

City of St. Paul Regular Meeting
704 6th Street
St. Paul, NE 68873

Monday, March 4, 2024

A meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of St. Paul, Nebraska was held at City Hall in said City on Monday, March 4, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. Present were Mayor Mike Feeken and Council members Katie Kowalski, Chuck Schmid, Bill Peters & Brian Sack. Absent: None. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Phonograph Herald, a legal newspaper published in said City and County. Notice of the meeting was also posted in four (4) public places. Notice of this meeting was communicated in the advance notice. All proceeds thereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was opened to the attendance of the public.

Mayor Feeken opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the "Pledge of Allegiance" and thanking the public for attending and announcing that the City of St. Paul abides by the Open Meetings Act, which is posted on the west wall as required by Nebraska State Law §84-1407 through §84-1414. Mayor Feeken also stated that the City Council may vote to go into Closed Session on any agenda item as allowed by NE State Law §84-1410.

Mayor Feeken continued the meeting by announcing that individuals who have appropriate agenda items for City Council consideration should complete the "Request for Future Agenda Items" form located at the City Office. If the issue can be handled administratively without Council action, notification will be provided. If the item is scheduled for a meeting or study session, notification of the date will be given. Also, any City patrons that are requesting "Public Records" or have "Questions or Concerns" in regard to the City, they need to be submitted in writing to the City of St. Paul, so that it can be addressed appropriately. These forms are available online, in a file folder on the back wall of the Council Chambers or at the City Office.

There was an opportunity for individuals wishing to provide input on any of tonight's agenda items. Those individuals were asked to reserve time to speak; per Mayor Feeken, there will be a five (5) minute limit per person on speaking.

Gary Hinrichs, Certified Public Accountant with Dana F. Cole & Co. provided an audit presentation regarding the City of St. Paul's 2022-2023 Financial Statement for year ending September 30, 2023. Mr. Hinrichs announced that this was an unqualified audit, which represents a clean audit report; expenditures were within the approved budget limits. Mr. Hinrichs stated that the City Clerk and her staff do an exceptional job of maintaining City records. Council member Kowalski moved to approve the City of St. Paul's 2022-2023 Financial Statement as presented. Council member Schmid seconded the motion. Council members Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0.

Chief of Police Dan Howard presented pictures of a nuisance property at 807 7th Street regarding four (4) unlicensed vehicles; one (1) camper; and a trailer full of trash. Council member Schmid moved to approve sending a "Notice of Hearing to be Determined Existence of Public Nuisance and to Abate in Whole or in Part" to be heard at the City Council meeting on Monday, March 18, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. regarding the property (formerly the old Parts Bin store). The property is more legally described as the N 71' of Lots Four (4), Five (5), Six (6) and Seven (7), Block Seventy-Eight (78), Original Town, Howard County, St. Paul, NE. Council member Sack seconded the motion. Council members Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0.

Next on the agenda for consideration was St. Paul Fire Chief Becker paying for gas and oil out of his personal funds pertaining to Fire Truck #50. The truck is described as a 2015 Ford F-250 Super Duty XL 4x4 four (4) door. The City purchased the truck from Jacobs Ford for \$22,995, with the St. Paul Rural Fire Board absorbing half (1/2) of the cost of the vehicle. Fire Chief Becker has been utilizing the truck to directly respond to incidents without having to utilize precious response time for on scene care. This has allowed the Fire Dept. to get on scene quicker, provide scene resources and to relay valuable information back to dispatch and

responding fire and rescue personnel. After Mayor Feeken provided background information regarding Fire Truck #50, comments and discussion ensued from Jerry Woodgate, Fire Chief Mike Becker, Isaiah Graham and Joel Bergman (previous Mayor). Council member Schmid moved to approve paying all fuel, oil and maintenance cost on Truck #50, with the St. Paul Rural Fire Board sharing the cost. Council member Sack seconded the motion. Council members Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0. Mayor Feeken is requesting hours and receipts on all vehicles.

The City of St. Paul Department Heads provided updates per the perspective Departments: **Fire Department:** (1) St. Paul Fire Chief Mike Becker was in attendance to provide updates on placing flatbeds on fire trucks; toolboxes were moved from the cab to the back of the truck, along with installing safety bars and cages constructed by Bernt Welding for safety purposes; placed safety seats in back of fire rigs, with the front rides removed; (2) Assistant Fire Chief Mark Wilson went with Alda, NE to assist with a rural grass fire; (3) Fire-fighter and EMS addresses need to be updated; (4) St. Paul Fire Dept. was awarded a SRS Volunteer Fire Dept. (VFD) Radio Grant in the amount of \$30,000. The grant is through the NE State Legislature for providing \$5 million in grants for the State of NE Volunteer Fire Departments. The grant is intended to supply volunteer fire departments with radio equipment to facilitate communication with state agencies; and (5) The St. Paul Rural Fire Board fully supports the St. Paul Fire Department.

Library: Kelli Helton, St. Paul Library Director was in attendance to provide updates on the budget; personnel; needs of the library (computers); challenges (changing technology); achievements (new community room flooring and painting); receiving the Silver Library Accreditation; goals (summer reading for all ages); grants for digitizing the St. Paul Yearbooks dating back to 1910; and repairing a library window on the west side of the building.

