

CITY OF BLAINE  
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, January 4, 2021

7:30PM

*Virtual meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic*

**CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR SANDERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30PM by Mayor Sanders followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the Roll Call. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**OATHS OF OFFICE – MAYOR SANDERS, COUNCILMEMBERS JEPPSON, MASSOGLIA AND SMITH**

The Oath of Office was administered by City Attorney Nelson to Mayor Sanders, Councilmember Jeppson, Councilmember Massoglia and Councilmember Smith. A round of applause was offered by all in attendance.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Tim Sanders, Councilmembers Wes Hovland, Julie Jeppson, Chris Massoglia, Richard Paul, Jess Robertson and Jason Smith.

**ABSENT:** None.

Quorum Present.

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; City Planner Lori Johnson; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Attorney Chris Nelson; City Engineer Dan Schluender; Communications Manager Ben Hayle; Communications Technician Roark Haver; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Workshop Meeting – December 14, 2021

Truth in Taxation Meeting – December 14, 2021

Workshop Meeting – December 21, 2021

Regular Meeting – December 21, 2021

Moved by Councilmember Robertson, seconded by Councilmember Jeppson, that the Minutes of Workshop Meeting of December 14, 2021, the Minutes of the Truth in Taxation Meeting of December 14, 2021, Workshop Meeting of December 21, 2021, and the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 21, 2021 be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted. Councilmember Hovland abstained on the December 14, 2021 Workshop and Truth in Taxation meeting minutes due to his absence.

## **AWARDS - PRESENTATIONS - ORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS**

### 6.1 Resolution 21-001, Mission Statement Affirming Council/Staff Responsibilities.

City Manager Wolfe stated the City Council initially adopted Resolution No. 86-41 defining certain responsibilities, defining expected Council/staff relationships and performance expectations, assuring no recriminations for acting in the public interest, and pledging no self-serving activities at the expense of the public interest. This resolution has come to City Council each year since 1986 for consideration and adoption at the first official meeting of the year. Of note is the first "Whereas" clause, which includes the City of Blaine Mission Statement. As part of the strategic planning process in 2019, the City Council began work on a revised mission statement and on October 5, 2020, adopted Resolution 20-151 approving the City's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. The Plan consists of six strategic priorities: effective communication, financial stability, growth management, organizational health, TH 65 improvement, and well-maintained infrastructure. Associated with each strategic priority is a set of desired outcomes, key outcome indicators, and performance targets that describe expected results and how results will be measured. As a result of this work the City's resulting Mission Statement is to deliver exceptional public services with the highest degree of professionalism and accountability. The mission statement will be accomplished through core values of transparency and openness; fairness and impartiality; creativity and innovation, respect and efficiency.

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Hovland, that Resolution No. 21-001, "Mission Statement Affirming Council/Staff Responsibilities," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

### 6.2 Motion 21-02, Appointment of Liaisons to Various Boards and Commissions.

City Clerk Sorensen requested the Council approve the appointment of liaisons to various boards and commissions.

Councilmember Jeppson reported Councilmember Robertson and Councilmember Smith would be interested in serving as alternates to the Metropolitan Council Transportation Advisory Board.

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Robertson, that Motion No. 21-02, "Appointment of Liaisons to Various Boards and Commissions," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

### 6.3 Motion 21-03, Rules of Procedure and Quorum – Order of Business.

Ms. Sorensen stated Section 3.03 of the City Charter, Procedure of Council, states the Council shall determine its own rules and order of business. Proposed changes include moving approval of minutes to the

Consent Agenda and outlining a clearer procedure for public input surrounding first and second ordinance readings. No other changes are being recommended at this time.

Councilmember Hovland stated he would like to see the minutes remain off the Consent Agenda as a separate item for approval. He explained this would allow Councilmembers to abstain when they are absent from meetings.

Councilmember Jeppson supported putting the minutes on the Consent Agenda. She indicated a Councilmember could still vote to approve a set of minutes even if not in attendance at the meeting.

Mayor Sanders requested comment from staff regarding this matter. Ms. Sorensen reported minutes can be approved by the entire Council and Councilmembers do not have to abstain from approval due to an absence. She noted attendance was listed on each set of minutes for the permanent record. City Attorney Nelson concurred with these statements.

Councilmember Hovland stated if an amendment had to be made to the minutes, the minutes would then have to be pulled from the Consent Agenda for further discussion. City Attorney Nelson reported this was the case.

Councilmember Hovland explained he could support moving approval of the meeting minutes to the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Robertson supported approval of the meeting minutes moving to the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Paul concurred with making the change.

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Robertson, that Motion No. 21-03, "Rules of Procedure and Quorum – Order of Business," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

#### 6.4 Motion 21-04, Designate Official Newspaper for 2021.

Ms. Sorensen reported State Law and City Code require that City Council designate a single newspaper as its official newspaper. Staff explained Minnesota Statute 331A.02, Subd. 1 defines the qualifications for a publication to be designated as an official newspaper. Staff provided a summary of the bid received from the *Blaine/Spring Lake Park Life*. It was noted public notices are also posted at City Hall, on the City's website and distributed through the CivicPlus NotifyMe communication tool.

