



**COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024  
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Mayor Louismet opened the meeting at 7:49 PM. Councilmembers in attendance included: Bill Walsh, Kevin Edberg, Andrea West, Steven Engstran and Heidi Hughes. Staff members in attendance included City Manager Lindy Crawford, Assistant City Manager Rick Juba, Police Chief Dale Hager, Community Development Director Jason Lindahl and City Engineer/Public Works Director Paul Kauppi.

**1. PUBLIC SAFETY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AID ALLOCATION**

The 2023 State Tax Omnibus Bill included \$300 million dollars in Public Safety LGA, for distribution to every city, county, and tribal nation in Minnesota by December 26, 2023. The City received \$1,096,939, which is restricted to uses for recruitment, retention, and equipment costs for the Police and Fire Departments.

At the September 12, 2023 Council meeting and amid the final 2024 budget adoption, most of the funds (\$948,500) were allocated to various uses approved between the Police and Fire Departments. There remains approximately \$148,000 of unallocated funds, which was intentional have some flexibility for future issues.

In response to the current environment around police officer recruitment, offering hiring and referral incentives has become commonplace in the industry. Until this point, the City has not offered such incentives as we had been receiving applications. While offering such incentives likely won't entirely solve this current issue, it may provide some relief. Therefore, staff recommended the City Council discuss allocating \$36,000 of the remaining Public Safety LGA towards hiring and referral incentives for the Police Department in order to remain competitive in the race to hire quality personnel.

The City Council discussed this recommendation and preferred it be a limited offering since the funding source would come from Public Safety LGA. Staff will work with the Patrol and Sergeant Unions to draft an agreeable Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting parameters around the incentives. The City Council will adopt the MOU at an upcoming regular meeting.

**2. DOWNTOWN HISTORY TOUR – WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Sara Hanson, Executive Director of the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society was present to deliver a virtual historical tour of downtown White Bear Lake. This experience was offered to help build an understanding of the history and evolution of the downtown area. As the Downtown Mobility and Parking Study concludes, having a stronger knowledge of the past will help staff and the Council as future infrastructure decisions are made in the downtown area.

Adjourned 9:46 PM.