

**CITY OF PARK RAPIDS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 24, 2020, 6:00 PM
Park Rapids City Hall Council Chambers
Park Rapids, Minnesota**

1. CALL TO ORDER: The November 24th, 2020, Regular Meeting of the Park Rapids City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Ryan Leckner, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Ryan Leckner, Councilmembers Tom Conway, Erika Randall, and Robert Wills. Absent: Councilmember Liz Stone. Staff Present: Administrator Betty Thomsen, Planner Andrew Mack, Fire Chief Terry Long, Liquor Store Manager Scott Olson. Via Zoom: Police Chief Jeff Appel and Public Works Superintendent Scott Burlingame. Others Present: Robin Fish from the Enterprise. Via Zoom: Cynthia Jones, Sue Tomte, and Butch DeLaHunt.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by Wills, seconded by Conway, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda with the following addition: Mayor Leckner added Item #8.3. Park Rapids City Revolving Loan Fund.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

4.1. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes-November 10, 2020: A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Wills, and unanimously carried to approve the November 10th, 2020, City Council Regular Meeting minutes as presented.

4.2. Canvass Board for the City of Park Rapids Meeting Minutes-November 13, 2020: A motion was made by Conway, seconded by Randall, and unanimously carried to approve the November 13th, 2020, Canvass Board for the City of Park Rapids Meeting minutes as presented.

5. FINANCE:

5.1. Payables & Prepays: A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Conway, and unanimously carried to approve the payables in the amount of \$186,656.93, and the prepaids in the amount of \$165,697.07, for a total of \$352,354.00.

6. CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Wills, and unanimously carried to approve the following consent agenda items:

- 6.1. Resolution #2020-174 Approving Ordinance No. 607 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.44.40100.**
- 6.2. Ordinance No. 607 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.44.40100.**
- 6.3. Resolution #2020-175 Approving Ordinance No. 608 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.45.52000.**
- 6.4. Ordinance No. 608 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.45.52000.**
- 6.5. Resolution #2020-176 Approving Ordinance No. 609 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.45.52200.**
- 6.6. Ordinance No. 609 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.45.52200.**
- 6.7. Resolution #2020-177 Approving Ordinance No. 610 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids, PID #32.25.07081, PID #32.25.02032, and PID #32.45.52100.**
- 6.8. Ordinance No. 610 Rezoning Land to R-3 in the City of Park Rapids PID #32.25.07081, PID #32.25.02032, and PID #32.45.52100.**
- 6.9. Approve Contract for Fire Alarm System Inspection in the Amount of \$1,695.16 from Johnson Controls, for Rapids Spirits Municipal Liquor Store.**
- 6.10. Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$9,000.00 from BerganKDV for the 2019 City of Park Rapids Audit.**
- 6.11. Approve Pay Request #1 in the Amount of \$119,225.00 for MN Mechanical Solutions for Construction Work on the 2020 Well and Water Treatment Facility Improvement Project.**
- 6.12. Resolution #2020-178 Authorizing Proper City Officials to Execute the Task Order By and Between Landrum and Brown Inc and the City of Park Rapids.**

- 6.13. **Resolution #2020-179 Approve Wage Adjustment and Step Increase for Part Time Rapids Spirits Liquor Store Clerk Cody Barr.**
- 6.14. **Resolution #2020-180 Authorizing Proper City Officials to Execute the Paperwork Associated with the Farm Leases for the City of Park Rapids.**
- 6.15. **Resolution #2020-181 Designating Election Polling Place for Precincts One and Two for the City of Park Rapids.**
- 6.16. **Approve Job Description for the Mechanic/Public Works Maintenance Worker Position (and) Authorize City Staff to Advertise, Interview, and Recommend for Hire a Full Time Mechanic/Public Works Maintenance Worker.**
- 6.17. **Resolution #2020-182 Approving Wage Adjustment and Step Increase for Full Time City Treasurer Jeremy Jude.**
- 6.18. **Approve Job Descriptions as Recommended by the Personnel Committee to Achieve Separation of Duties for the Finance Department:**
 - **Accounts Payable Clerk.**
 - **Planning/Administrative Assistant.**
 - **Accounting/Administrative Assistant.**
- 6.19. **Approve Pay Requests in the Amount of \$1,830.84 to Guardian Fleet Safety and \$35.00 to Innovative Sign & Graffix for Additional Expenses, Beyond What Was Previously Approved, for Three (3) Police Squad Car Buildouts.**