Councilmember Paul asked if all public notices were placed in the newspaper and made available online. Ms. Sorensen explained the City was required by State law to publish public notices and Truth in Taxation Hearings in a physical newspaper. She stated the City newsletter could not be used to fulfill the requirement for publication in an official newspaper.

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Hovland, that Motion No. 21-04, "Designate Official Newspaper for 2021," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

#### 6.5 Motion 21-05, Recording Secretary Service Agreement for 2021.

Ms. Sorensen stated TimeSaver Off-Site Secretarial Service had been recording minutes for City Council meetings since 1993, and in 2020 this family-owned business underwent organizational changes and formally transferred the City's account to Minute Maker Secretarial. Ms. Guenther has been transcribing the City's minutes for several years and continues to do so under the new business name. The agreement reflects a less than 2.5% increase in rates for 2021, consistent with past increases, and includes a clause that allows either party to cancel this agreement with or without cause upon thirty (30) days written notice. Currently, Minute Maker Secretarial is recording minutes for all City Council meetings, workshops, EDA meetings, Planning Commission, Park Advisory Board, Traffic Commission, and Natural Resources Conservation Board meetings. Minute Maker Secretarial also covers special workshops and Council meetings as needed and posts approved minutes to Legistar for public viewing on the City's webpage. The agreement reflects their fees for all recording services and extends the expiration date to December 31, 2021.

Councilmember Hovland recalled the Council placing this item out for bid but it was his understanding there was not a need because this was a smaller contract. He explained he would like to include the opportunity for other businesses to bid on this service as this was only fair. Ms. Sorensen indicated the last time this service was bid was in 2004. She reported the difficulty was there were not many firms that provided this specialty service but staff would note this request.

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Hovland, that Motion No. 21-05, "Recording Secretary Service Agreement for 2021," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

#### 6.6 Motion 21-06, Designate Official City Depositories for 2021.

Finance Director Huss stated this item fulfills the requirement of Minnesota State Statute 118A.02. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bank serves as the City's primary banking services provider and US Bank is used as a depository for certain investment transactions. Village Bank is the primary provider for Twin Cities Gateway, the local tourism board for which Blaine serves as the fiscal agent.

Moved by Councilmember Hovland, seconded by Councilmember Jeppson, that Motion No. 21-06, "Designate Official City Depositories for 2021," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

#### 6.7 Motion 21-07, Designate the Finance Director to Make Electronic Funds Transfers.

Mr. Huss stated in 2019 the City adopted its Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Policy, per Minnesota Statute 471.38. Pursuant to this policy the City Council annually delegates the authority to make EFTs to the City's Finance Director.

Moved by Councilmember Hovland, seconded by Councilmember Paul, that Motion No. 21-07, "Designate the Finance Director to Make Electronic Funds Transfers," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilmember Robertson stated the Mary Ann Young Center holiday meal was a tremendous success and thanked all of the volunteers and City staff members who made this event possible.

Councilmember Jeppson thanked SBM Fire Department, Allina EMTs and the Blaine Police Department for their response at a recent house fire in her neighborhood. Councilmember Robertson encouraged the public to watch social media for ways to help the Blaine family who recently lost their home due to this fire.

## **OPEN FORUM FOR CITIZEN INPUT**

Mayor Sanders opened the Open Forum at 8:12PM.

Rob Doar, 11027 Terrace Road NE, welcomed the new Councilmembers and Mayor and thanked them for their service to the City of Blaine.

There being no input, Mayor Sanders closed the Open Forum at 8:14PM.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted as presented.

## **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Robertson, that the following be approved:

10.1 Motion 21-08, Schedule of Bills Paid.

10.2 Motion 21-09, Approve a Tobacco and Tobacco Products License for M&M Tobacco at 10850 Club West Parkway NE.

10.3 Motion 21-10, Approve Payment of \$50,179 to Davids Hydro-Vac for Bypass Pumping for Emergency Repairs to Sanitary Sewer.

10.4 Motion 21-11, Approve 2021 Public Works Capital Equipment Purchases.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

## **7:30PM - PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ITEMS SET FOR A CERTAIN TIME**

None.

## **DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS**

12.1 Resolution No. 21-002, Granting Final Plat Approval to Subdivide Approximately 6.79 Acres into 29 Lots and Two Outlots to be known as Mill Pond 2<sup>nd</sup> Addition at 13045 Lever Street. (TEGL/AREP Mill Pond, LP) (Case File No. 20-0043/SLK).

