



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024
7 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Dan Louismet called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The City Clerk took attendance for Councilmembers Kevin Edberg, Steven Engstran, Heidi Hughes, Bill Walsh, and Andrea West. Staff in attendance were City Manager Lindy Crawford, Public Works Director/City Engineer Paul Kauppi, Community Development Director Jason Lindahl, City Clerk Caley Longendyke, and City Attorney Sam Ketchum.

There was a moment of silence for Burnsville Police Officers Paul Elmstrand and Matthew Ruge, and Burnsville Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth, who were victims of a deadly shooting during an emergency call in Burnsville on February 18, 2024.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting on February 13, 2024

It was moved by Councilmember **Engstran**, seconded by Councilmember **Hughes**, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

- B. Minutes of the City Council Work Session on February 13, 2024

It was moved by Councilmember **Engstran**, seconded by Councilmember **West**, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

- C. Minutes of the City Council Work Session on February 20, 2024

It was moved by Councilmember **Engstran**, seconded by Councilmember **West**, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Councilmember **Engstran**, seconded by Councilmember **Hughes**, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Resolution approving liquor licenses for S & Y Foods LLC **Res. No. 13323**
B. Resolution authorizing a recycling grant agreement with Washington County and requesting grant funding allocation **Res. No. 13324**
C. Resolution approving plans and specifications and authorizing ISD 624 to advertise for bids for North Campus roadway improvements **Res. No. 13325**

- D. Summary of the City Manager's performance evaluation
- E. Resolution approving a salary adjustment for the City Manager **Res. No. 13326**

Mayor Louismet made a clarification on the salary adjustment for the City Manager. He noted that instead of a percentage increase, as Council previously discussed, the increase is reflected as a step adjustment, and equates to a \$278 difference. It was moved by Councilmember **Engstran**, seconded by Councilmember **Hughes**, to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

5. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Bruce Vento Trail – Phase 1 Update

Public Works Director/City Engineer Kauppi introduced Scott Yonke, Planning and Development Director for Ramsey County Parks, to present an update on Phase 1 of the Bruce Vento Trail. Kauppi noted that City Council has been supportive of this Ramsey County project over the years and has offered several letters of support for project funding since 2016. Yonke reviewed the benefits of the project, including providing connections to other regional and local parks and trails, increasing safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, and completing approximately half of a six-mile gap in the regional trail corridor and national trail system. Phase 1 of the project is about \$10 million, with \$5 million being funded through state bonds, \$4 million through federal funding, and \$1 million through Ramsey County. Construction plans are expected to be finalized in summer 2024, construction solicitation in late summer 2024, construction starting in October/November 2024, and construction ending in November/December 2025.

Yonke provided background information on the Bruce Vento Regional Trail, which was established in 1993 along the Burlington Railway Corridor, and extends 13.3 miles through Saint Paul, Maplewood, Gem Lake, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township. Significant connections include a national bike route, a regional bike transportation network, and the Gateway State Trail, among other regional and local parks and trails. Yonke shared about the City's letters of support, both for funding and design.

Yonke provided more details about the Phase 1 trail, which starts at Buerkle Road and ends at the intersection of Hoffman Road and Highway 61. The preliminary design study started back in 2014 with plan development occurring between 2018 and 2021. Trailhead locations are planned for the County Road E intersection and Hoffman Road intersection. He shared about the public engagement opportunities offered over the last 10 years, which informed the construction plans for the design of Phase 1. Yonke projected aerial images and elevation graphics of various trail sections, and provided details for each section. He explained next steps for moving forward with Phase 1, including state aid process, permitting, land agreements, and finalizing construction plans.

Councilmember West asked about landscaping and plan for replacing any downed trees. Yonke explained that the project will involve some tree removal, but affirmed it was a sensitive component and that trees will be replanted. Vegetation will also be added along the corridor. Councilmember Walsh asked about the feedback received during the public engagement opportunities, and Yonke reported that the feedback was positive for Phase 1 of the project.

