

NEW YORK MILLS CITY COUNCIL
September 10, 2024
4:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Call to Order The regular meeting of the New York Mills City Council was called to order at 4:30 pm in the Council Chambers of the City Center building at 118 N Main Ave, New York Mills, Minnesota, all members of the Council having been notified of the meeting and the business to be transacted.

Members Present Maki, Grotheer, Hetland, Hammond

Members Absent Nesland

Staff Present City Clerk-Treasurer Julie Roberts, Administrative Assistant Cheri Kopveiler, Public Works Director Kyle Mattson, Liquor Store Manager Lana Jacobson, Pool Manager Harley Wurst

Guests Present James Freudenberg, Jessica Helmbrecht (5:03 pm), Sommer Dow, Cindy Salo, Ben Jacobson

Call to Order The meeting was called to order by Mayor Maki at 4:30 pm. A quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Additions, Changes or Deletions to Agenda and Approval of Final Agenda –

A motion was made to approve the final agenda as presented by Hammond. Motion was seconded by Hetland and carried by unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes –

A motion was made by Hetland to approve minutes from the August 20, 2024 Regular Meeting. Hetland's motion was seconded by Grotheer and carried by unanimous vote.

Communications & Recognitions – Mayor Maki acknowledged a thank you from the NYM Cultural Center.

Department Reports

Pool Report – Manager Harley Wurst provided the Council with a Pool Summary for 2024 as well as 2023 for comparison. The number of students taking lessons was 308 excluding private lessons compared to 355 in 2023. Wurst noted that part of the lower number is due to Sebeka's pool opening up again. Total money brought in for 2024 was \$24,756.39. This amount was only slightly less than 2023 (\$25,036.49). The Free Swim Day sponsored by the Civic & Commerce brought a record number of swimmers with 174 in 2024. Wurst noted that

the pool opened 1 ½ weeks later than usual this year due to waiting for state inspectors. This year, they purchased new office chairs, received cubbies along the roadside fence and all new pumps, pump/chemical electronic readers in the pump room. Ideas for 2025 included raising the cost of private lessons to \$30 per half hour from the current \$25/half hour to alleviate the amount of sign ups with end of summer lifeguard availability, some new chairs for the pool deck, umbrellas for lifeguard stands and tables, a mini fridge for the office, and equipment for H2O aerobics. The new resurfacing project on the pool should be complete before next season.

A motion was made by Hammond to acknowledge receipt and review of the Pool Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Hetland and carried by unanimous vote.

Liquor Store Report –The Liquor Store Report was included in the packet. Lana Jacobson addressed the council. Combined gross sales for the month of August were down 4% from prior year. Combined COGS were up 1.78% as a percentage of sales from prior year. Net revenues for the month of August were down 3.55% from prior year. Payroll expenses were up 1.78% as a percentage of sales from last year. YTD revenues were down 4.94%. Jacobson stated that she is looking to hire two new part-time employees. Trivia Night went well with 13 teams participating. Mayor Maki welcomed Jacobson back. James Freudenberg commented that staff worked very hard in Jacobson’s absence.

A motion was made by Grotheer to acknowledge receipt and review of the Liquor Store Report as presented along with approval to hire two new part-time employees. The motion was seconded by Hammond and carried by unanimous vote.

Fire Department Report – Chief Roder’s report was included in the packet. The Department responded to 16 calls in August with 13 being medical, 1 sprinkler malfunction, 1 false alarm and 1 motor vehicle accident. The old engine (formerly engine 1) was sold for \$4,000 with a net seller’s premium of \$2,710. The proceeds will go toward the shortfall of the new engine. The remaining balance owed to the City’s general fund for the truck is now \$56,034 which will be made up through grants and or using the 2025 capital contributions. The Department received a \$2,500 grant through the DNR for water supply, wildland fire equipment, radios and turn out gear.

A motion was made by Hetland to acknowledge receipt and review of the Fire Department Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Hammond and carried by unanimous vote.

Police Report – Chief Berndt’s report was in the packet. The Department responded to 141 calls for service in August, issued 2 citations, 0 parking citations, 30 warnings and 1 arrest.

A motion was made by Hammond to acknowledge receipt and review of the Police Department Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Hetland and carried by unanimous vote.

Public Works Report – Mattson addressed the Council. His department has completed gas valve exercising and has completed the gas sytem Cathodic Protection Survey. They are working on the gas system Leak Survey and above ground gas piping Atmospheric Corrosion Survey. The pool has been pumped down and winterizing has begun. Materials have been ordered for the pool resurfacing project. Work is estimated to start in October. The OTC Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day went well. A pre-construction meeting was held for the new material storage building. Fences are up and excavation should start tomorrow. A street closing application was received for a collaborative community event between the Cultural Center and Continental Divide Brew Pub for October 5th from 11 am-10 pm for Pickletoberfest. Mattson conducted a performance review on Todd Lorentz and recommended a pay increase. Mattson commented that Lorentz has been an asset and the step

increase is well-deserved. Mattson presented a quote from Esser Plumbing & Heating in the amount of \$4,121 to replace the water softener at the City Center, which is non-functioning and obsolete so there are no parts for repair. He commented that the price was fair and lower than the second quote of \$6,000 by Ben Holzer Unlimited which also did not include plumbing connections and disposal.

A motion was made by Hammond to acknowledge receipt and review of the Public Works Department Report as presented along with approval of the water softener quote from Esser Plumbing and approval of step increase for Todd Lorentz. Motion was seconded by Hetland with Maki voting in favor and Grotheer abstaining.