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

7. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: Cynthia Jones stated I'd like to inform the City Council that the tree lighting will be entirely virtual this year. You will be able to view it on YouTube at 6:00 p.m. on Friday. There will not be a fire truck involved this year. There will be a pre-recorded program with Santa, and Butch DeLaHunt will throw the switch on the Christmas tree, which will be live. The videocam will be working.

Conway questioned will it be on the Chamber's website? Jones stated yes, the Chamber website, YouTube, or the CHI Hospice website.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS:

8.1. Resolution Authorizing Accountant/Treasurer to Zero Out Unpaid Aging Invoices Prior to 2018 for the City of Park Rapids: Betty Thomsen stated the Finance Committee met to discuss these outstanding invoices the city has. Some of them are so old that its virtually impossible to even attempt to collect them. We recommend and are asking for the Council to authorize the treasurer to zero out all of the unpaid invoices prior to 2018. We have one exception to that which is the McGrane Partnership in the amount of \$48,392.29. That is because it will be collected through special assessments as they continue to develop the land. After that is done, the staff would run an aging report each month, issuing a second bill if required, and possibly a gentle collection call if not paid.

Conway stated so primarily we're writing them off as a bad debt because we're not getting paid or because we didn't invoice them? Thomsen stated some of them we didn't invoice, but we did collect a vast amount. We'd like a clear slate to move forward and then keep it at that and not regress.

A motion was made by Conway, seconded by Randall, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution #2020-183 Authorizing Accountant/Treasurer to Zero Out Unpaid Aging Invoices Prior to 2018 for the City of Park Rapids.

8.2. Resolution Appointing Dawn Rouse as Full Time Accounts Payable Clerk for the City of Park Rapids: Thomsen stated Dawn Rouse is currently almost a full-time employee. This is just a change in the schedule. We have a need for it. As we went through and segregated the duties, that which we get dinged on every year in our audit, we have divided it out to the point that we needed her full time. We can now have more than one set of eyes looking at payroll, accounts payable, etc. With these moves we will be able to fully implement that.

Conway questioned with no affect on the budget? Thomsen stated it's already in the budget. Randall stated there is a change in the budget. She was hired as a twenty hour a week employee and is now going to forty hours, and she's been working 37.5 hours per week. There's no increase to the budget because we are not filling some spots.

A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Wills, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution #2020-184 Appointing Dawn Rouse as Full Time Accounts Payable Clerk for the City of Park Rapids.

8.3. Park Rapids City Revolving Loan Fund: Ryan Leckner reported that at the Heartland Lakes Development Commission (HLDC) meeting we talked about the city's revolving loan fund which is now managed by HRDC. In the past when we've tried to get information, or if people want to get a loan, they have to go to Bemidji to get it started. HLDC has the capability now to handle that with Mary Thompson. It's an ongoing contract the city has with HRDC. We have the option to turn that over. It would be a one stop shop. The HLDC wouldn't charge anything since we already contribute, so it would save us a little money. We don't pay a lot to HRDC. Last year it was \$1,500.00, the year before it was \$2,300.00. It varies. They charge \$750.00 per loan application, plus some administration fees. With the shutdown, and restaurants being closed, a lot of the businesses in Park Rapids are going to be needing assistance. This might speed up the

process for that and make the money a little more available to our community and more usable. If we decided to do a \$10,000.00 loan to twenty people, times \$750.00 it's going to cost the city a lot. This is more economical. If the Council is comfortable, we could make a motion that we would like the contract turned over to HLDC, or we could refer it to staff for more information. It's, not necessarily the money, saving money is a benefit but it's more than that. When I've called HRDC to try and find out what our loan balance is and what we have available for lending they can't give me an answer, which is scary.