Police: Chief of Police Dan Howard was in attendance to provide updates regarding the Police Dept. Mayor Mike Feeken stated that some of the information that Chief of Police Howard provided is not to be released for public knowledge. Information that was provided in the updates included: budget, the revenue and expenditure guideline, training and continuing education hours and Department challenges (understaffed).

Ambulance: St. Paul Rescue Squad Captain Nathan Meyer was in attendance to provide an update regarding the ambulance. The updates included: 2022-2023 emergency calls; currently, there are two (2) persons taking the EMT course; a new bumper guard will be installed on St. Paul Unit 99-1; six (6) EMT's will be attending the Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Association (NEMSA) Conference in Kearney, NE this coming weekend; five (5) nurses will be joining the St. Paul Rescue Squad to assist in EMT calls; and (6) the St. Paul Rescue Squad does not carry a County levy.

Brian Friedrichsen was in attendance to provide a recap of the Middle Loup Subdivision Black-Hills gas line. The recap includes: The NE State Fire Marshal sent a letter to Olsson's stating that there were no federal regulations limiting how close structures could be built to the gas line. The Fire Marshal did say that there were recommendations to keep homes/businesses/places of public gatherings 50 feet from the gas line and to keep garden sheds/outbuildings 25 feet from the gas line. These distances were both recommendations and not regulations. The only regulation that the City has is that there will not be any building on the gas easement. The estimate to replace the existing gas line is approximately \$135,000. This estimate did not include some of the gas work that will need to be done along 1st Street. Olsson's are still waiting to see what the number will be. Since the gas line work is included under Elsbury Constructions contract, they will be in charge of coordinating and paying the gas company to complete the work. As part of the bid package, Olsson's had already included a \$50,000 allotment for the gas line work. Olsson's are seeing numbers exceeding this amount from the gas company; Olsson's anticipate Elsbury asking for a change order for the correct amount as soon as his contracts are in place. Since the existing gas easement is described as a 40 foot wide easement centered on the gas line, when the line gets replaced and shifted to the east, the easement will follow to keep the main centered. Olsson's don't know what the exact distance is yet as it depends on how clear the corridor will be to install the line; Black-Hills thought it would shift five (5) to ten (10) feet east. According to City of St. Paul Zoning regulations, fences are not allowed to be placed over existing gas easements.

The Middle Loup Subdivision bids were received and opened on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. A total of four (4) bids were submitted and have been reviewed by Olsson's, Grand Island, NE. After the review of the bids, Olsson's recommendation that "Notice of Award" be given to the low bidder, Elsbury Construction LLC, in the contract amount of \$3,218,403.94. Council member Schmid moved to approve the Middle Loup Subdivision "Notice of Award" to be given to Elsbury Construction LLC, in the contract amount of \$3,218,403.94; this comes with the pending approval from the St. Paul Development Corp. (SPDC). Council member Peters seconded the motion. Council members Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0.

The discussion regarding burying a drainage ditch pipe on the east side of 4th Street between Jay Street and Kendall Street pertaining to the new Fire Station was tabled. This is due to the City acquiring additional information regarding the construction of the project.

Council member Schmid moved to approve the Consent Agenda Items: (1) Council Minutes dated February 20, 2024 (regular); (2) March 4, 2024 Disbursements; and the (3) new St. Paul Rescue Squad Members: Emilee Almond; Chloe Carlson; Amy Kruse; Tarah Ondracek; and Paula Ryan. Council member Kowalski seconded the motion. Council members Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0. Council member Peters had a few questions regarding the disbursements.

March 4, 2024 Disbursements

Gross Wages - February	96899.80
Altec Capital Services LLC (Electrical Bucket Truck) (truck)	53950.00
Amazon Capital Services (books)	556.20
Aquafix (lab)	400.00
Blue Cross Blue Shield of NE (insurance)	18420.28
Bomgaars (supplies)	2121.72
Bound Tree (supplies)	1956.36
Brehm's Drug (supplies)	11.50
Cengage Learning (books)	95.97
Central Comm. College (education)	768.00
Charter/Spectrum (service)	239.96
City Health Deductible Savings (insurance)	5445.00
City of St. Paul 125 Plan (insurance)	100.00
Core & Main (supplies)	4095.57
Crescent Electric (supplies)	377.66
Custer County Recycling (Service)	40.80
Dana F Cole & Co (accounting)	3880.00
Dutton Lainson (supplies)	65.02
Eakes Office Solutions (contract)	77.69
Elan Financial (meals, supplies, education, postage, lodging, parking)	4370.57
Filtercare of NE (service)	65.80
Hamilton Information Systems (agreement)	1568.50
Hastings Fiber Glass Products (supplies)	3649.08
Heartland Disposal (service)	84.00
Howard Co. Treasurer (Dispatch Fee)	3158.54
HTM Sales (supplies)	126.00
Jarecke Motors (service)	1490.57
John Deere Financial (supplies)	276.51
LARM (insurance)	2085.53
Madison Nat'l Life (insurance)	209.38
Meyer, Deb (education)	780.00
Midwest Service & Sales (supplies)	1220.75
Modern Marketing (supplies)	380.55
Mutual of Omaha (insurance)	144.00
NE State Patrol (licenses, fees)	357.00
NE Public Health Envir (lab)	31.00

