary tax levy in September to allow time for the County to notice property owners. This amount may be reduced, but not increased when the City Council adopts the final tax levy during the Truth in Taxation Hearing in December.

To summarize, Ms. Hiniker forwarded a proposed tax levy of \$7,880,000, with \$163,000 going toward existing debt service and \$347,000 proposed increase to the general fund. She explained this funding would support a Fire Department formula reallocation and staffing model to include an additional full-time response crew to meet a 24/7 complement. Also included are technology enhancements and salary and benefit adjustments for staff.

Ms. Hiniker then referenced Council discussion at its September 21 work session related to the Construction Fund. She reviewed the discussion related to consideration of an additional

\$200,000 levy to accelerate reduction of reliance on the Construction Fund Transfers to the General Fund. She reviewed a couple of long range scenarios which indicated that more aggressive action in the first few years led to a much healthier Construction Fund balance after ten years. She explained that adding \$200,000 to the proposed levy would impact the median value home by \$15.38/year.

Original levy presented to council:	\$7,880,000
Tax capacity rate for that levy:	21.592%
Taxes on a median value home at that rate:	<b>\$532.24</b> <i>(this amount is less than the amount shown at the 8/17/21 work session because the calculations include the fiscal disparities data which wasn't available for the work session)</i>

Additional \$200,000 added to the original levy:	\$8,080,000
Tax capacity rate for that levy:	22.216%
Taxes on a median value home at that rate:	<b>\$547.62</b>

It was moved by Councilmember **Edberg** seconded by Councilmember **Walsh**, to approve **Resolution No. 12852**, the baseline preliminary 2021 tax levy collectible in 2022 and establishing December 14, 2021 as the date for the City's Truth-in-Taxation Hearing.

It was moved by Councilmember **Jones** seconded by Councilmember **Edberg**, to amend the previous motion by adding \$200,000 to the proposed baseline preliminary 2021 tax levy collectible in 2022 for a total preliminary tax levy of \$8,080,000 and establishing December 14, 2021 as the date for the City's Truth-in-Taxation Hearing.

Councilmember Edberg supported the additional \$200,000 tax levy as it is the right time to make this down-payment, and to locate expenses and revenue sources necessary to preserve the City's capacity to support infrastructure development in the future.

Councilmember Walsh was not in favor of confusing transfers, therefore he supported the additional tax levy as it is more transparent than continued reliance on transfers.

Councilmember Biehn agreed with Councilmembers Edberg and Walsh. Noting the timeliness of this, Councilmember Jones also agreed, especially with home values going up and additional funding expected through federal relief funding.

The amended motion carried unanimously.

In response to Councilmember Walsh who asked when the City Council votes on use of the Federal ARPA Funds, Ms. Hiniker said that would happen when the Council adopts the 2022 Budget in December.

Amended **Resolution 12852** carried unanimously.

B. Resolution ordering preparation of a Feasibility Report for the 2022 South Shore Blvd Project, City Project No.: 22-08

City Engineer / Public Works Director Kauppi stated this is one piece of the County's South Shore Blvd and Trail Project in which the City would like to extend sanitary sewer service to the east edge of the community for twelve (12) homes. While these homes currently get water from the Township, he said the City intends to assume water service too, so all utilities

originate from the same entity. He explained that a portion of these costs will be assessed to the benefitting property owners and mentioned the first step is to order the Feasibility Study.

It was moved by Councilmember **Engstran** seconded by Councilmember **Jones**, to adopt **Resolution No. 12853** ordering preparation of a Feasibility Report for the 2022 South Shore Blvd Project, City Project No.: 22-08.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Resolution authorizing a contract for Auditing Services with Abdo, Eick and Meyers

In consultation with Councilmember Edberg, Finance Director Kane reported that seven firms submitted proposals for professional auditing services for the fiscal years ending 2021 – 2023, with an option to renew from 2024 – 26. Although the number of hours each firm submitted for this work was similar, quotes ranged from \$92,250 to \$124,390. She explained that upon reviewing cost, experience with like-sized cities, and audit staffing changes, they recommend the City award the contract to Abdo, Eick and Meyers.

Councilmember Edberg concurred with Ms. Kindsvater and stated he was satisfied that the City did its due diligence by price checking quality of service with the competition.

It was moved by Councilmember **Biehn** seconded by Councilmember **Engstran**, to adopt **Resolution No. 12854** authorizing a contract for Auditing Services with Abdo, Eick and Meyers.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 10. CONSENT

A. Resolution approving acquisition of tax forfeit property. **Resolution No. 12855**

It was moved by Councilmember **Biehn** seconded by Councilmember **Jones**, to adopt the consent agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 11. DISCUSSION

Nothing scheduled.

## 12. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

- Fall Newsletters will be hitting homes this week.
- Updates by Public Works Director / City Engineer Kauppi
  - Public Works expressed desire to order several 2022 vehicle chassis now (prior to approval of the budget), so they might have a chance to receive them next year. The City would not have an obligation to purchase them once ordered, depending on the final budget approval.

- Updates by Community Development Director Kane
  - The second housing forum was held virtually last Monday with approximately 35 participants attending both in-person and virtual Housing Forum conversations. The Housing Task Force will be conducting one of its last meetings to finalize recommendations for programs, policies and priorities for Council’s consideration in November.
  
- Mayor Emerson made note that two MN State Representatives were selected by the League of Minnesota Cities as Legislators of Distinction out of 18 awards.

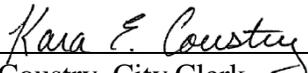
**13. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Council, it was moved by Councilmember **Edberg** seconded by Councilmember **Jones** to adjourn the regular meeting at **9:58** p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

  
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Jo Emerson, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Kara Coustry, City Clerk