



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

6:00 PM - CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pownell called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

- Present:** 6 - Council Member Brad Ness, Mayor Rhonda Pownell, Council Member Jami Reister, Council Member George Zuccolotto, Council Member Kathleen Holmes, and Council Member Davin Sokup
- Absent:** 1 - Council Member Jessica Peterson White

Also present: Public Works Director/City Engineer David Bennett, Police Chief Jeff Schroepfer, Streets and Parks Manager Charlie Fredericks, Community Development Director Jake Reilly, City Administrator Ben Martig and City Clerk Lynette Peterson.

LISTENING SESSION

Rich Graves, 1202 Festler Court, representing Communities United Against Police Brutality in Minneapolis, addressed the Council regarding the organization.

David Ludescher, 915 S. Washington, addressed the Council regarding raising taxes and the City's spending.

Jane Williams, Forget-Me-Not Florist, 501 S. Water St., addressed the Council regarding the proposed tax statement with their taxes going up 28.1 percent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pownell noted information in Supplemental Agenda Memo Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Sokup, to approve the agenda removing Item No. 29 "Ord. 1074 - Consider Ordinance No. 1074 Amending Gas Service Franchise Fee" and Item No. 30 "Ord. 1075 - Consider Ordinance No. 1075 Amending Electric Service Franchise Fee" and moving Consent Agenda Item No. 9 to Regular Agenda Item No. 29 "Ord. 1071 Consideration of the Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1071 Amending Chapter 34 - Land Development Code Related to Industrial and Agricultural Land Uses" and moving Consent Agenda Item No. 20 to Regular Agenda Item No. 30 "Consideration of Professional Service Contract with TSP Architects for 5th & Washington Street Redevelopment Project". The motion carried by the following vote:

- Yes:** 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Sokup, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

1. [24-730](#) Consider Approval of November 26, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes.
2. [24-731](#) Consider Approving Disbursements totaling \$979,346.80
3. [24-732](#) Consider approval of Tobacco License Renewals.
4. [Res. 2024-124](#) Consider Resolution Retaining Statutory Tort Limits for 2025.
5. [Res. 2024-125](#) Consider Approving Plans and Specifications and Order Advertisement for Bids for the Wall Street Road Improvements Project.
6. [Res. 2024-126](#) Consider Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bid for TH 3 Streetlight Replacement Project.
7. [Res. 2024-127](#) Consider Resolution Accepting Public Improvements and Approving Final Payment for the 2023 Miscellaneous Storm Structure Repair Project (STRM2023-K35).
8. [Res. 2024-128](#) Consider Adopting Schedule for 2025 Park and Recreation Advisory Board Meetings.
10. [24-733](#) Consideration of Summary Publication of Ordinance No. 1071 Amending Chapter 34 - Land Development Code Related to Industrial and Agricultural Land Uses.
11. [Ord. 1072](#) Consideration of the Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1072 a Zoning Map Amendment for the Northwest Development Area.
12. [24-734](#) Consideration of Summary Publication of Ordinance No. 1072 a Zoning Map Amendment for the Northwest Development Area.
13. [Ord. 1073](#) Consideration of the Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1073 a Zoning Map Amendment for the property at 113 Linden St S. from R-1 Residential to C-1 Downtown.
14. [24-735](#) Consideration of Summary Publication of Ordinance No. 1073 a Zoning Map Amendment for 113 Linden St. S. from R1-B: Residential to C1-B: Downtown Commercial.

15. [24-664](#)
Consider Approval of Memorandums of Understanding with Carleton College.
16. [24-736](#)
Consider Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with St. Olaf College.
17. [24-737](#)
Consider approval of a new three-year School Resource Officer agreement between the City of Northfield and Independent School District No. 659.
18. [Res. 2024-129](#)
Consider Resolution Extension of Joint Resolution for Orderly Annexation by and Between Bridgewater Township and the City of Northfield.
19. [Res. 2024-130](#)
Consider Resolution Requesting Minnesota State Capital Investment Bonds for Bridge Square Street and Park Improvements in the City of Northfield.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND RELATED ACTION

21. [24-738](#)
Public Hearing on the 2025 Budget and Tax Levy.

Mayor Pownell declared the public hearing open at 6:18 p.m.

City Administrator Ben Martig presented an overview of the 2025-2026 Budget and Tax Levy to include the budget timeline; property tax rate information; tax base changes median home values; tax change by parcel map; historical view of levy/tax rate; details of the 15.8% levy increase; residential total tax rate impact; property tax comparison; key ratios - peer comparison; city-wide levy; 2025 EDA Fund; 2025 HRA Fund; general fund revenues; general fund expenditures; 2025 budget highlights; City services; maintaining quality infrastructure and facilities; 2025-2029 CIP/CEP; and 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

Rich Graves, 1202 Festler Court, addressed the Council thanking the Council for dealing with the fiscal responsibilities of the City.

Colin Campbell, 811 Mayflower Court, addressed the Council regarding the increase in property taxes.

Martig answered questions from the Council.