PSSI Pest Services (service)	216.00
Pulse Finders (education)	900.00
Quick Med Claims (service)	840.69
Road Builders Machinery (supplies)	173.11
Robinson, Grady (meal)	16.58
State of NE Central Svcs (telephone)	38.34
Stepanek Plumbing (repair)	174.00
Woodgate, Lisa (education)	260.00

Non-General Disbursements

Keno: NE Dept of Revenue: 2024 City 50G Fee (fee)	100.00
Cem: Transfer from Cemetery Svcs to General for Work Comp Audit adjustment	2658.53
TIF: St. Paul Development Corp (Bed Head Coffee TIF) (TIF Proceeds)	121.38
TIF: S. Squared Enterprises: Prairie Falls Tif Proceeds (TIF Proceeds)	1032.70
TIF: City of St. Paul: MAD Development 1/2 Share: (TIF Proceeds)	1903.68
TIF: MAD Development: 1/2 Share of MAD Dev. (TIF Proceeds)	1903.67
Sales Tax: Street: Mtr Veh Tax: Dec. 2023 Proceeds (Mtr Veh Tax)	6464.77
Sales Tax: Fire Station: Dec. 2023 Proceeds (Fire Station)	23418.14
Sales Tax: 25% Infrastructure: Dec. 2023 Proceeds (25% Infrast)	11709.07
Keno: Dana F. Cole & Co: 22-23 Financial Statement Preparation (financial statement preparation)	700.00
Sales Tax: Transfer from M. Mkt 504420 to Chg 100027 (transfer)	100000.00
Fire Stn Construction: JEO Consulting (design/bid)	6318.75

Council member Kowalski moved to approve City Clerk Connie Jo Beck transferring \$300,000 from the City Utility Billing Heritage Bank account and depositing the funds into the City's Light, Water and Sewer Nebraska Class accounts. Council member Schmid seconded the motion. Council members Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0.

Council member Sack moved to approve replacing the St. Paul Police Dept. "evidence door" with a door that will be constructed at the Smith Welding shop in the approximate cost of \$930. The door is being replaced, due to the overheating of the room. The cost of the door will be disbursed from the Building Insured Cash Sweep (ICS) fund. Council member Kowalski seconded the motion. Council member Kowalski, Schmid, Peters & Sack voted aye, nays none. Motion carried 4/0.

Chief of Police Dan Howard gave a brief update on the nuisance committee report. The Mayor and City Council members were in agreement to send the first letter to landlord and tenant pertaining to: 920 Indian Street (J. Rudolf); (2) 1108 7th Street (B. Lyons); and 224 5th Street (G. Thompson). Chief of Police Howard also stated that the Honda vehicle has been removed from the Eiberger home at 304 8th Street.

Council member Peters had questioned why the cars haven't been removed from the Padrnos property, along with the rest of the trash. Chief of Police Howard will be contacting the proper persons regarding the cleanup and removal of the cars.

Utilities Superintendent Helzer updates included: (1) the new Electrical Bucket Truck has arrived; Electrical Commissioner James Summers will be placing tools in the truck according to the budget; and (2) a vehicle list is being prepared to sell City Trucks on Big Iron.

Chief of Police Howard stated that this was an expensive month with vehicle repairs in the approximate amount of \$2,500, along with purchasing tires. Chief of Police Howard is in the process of applying for a grant to acquire thermal imaging devices; the grant is \$1000.

Mayor Feeken updates:

(1) St. Paul Municipal Code updates are still in progress Chapter 1, Articles 1 - 11; Deputy Clerk Berthelsen and Payroll Clerk Kristie Fousek are making the changes; (2) The City received the Energy Research and Development Fund Grant (ERDF) in the amount of \$1,405.78; Electrical Commissioner James Summers is requesting to utilize it for Electrical engineering fees regarding the Middle Loup Subdivision; (3) The final payment regarding the Electrical Bucket Truck was delivered to Altec Capital Services in the amount of \$53,950; the Electrical Bucket Truck is insured for \$120,000, due to material and equipment on the truck; (4) the Cybersecurity Grant has been submitted to the NE Cybersecurity Board for review and scoring of the applications. Once they are scored, the state will send an email stating that the grant has been approved at the state level, and then it will be sent to FEMA and CISA for approval. Jennifer Dennis with Hamilton will be the City of St. Paul's new contact person (2-28-24); (5) EPIC - Eliminate Property, Income and Corporate tax (See LB 79) bill is attached to SparqData for reading; and the Howard County Tire Amnesty will be held on April 6, 2024 at the Howard County Fairgrounds.

Mayor Feeken adjourned the City Council meeting at 8:24 p.m.

March 18, 2024
Date


Mike Feeken, Mayor


Connie Jo Berk, City Clerk/Deputy Treasurer