

**REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
MARCH 19, 2019**

The meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Gunderson at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following members were present: Mayor Heidi Gunderson, Council Members: Craig Johnson, Greg Urban, Patricia Youker and Robert Morse.

The following members were absent: None.

Also present were: Kevin Watson, City Administrator; Tim Sandvik, Assistant City Administrator, Ed Leier, Fire Chief, Planning/Community Development Director, Nolan Wall, City Attorney, Erich Hartmann, Public Works Director, Jesse Farrell, and Deputy City Clerk, Peggy Aho.

Everyone present stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Administrator Watson provided several announcements.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Johnson asked that the agenda be amended to remove Item #12B, Consider Setting a Public Hearing on Planned Unit Development Zoning Amendments for Tuesday, April 16 from the agenda.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Youker, it was

19-03-151 “RESOLVED, that the March 19, 2019 Regular Meeting Agenda be approved as amended removing Item #12B, Consider Setting a Public Hearing on Planned Unit Development Zoning Amendments for Tuesday, April 16.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 5, 2019 Regular Workshop Meeting

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Urban, it was

19-03-152 “RESOLVED, to approve the March 5, 2019 Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes, as presented.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

B. March 5, 2019 Regular Council Meeting

Upon motion by Morse, seconded by Johnson, it was

19-03-153 “RESOLVED, to approve the March 5, 2019 Regular Council Meeting Minutes, as presented.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Urban, seconded by Johnson, it was

19-03-154 “RESOLVED, that the Consent Agenda Item #7A for the March 19, 2019 meeting be approved as follows:

A. Approve Claims #77483 Through #77539 and Electronic Claims #1346 Through #1351 for Payment.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: None

PRESENTATIONS:

A. Northeast Youth & Family Services

Jerry Hromatka, Northeast Youth & Family Services, President & CEO, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the NYFS services/programs offered (mental health, day treatment and community services) and their budget showing revenue sources and expenditures. Mayor Gunderson thanked NYFS for their services. Hromatka thanked the City for being a funding partner.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Consider Approving an Agreement with S.E.H. for the Koehler Road Trail Alternatives Analysis:

Assistant City Administrator Sandvik gave an overview of the development of the Koehler Road Trail Task Force to explore a pedestrian friendly corridor along Koehler Road. The group met on December 6, 2018 and the Task Force came up with a number of ideas which were brought to S.E.H. and S.E.H. is proposing to do an Alternatives/ Analysis (A/A) which falls within the amount the City budgeted for the Task Force in 2019.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Urban, it was

19-03-155 “RESOLVED that the Council approves the proposed analysis study regarding Koehler Road pedestrian access as presented by S.E.H., dated March 11, 2019, and authorizes the City Administrator to accept/sign the proposal from S.E.H for the Alternatives/Analysis (A/A).”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

- B. Consider Approving a Contract with a Facilitator for the Garceau Corner Task Force: Planning/Community Development Director Wall noted that he and Council Members Youker and Johnson met with two potential facilitators offering their services to the City and staff recommend contracting with Bennett Community Consulting for an amount not-to-exceed \$3,600 for a maximum of six Work Group sessions. Additional Work Group sessions would be billed at a fee not-to-exceed \$600 per session.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Youker, it was

19-03-156 “RESOLVED that the Council approves entering into a professional services agreement for facilitator services with Bennett Community Consulting for the Garceau Corner Task Force as recommended.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Consider Approving Variance Requests for 3364 Rice Street: Planning/Community Development Director Wall reviewed Planning Case 19-001, which is a request for variances to construct a new billboard at 3364 Rice Street. He said that the subject property formerly contained the Vadnais Inn building and parking lot and was acquired by Ramsey County. The applicant formerly owned and operated a billboard near that site but it had to be removed as part of the construction for the Rice Street Interchange highway project. Wall said that the property owners are in negotiations with the County to acquire the property which would ultimately expand the parking for the Caribou.