Conway stated the HLDC would primarily be meeting with applicants and getting the applications squared away. They would still be presented to the existing application committee that currently reviews it. The HLDC is not going to be reviewing the applications. Is that correct? Leckner stated that would be correct. Conway stated I'm trying to understand what we are asking the HLDC to do. Leckner stated they would be the person to go to for the loans. Randall questioned are they holding the money? Why are we calling up there for the balance? My concern is if they have the money. I'm fully on board with exploring this but I don't think we should be passing a motion on this given the very limited information that we have.

A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Wills, to refer this to staff to explore Heartland Lakes Development Commission taking over the revolving loan fund.

Discussion: Conway questioned I would have thought that if we have a revolving loan fund that we would have a bank account set up somewhere that would be holding the funds. It's just a matter of who has the signatory authority on the bank account. Randall stated it seems like there is a lot of things to figure out. Leckner stated that's exactly what I would have thought too. That's what is kind of disturbing that we have a hard time figuring this out. Referring it to staff to double check some of this stuff. Maybe they can contact Thompson to find out what she would do versus what HRDC does. Conway stated let's put it on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

The vote was called.

The motion carried unanimously.

9. CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS: Thomsen stated Carmen Lockhart has been working very hard on the delinquent water and sewer accounts since we are approaching the time of the year when we assess those against the properties. With the help of the additional staff that came in we were able to square away some of those things and understanding the Banyon Program better. We're moving forward on that. She sent out a number of letters and fielded calls. She's gone the extra mile.

10. DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES: Scott Olson stated we are still seeing numbers that are ahead of 2019 numbers. With the recent movement towards the four-week closure for restaurants and bars, we are seeing increased numbers because of that again.

Terry Long stated I wanted to update the Council on our search for a different grass unit, which we talked about at our last meeting. We got a really good price from the local Ford dealer on a brand-new truck. In talking with the committee on this, that's what we decided to go for. I was pleasantly surprised with the price on it. Since it's brand new we'll get a warranty on it. It will be a good replacement for a long time. With the money that we received from the Wolf Pack and some others; the purchase will be all done with donations.

Leckner stated it's not anything that will be in the budget? Long stated it's all donated money gotten from the local community and we'd be buying local too. Randall stated I think this has to go through a formal process. Get it on the agenda. I said at the last meeting that I do feel like we need to approve the purchase on the agenda so that there is documentation. The city is now going to be paying insurance on a brand-new vehicle. Leckner stated Long did ask about how to do it being that it is not part of our budget. We could make a motion now.

Randall stated I specifically asked that there would be something in writing at the last meeting so that it got documented. It doesn't impact the budget, but it does impact the city's position because of the insurance. We can't overlook the things that the city pays insurance on. Thomsen stated so it could come back as a request to spend x amount of dollars and describe the vehicle. Randall stated I understand that they can go forward with the purchase now, but there are things all the time that get on our agenda all of the time that have already happened. I'll leave it to you today, but I'm pretty frustrated on how this is coming back to us.

Leckner questioned do you want to put it in writing and put it on the next agenda for approval? Since it's not in the regular budget, we weren't sure. Randall stated I understand that you weren't at the last meeting, but this exact issue was discussed about how to bring it back. Conway questioned would it just be a consent agenda issue approving the vehicle purchase? Randall answered yes. Conway stated why don't we add it to the consent agenda.

A motion was made by Conway, to allow the fire department to move forward with the purchase of a vehicle.

Discussion: Randall stated they have the money now. If they choose to go buy this thing then so be it. Leckner stated all he's looking to do is to order it. It might take months. They want to get it before the spring fire season. Long stated there is a bit of a time table for that reason, but there is no taxpayer money. This is donated money. My understanding at the last meeting was you asked me to bring it back before we purchase it so that you know what we are doing. I understand that to some extent, but I don't understand the fact that you want to approve our purchase of it. I understand the idea of the insurance part of it, but you also look at we're replacing a thirty-five-year-old truck. If that goes down that would be your budget to repair it.