Administration Report - Clerk Roberts reported. There are two step raises due this month, Wanda Smith to Step 6 and Leshay Kratzke to Step 2. TextmyGov was launched in August and is working well. Roberts has been working on the preliminary budget to be certified to the County by September 30, 2024. She has been helping Jacobson with the bar's POS system implementation. Roberts reviewed the financials to determine how much money is available for replacement of equipment for the Police Department. She will meet with the Police Committee. Finally, Roberts is continuing to look for a location to move the county recycling bins.

A motion was made by Grotheer to acknowledge receipt and review of the Administration Report. Motion was seconded by Hammond and carried by unanimous vote.

Financial Consent Agenda – A list of claims and financial reports were included in the packet as well as a list of additional bills.

A motion was made by Hetland to approve the Financial Consent Agenda as presented including additional bills submitted. The motion was seconded by Grotheer and carried by unanimous vote.

Old Business and Tabled Items –

Calendar Parking Ordinance Communications – Clerk Roberts asked for direction on communicating the start of Calendar Parking for this year. The Council recommended notices be placed on bulletin boards, the City website and social media, notification in the newspaper and finally alerts will be sent out on TextmyGov closer to the date. Reminders will be issued initially, followed by warnings and finally, tickets to those who do not comply.

Sommer Dow asked where vehicles will park when the salt and sand storage building is built and takes up a large portion of the parking lot. Public Works Director Kyle Mattson replied that the parking lot will be extended on a portion of the south side of the City Center building and parking capacity will remain basically the same.

New Business –

West Central Initiative-Request for 2025 – Clerk Roberts presented the annual donation request from West Central Initiative. Roberts noted that at \$1,500, there has been a \$100 increase in the request from last year, but recommended that the City continue their partnership with WCI.

A motion was made by Hammond to approve West Central Initiative’s annual donation request in the amount of \$1,500.00. Motion was seconded by Hetland and carried by unanimous vote.

Request from the Library Board to Approve Filling of Board Vacancy – The Library Board, at their last meeting, reviewed the application from Wendy Hetland to fill the vacancy on the Library Board. Their request to appoint Hetland was included in the packet.

A motion was made by Grotheer to appoint Wendy Hetland to the Library Board. Motion was seconded by Hammond. Mayor Maki voted in favor with Latham Hetland abstaining.

Open Forum – Mayor Maki asked if anyone was present who wished to speak at Open Forum. James Freudenberg of 420 E Gilman expressed concern over the condition of Gilman Street past his property. He stated that the road has sunken and water accumulates in the area and floods over onto his property. He asked that something be done to fix the street permanently.

Sommer Dow of 104 North Main Avenue asked if the City plans to re-zone the block between Main Avenue and Tousley, and expressed concerns that the extension of the City Center parking lot would be disruptive to residences adjacent to it with both noise and garbage accumulation. The parking lot extension of approximately 50’ would only occur on the southwestern corner of the lot which is bordered currently by chain link fence. The block is currently zoned RBC which is a blending district between residential and commercial properties.

Open Forum closed at 5:05 pm.

Public Requests – None

New Business Cont.

Preliminary 2025 Budget & Preliminary 2024 Tax levy for Taxes Payable in 2025 – Clerk Roberts presented the Preliminary Budget. The Proposed Budget shows a 5% increase in the General Fund, but with the Debt Levy remaining flat, the overall Budget shows a 3.7% increase for 2025. Roberts commented that the department heads do a very good job of trying to keep expenses down. The TNT Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10th, after which the Final Budget will be adopted.

A motion was made by Hammond to approve the 2025 Preliminary Budget as presented. Motion was seconded by Hetland and carried by unanimous vote.

The Regular Meeting recessed at 5:11 pm for a Public Hearing regarding Updates to Animal Ordinance No. 113, Nuisance Ordinance No. 106, and New Food Truck/Cart Ordinance.

The Council Meeting resumed at 5:49 p.m.

Approve Animal Ordinance No. 701- The Council discussed proposed changes to allow chickens. In Section 5 (C) Disposal, the sentence stating: “any impounded chickens not redeemed or sold shall be humanely disposed of by the Public Works Department’ shall be changed to “... by the Animal Control Officer”. Councilman Hammond stated that compliance should be reviewed by the Public Safety Committee at each monthly meeting.

A motion was made by Hammond to approve Ordinance No. 701 (formerly Ord. No. 113) with the change from “Public Works Department” to “Animal Control Officer”. Motion was seconded by Grotheer and carried by unanimous vote.

Approve Health & Safety: Nuisances Ordinance No. 1001 – Council discussed a change to clarify that barbed wire will not be allowed in residential districts except as allowed in the Zoning Ordinance. Section 106.06 (M) will be changed to read: “Barbed wire and razor wire fencing is not allowed unless it is installed at the top of chain link fencing that is a minimum height of six feet and located in Commercial/Industrial areas. Barbed wire is not allowed in residential areas except as described in the City’s Zoning Ordinance.”

A motion was made by Hetland to approve Ordinance No. 1001 (formerly Ord. No. 106) with the change as described. Motion was seconded by Hammond and carried by unanimous vote.

Approve Licensing and Regulations for Mobile Food Units and Food Carts-Ordinance No. 702 –

A motion was made by Grotheer to approve Ordinance No. 702 as presented. Motion was seconded by Hammond and carried by unanimous vote.

Next Regular Meeting will be October 8, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Center Building located at 118 North Main Ave, New York Mills, MN.

Adjournment – A motion was made by Hammond to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 p.m. Motion was seconded by Grotheer and carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted by,

Julie A. Roberts

City Clerk(Notes taken and typed by Cheri Kopveiler, Administrative Assistant)