



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
ci.northfield.mn.us

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

5:00 PM

[Goto Meeting](#)

Closed Special

5:00 PM - SPECIAL AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pownell called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: 7 - Council Member Clarice Grabau, Council Member Suzie Nakasian, Council Member Brad Ness, Council Member Jessica Peterson White, Mayor Rhonda Pownell, Council Member Jami Reister, and Council Member George Zuccolotto

City representatives present: LMCIT Legal Counsel Jana O'Leary Sullivan, City Administrator Ben Martig and Communications and Human Resources Director Michelle Mahowald.

1. [21-026](#) Information on How to Provide Public Input and Watch the Meeting During the Pandemic.

SPECIAL AGENDA

2. [21-034](#) Pending Litigation and Settlement Agreement - Alexandria Robertson v. City of Northfield.

Mayor Pownell stated the following:

The agenda item for the special meeting is "Pending litigation - City of Northfield v. Alexandria Robertson." This portion of the meeting will be closed pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.05, Subdivision 3(b). The grounds for closing it are as follows:

The City's need for absolute confidentiality outweighs the purposes served by the open-meeting law in this case based on the following:

- *Absolute confidentiality is necessary so that the City Council and legal counsel can have a candid and open discussion to determine the available legal options to handle the litigation, including response strategy and possible areas of reconciliation.*
- *The purpose of the closed meeting is not to make a decision behind closed-doors, but instead the purpose of the meeting is to determine the legal options for handling the litigation.*
- *The only business to be discussed is the pending litigation.*
- *An open session would be detrimental because it may take place in the presence of individuals involved in the litigation.*
- *A closed session would benefit the public because the ultimate outcome of the litigation may impact the finances of the City.*

A motion was made by Council Member Nakasian, seconded by Council Member

Ness, to close the meeting at 5:03 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Grabau, C. Nakasian, C. Ness, C. Peterson White, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, and C. Zuccolotto

3. [21-035](#)

Other - Pending Action on Closed Meeting Agenda Item.

Mayor Pownell opened the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

A motion was made by Council Member Peterson White, seconded by Council Member Ness, that the Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims for Alexandria Robertson v. City of Northfield be approved and that the designated City officials duly execute the agreement. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Grabau, C. Nakasian, C. Ness, C. Peterson White, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, and C. Zuccolotto

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Council Member Peterson White, seconded by Council Member Ness, to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Grabau, C. Nakasian, C. Ness, C. Peterson White, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, and C. Zuccolotto