Randall stated I don't know that we need to get into a debate about this. I thought I was very clear last time about what the expectation was. You bring it back so that there is documentation about what you are requesting. To keep saying that there is no cost to the taxpayers is not an accurate statement. I'm going to say it now for the sixth time. There is a cost to the taxpayers and that's the ongoing insurance. I'm fine with you going and ordering this thing because if there is a rush on it or whatever, as long as there is

something in writing on the agenda on December 8th about what you bought, what the purchase price was, and what the vehicle is. So that we have documentation about a vehicle that the city is now going to own. We approve the purchase of every other vehicle in this fashion for every department, whether it's with grant money or with city money.

Thomsen stated you can order it. The purchase is not going to take place before the next Council meeting. Leckner stated go ahead and order it. Randall stated put it on the consent agenda. It should be documented in writing. That's what I said last time. Leckner stated maybe this is my fault, I thought we could have made a motion just to approve it. Randall stated I disagree. That's not how we handle the purchase of any other vehicles.

Long stated what I remember from that Council meeting is you specifically said I don't need a price on it, but that we wanted to know what we're doing. Now you're saying you need a price written to be approved. Randall stated on the consent agenda, yes. Now that you've located the vehicle, I still said that there needed to be something in writing about what you were looking to buy. Long stated okay. Thomsen stated if you order it, you'll have a nice description and cost, and put that on the consent agenda. Randall stated we don't buy any vehicles without it being in a written format regardless of where the source of funds are from. The discussion last time was about we have vehicles that weren't insured properly because we didn't have the proper records. We don't have any objection to the vehicle being ordered. We will formally approve it at the next meeting.

Conway rescinded his motion.

Butch DeLaHunt stated we met today with our partner CHI St Joseph's as part of the hospice lighting. Thanks to the Council for issuing a permit and being able to close down the second block of Main Avenue. Everything is going to go virtual this year. We are not going to block off the street at all. It will be 100% virtual. With CHI St Joseph's being our community health partner in this event we thought that was the best way to do it in light of the governor's executive order that we create no events of any sort that would encourage the gathering of people during the tree lighting. There will be no sound. There will be nobody at the tree itself, everything will be done live on Facebook, or visitparkrapids, the Chamber, or CHI St Joseph's on Facebook or the Downtown Park Rapids social media site. We thought this was the best way to do it to make it 100% virtual. And thanks to the city for the assistance to get the tree up. We'll have a lot of fun with it and Santa will be coming to town also.

Mack stated acknowledgement should be given to the Fire Department for helping to decorate all of the downtown trees with Christmas lights.

11. MINUTES/REPORTS/INFORMATION: There were no comments.

12. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Conway stated on the search for the city administrator, Randall and I did host interviews yesterday. I believe there were about forty applications. We choose the top five candidates for interviews. Four of the five accepted those interviews. We did three virtual and one in person interviews. The committee will be ready to move forward with a recommendation prior to the next Council meeting.

13. CLOSED SESSION:

13.1. INTRODUCTION: Performance Evaluation for Non-Disciplinary Reasons of City of Park Rapids Employee Lisa Furlott under Minn. Stat. 13D.05, Subdivision 3(a):

A motion was made by Conway, seconded by Wills, and unanimously carried to close the regular Council session, and open a closed session at 6:30 p.m.

CLOSED MEETING:

Acknowledge Members/Staff Present: Thomsen, Conway, Leckner, Randall, Wills, and Scott Olson.

Council Discussion

Conclusion *(All motions/votes must be in open session)*

A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Conway, and unanimously carried to closed the closed session, and open the regular Council session at 6:36 p.m.

A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Conway, and unanimously carried to terminate Lisa Furlott for non-disciplinary reasons.

A motion was made by Conway, seconded by Wills, and unanimously carried to post, then advertise the vacant full time liquor store clerk position.

14. ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Conway, seconded by Wills, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

[seal]

Mayor Ryan Leckner

ATTEST:

Margie M. Vik
City Clerk