Wall reviewed the proposed site plan and layout configuration. Wall said that the billboard does comply with many of the City’s applicable code standards but those standards do require four separate variance requests from the City in order to be constructed as proposed. Wall reviewed that the City defines that three thresholds that must be met. For each of the thresholds there are four separate variance requests.

Wall reviewed what they are proposing the billboard to look like. He said that City billboard standards limit the height to 35 feet tall and the proposed billboard would be 50 feet in height. The height would allow greater visibility.

Wall noted that the contractor is also asking for a 66 foot variance from the building setback. The code requires 100 foot setback. Wall reviewed the proposed parking plan to expanding the parking lot. Staff included a condition as part of the recommendation that the four spaces underneath the billboard be removed.

Wall said that the City's current requirement is to limit billboards within 500 feet of an existing wetland and this one is proposed to be within 219 feet. The entire subject property is within 500 feet of the wetland. Wall said that the neighborhood is unique because it borders three cities near the interchange of 694 and Rice Street.

Wall reviewed staff's recommendation for the four variance requests and conditions. Notable conditions are: adding architectural treatment around pylon that would match Caribou Coffee building and removing the parking stalls that are under the billboard as a part of the proposed parking lot expansion. Wall then noted that the Planning Commission recommended denial of the variances with a 4 to 3 vote. He said that there are two resolutions before the Council, one denying the variance requests and one approving the variance requests, which is based on staff's recommendation.

Mayor Gunderson asked if the applicant wished to speak. John Bodger, Outfront Media, said that they concur completely with what staff are recommending. He said that a key component that was left out is that the City receives 5 hours of public service advertising every month for local events, which is a good benefit to the City.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Morse, it was

19-03-157 "RESOLVED that the Council adopts the Resolution Approving the Variances at 3364 Rice Street as requested by Outfront Media, LLC including five findings of fact with conditions."

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

B. Consider Authorizing the City Administrator to Enter into an Agreement with Phil Kern for a Goal Setting Session:

City Administrator Watson noted that before the Council is a contract with Phil Kern for running a Goal Setting Session with the City. Kern has provided this type of service to many cities.

Upon motion by Morse, seconded by Youker, it was

19-03-158 “RESOLVED that the Council authorizes the City Administrator to contract with Phil Kern to facilitate a goals session, as recommended.”

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

C. Setting Tuesday, April 2, 2019 Workshop and Agenda:

City Administrator Watson noted that possible agenda items for the April 2, 2019

Workshop may include: an update on refuse contract with VHG and organics recycling.

COUNCIL AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Public Works Director Farrell noted that Public Works staff have been working on flood relief issues. The warmer weather has allowed the opportunity for some cold mix patching of pot holes to be done on a number of roads. Staff are working on addressing Buerkle Road repair and stated that he will be bringing to the Council for approval at an upcoming meeting. He said that they are approaching substantial completion on the water meter replacements. The contractor will return in June to finish the replacements.

Planning/Community Development Director Wall noted that there is a Planning Commission meeting scheduled for next week.

City Attorney Hartmann noted that he has served on the NYFS Board and it is a great organization and that the Board very much appreciates the City’s support.

Deputy Clerk Aho had nothing to report.

Fire Chief Leier noted that last year the Council took action on cleaning ditches which increased flow. He also said that call load to the Fire Department continues to increase.

Assistant City Administrator Sandvik noted that the Heritage Days Committee met last week and they are still looking for volunteers. The Parks and Trails Committee met this week and their next meeting is scheduled for May 6.

Council Member Morse noted that he attended the Heritage Days Committee meeting and reiterated that additional volunteers are needed for the Committee. He was at the Ramsey County League of Local Governments where they gave an update on legislative activities.

Council Member Urban said that he had nothing to report.

Council Member Johnson said that he had nothing to report.

Council Member Youker thanked Planning/Community Development Director Wall for setting up the appointments for the facilitator task force service interviews.

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City Administrator Watson noted that he is sending out a letter on behalf of the City supporting Representative Hertaus' legislation regarding a new LGA formula. He said that there was a meeting regarding POLCO and that they hope to get that up and running soon.

Council Member Morse made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Johnson. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Watson, City Administrator

APPROVED