Councilmember Walsh asked about the timeline for public engagement for Phase 2. Yonke anticipates the preliminary planning and the start of public engagement to begin in 2024. When asked about involvement of the railroad, Yonke said the County has been actively engaged with the railway throughout the entire project. City Manager Crawford clarified that construction is beginning only for Phase 1, not Phase 2. Yonke confirmed that Phase 2 is in the very beginning planning stages. Mayor Louismet asked if the timeline for Phase 1 is reflective of what the timeline will be for Phase 2. Yonke anticipates it will be a similar timeframe, as it takes several years to complete some components of the project.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Requested Appeal for Denied Massage License – Crystina Vang

Pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 1127, the City regulates massage businesses and practitioner's licenses to ensure they meet minimum qualifications and basic insurance coverages. City Manager Crawford presented information about a massage therapist application that was administratively denied. The applicant, Crystina Vang, stated in the application that she has an active massage license with the City of Brooklyn Center. While conducting a background investigation, the Police Department found there to be no active license for the applicant with the City of Brooklyn Center. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 1127.110, Subd. 6, it shall be grounds for denial, revocation, nonrenewal, suspension or any other appropriate adverse license sanction if the applicant provides false information in their application materials. The City Manager's Office issued a denial letter to the applicant on February 1, 2024 based on the information found during the background investigation and in accordance with Municipal Code. The applicant submitted an appeal for denial. City Manager Crawford noted that previous appeals brought to Council have been upheld, aligning with the Municipal Code.

The City recognizes massage therapy as a reasonable business and has licensed several such businesses and practitioners. However, the nature of the business, the potential for such businesses to be used as a disguise for other activities, and the difficulties related to investigating violations occurring at such businesses compels City staff and the City Council to carefully scrutinize all applications and appeals for massage businesses and practitioner's licenses.

Crystina Vang, applicant and resident at 1908 Red Oak Lane in Lino Lakes, addressed the error on her application and explained her misunderstanding. Dustin Carlson, owner of The Carlson Clinic, vouched for the applicant and asked for the Council to reconsider.

Councilmember Edberg asked when an applicant can resubmit a new application. City Manager Crawford said an applicant who has been denied a license can reapply one year from the date of denial or, if appealed, the date of the Council meeting. City Manager Crawford also addressed a comment made by the applicant saying she has an active license, but reiterated that the Police Department didn't identify any such license. Councilmember Walsh acknowledged that the Council has been strict for simple errors on applications in this area of business. He noted that he trusts Mr. Carlson, but recognized needing to be consistent with applications.

It was moved by Councilmember **Walsh**, seconded by Councilmember **Engstran**, to approve **Res. No. 13327** upholding the denial of a massage therapist license application for Crystina Vang. Councilmember Hughes understands the need to be strict, but wondered if applicants are under the same scrutiny for other types of licenses, like liquor and tobacco. City Manager Crawford confirmed that all applicants are held to the same standards. Councilmember Edberg questioned if a year is too long for a denied applicant to wait before reapplying. He was open for future discussion on reviewing regulatory practices in the ordinance and making sure it's consistent with other practices. Mayor Louismet shared support for reviewing the massage ordinance. Regarding the application in front of the Council, Mayor Louismet pointed out language in the Municipal Code, stating that providing false information in an application "shall" constitute grounds for denial, which he noted doesn't allow flexibility for Council discretion. He used that language as an example of a discussion topic for future review of the ordinance. Councilmember Edberg was curious about the length after which a denied applicant can reapply for other licenses and whether denied applicants typically reapply. Councilmember West asked how the City's ordinance compares with other cities. City Manager Crawford said it is similar to other cities. Motion carried unanimously.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

8. NEW BUSINESS

None

9. DISCUSSION

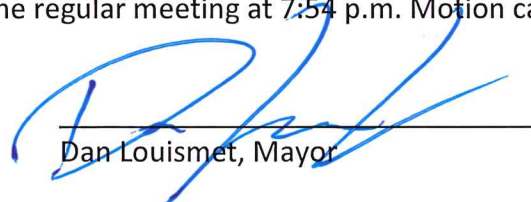
None

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Crawford shared that Terry Vadnais, former White Bear Lake firefighter, passed away. He served on the Fire Department for 51 years in various roles. She congratulated Bill Foussard, local businessowner and community leader, who won the Tourism Industry Leader Award from Explore Minnesota. For upcoming events, she provided information about an upcoming Downtown Mobility & Parking Study open house at City Hall. She shared her condolences for the fallen officers and firefighter of the City of Burnsville and thanked White Bear Lake first responders for their service.

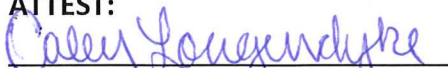
11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, it was moved by Councilmember **Engstran**, seconded by Councilmember **Hughes**, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:54 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.



Dan Louismet, Mayor

ATTEST:



Caley Longendyke, City Clerk