A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Ness, to close the Public Hearing at 7:33 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

22. [Res. 2024-132](#)
Consider Adopting the 2024/Payable 2025 Economic Development Authority (EDA) Tax Levy.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Reister, to approve Resolution No. 2024-132 Adopting the 2024/Payable 2024 EDA Tax Levy. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

23. [Res. 2024-133](#) Consider Adopting the 2024/Payable 2025 Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Tax Levy.
- A motion was made by Council Member Zuccolotto, seconded by Council Member Holmes, to approve Resolution No. 2024-133 Adopting the 2024/Payable 2025 HRA Tax Levy. The motion carried by the following vote:**
- Yes:** 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup
24. [Res. 2024-134](#) Consider Adopting the 2024/Payable 2025 Tax Levy.
- A motion was made by Council Member Reister, seconded by Council Member Holmes, to approve Resolution No. 2024-134 Adopting the 2024/Payable 2025 Tax Levy 15.8%. The motion carried by the following vote:**
- Yes:** 4 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, and C. Holmes
- No:** 2 - C. Zuccolotto, and C. Sokup
25. [Res. 2024-135](#) Consider Adopting the Final 2025 Budget.
- A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Ness, to approve Resolution No. 2024-135 Adopting the 2025 Budget. The motion carried by the following vote:**
- Yes:** 5 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, and C. Holmes
- No:** 1 - C. Sokup
26. [Res. 2024-136](#) Consider Adopting the 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
- A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Reister, to approve Resolution No. 2024-136 Adopting the 2025 to 2029 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The motion carried by the following vote:**
- Yes:** 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup
27. [Res. 2024-137](#) Consider Approving the 2025-2029 Capital Equipment Plan (CEP).
- A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Reister, to approve Resolution No. 2024-137 Adopting the 2025 to 2029 Capital Equipment Plan (CEP). The motion carried by the following vote:**
- Yes:** 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

RECESS

Council recessed at 8:01 p.m. Council meeting resumed at 8:14 p.m.

REGULAR AGENDA

28. [Res. 2024-138](#) Consider Resolution Approving the Sechler Park Long-Range Plan.
- Charlie Fredericks, Streets and Parks Manager, introduced the item and introduced Anna Springer, Bolton and Menk, and Bruce Jacobson, Jacobson Landscape Architect LLC.*

Springer presented updates on the Sechler Park Long-Range Plan highlighting the long-range plan contents, final concept design, meeting outcomes and next steps.

Springer and Jacobson answered questions from the Council.

Bill Seeberg, 401 Ivanhoe Avenue, addressed the Council regarding the need for pickleball courts in Sechler Park.

A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Sokup, to approve Resolution No. 2024-138 Approving Sechler Park Long-Range Plan. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

9. [Ord. 1071](#) Consideration of the Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1071 Amending Chapter 34 - Land Development Code Related to Industrial and Agricultural Land Uses.

Community Development Director Jake Reilly presented a summary of the second reading edits to Ordinance No. 1071 Amending Chapter 34 - Land Development Code Related to Industrial and Agricultural Land Uses.

A motion was made by Council Member Sokup, seconded by Council Member Ness, to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 1071 Amending Northfield City Code, Chapter 34 - Land Development Code: Article 2. Zoning Districts and Use Regulations, Article 3. Site Development and Article 9 Definitions. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

20. [Res. 2024-131](#) Consideration of Professional Service Contract with TSP Architects for 5th & Washington Street Redevelopment Project.

City Administrator Ben Martig introduced the item giving background on the Professional Service Contract with TSP Architects for 5th and Washington Street Redevelopment Project. The total contract is for \$52,500 and includes work already completed on conceptual drawings, public presentations and sustainable design. Future commitments will be subject to a partnership and will be a future action of the Council for approval.

Martig and Community Development Director Jake Reilly answered questions from the Council.

EXTEND THE MEETING

A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Sokup, to extend the meeting until business is complete. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

20. [Res. 2024-131](#) Consideration of Professional Service Contract with TSP Architects for 5th & Washington Street Redevelopment Project.

A motion was made by Council Member Sokup, seconded by Council Member Holmes, to approve Resolution No. 2024-131 Approving Professional Service

Contract with TSP Architects for 5th & Washington Street Redevelopment Project and Update of Delegating the Northfield Economic Development Authority (EDA) to Provide an Advisory Role to the City Council related to Potential Redevelopments Related to the Project Currently Known as the "5th And Washington Street Redevelopment" and "5th and Water Street Redevelopment".
The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup

ADMINISTRATORS UPDATE

31. [24-739](#)

City Administrator's Update.

City Administrator Ben Martig updated the Council on upcoming City events.

REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

C. Sokup - Thank you to Mayor and Council Members whose terms end in December.

C. Holmes - Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; Thank you to Mayor and Council Members whose terms end in December.

C. Zuccolotto - No Report.

C. Reister - NAFRS Meeting; Hospital Committee Meeting; Age-Friendly Meeting; Thank you to colleagues and City Staff for their support in role as Council Member.

C. Ness - Thank you to Mayor and Council Members whose terms end in December.

Mayor Pownell - Thank you to all for kind words and support.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Council Member Zuccolotto, seconded by Council Member Reister, to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - C. Ness, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, C. Zuccolotto, C. Holmes, and C. Sokup