City Planner Johnson stated the final plat proposal consists of subdividing approximately 6.79 acres into a subdivision with a total of 29 new dwelling units and two outlots. The plat includes outlots for future development. All local public streets require dedication of 60 feet of right-of-way and shall be constructed to 29 feet back to back of width. All streets will follow the Anoka County street name grid system. Developer and staff will work together to identify areas of the plat where additional trees can be saved through the use of custom grading, retaining walls, and by structure design. Staff commented further on the final plat noting it was consistent with the preliminary plat.

Moved by Councilmember Hovland, seconded by Councilmember Smith, that Resolution No. 21-002, "Granting Final Plat Approval to Subdivide Approximately 6.79 Acres into 29 Lots and Two Outlots to be known as Mill Pond 2<sup>nd</sup> Addition at 13045 Lever Street," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### 13.1 Resolution No. 21-003, Letter of Support for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity.

Community Development Director Thorvig stated Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity (TCH) is an organization that provides affordable home ownership opportunities for individuals and families in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. TCH is working on an application for HOME funds from Anoka County. The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides grants to localities (Anoka County) to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership. HOME is the largest Federal block grant designed exclusively to create affordable housing. Based on TCH's projected pipeline of work for construction in 2022, they are looking at the possibility of doing two new construction projects in Anoka County. TCH believes Blaine would be a good city to purchase one or two lots for these projects. As part of the HOME application process, TCH is requesting a letter of support from the community. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies various goals in the Housing chapter related to the creation of new affordable housing in Blaine and the type of project TCH would construct is consistent with said goals. He reviewed the letter of support for TCH in further detail with the Council and recommended approval.

Councilmember Robertson stated she supported Habitat for Humanity and the great work they do for the community. She asked if there would be an engagement process when TCH began their projects in Blaine and recommended a stop gap be put in place to ensure there was community engagement and communication with the neighbors. Mr. Thorvig discussed his previous work with Habitat for Humanity and stated he would ensure this concern was shared with TCH.

Councilmember Hovland asked for clarification on how the City defined affordable housing. He reported the people who move into Habitat for Humanity homes were purchasing these homes then requested an update from Chief Podany on the homelessness situation in Blaine. Mr. Thorvig explained the term affordability was misunderstood when it came to affordable housing. He stated this was not a one-size fits all term and reported there were varying levels of affordability (80% AMI, 60% AMI, etc.). He indicated he would be discussing affordable housing in greater detail with the Council at an upcoming retreat.

Councilmember Hovland stated the Habitat for Humanity homes were well constructed and fit well into existing neighborhoods.

Safety Services Manager/Police Chief Podany provided the Council with an update on homelessness in Blaine. He described how the Blaine Police Department was working to assist the homeless population near the Northtown Mall. He commented on the outreach events that have been held and discussed the services that were available. He reported the Police Department takes a compassionate approach to help those in need and does not criminalize homelessness but noted the need for a balance to ensure Northtown businesses were successful. He commented on the panhandling complaints the City receives and discussed how the City would be addressing this concern.

Councilmember Paul stated he appreciated the work the City would be doing with Habitat for Humanity. He understood there was a growing need for affordable housing. He recommended the Council address affordable housing at a future workshop meeting, given the growing needs in the community. He asked what type of project TCH was proposing to complete in Blaine. Mr. Thorvig stated TCH was proposing to purchase one or two single family lots in order to build new homes.

Councilmember Jeppson explained that in her role as an emergency housing director she had applied for HOME funds and CDBG funds and discussed the long process that had to be followed by TCH in order to receive funds for new homes. She indicated the City was offering a letter of support for TCH. She supported the Council further discussing affordable housing at a future workshop meeting. She feared the City was seeing just the beginning of increased homelessness due to the pandemic and supported the Council holding real conversations about homelessness and housing needs. Mr. Thorvig thanked Councilmember Jeppson for her input and said he looked forward to discussing affordable housing at a future workshop meeting.

Moved by Councilmember Jeppson, seconded by Mayor Sanders, that Resolution No. 21-003, "Letter of Support for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity," be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

13.2 Resolution No. 21-004, Receive Feasibility Report and Order Public Hearing for the 132<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Hastings Street Area Rehabilitations, Improvement Project No. 21-07.

Moved by Councilmember Hovland, seconded by Councilmember Paul, that Resolution No. 21-004, "Receive Feasibility Report and Order Public Hearing for the 132<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Hastings Street Area Rehabilitations," be approved.

City Engineer Schluender stated at the meeting held on September 21, 2020, Council initiated this project and ordered the preparation of a Feasibility Report. The report outlines the 132nd Avenue/Hastings Street Area Rehabilitations project. Staff reviewed the streets included in the project area. It was noted the project area consists of residential streets with concrete curb and gutter. The proposed improvements include spot concrete curb and gutter removal/replacement, minor storm drainage improvements, spot water main repair, asphalt surface replacement, traffic control signage replacement, and appurtenant construction. The estimated cost of these proposed improvements is \$2,091,000 with \$597,200 to be assessed to the benefitting properties over a 15-year period. Replacement of existing sanitary sewer castings/rings at an estimated cost of \$51,200 and replacement of malfunctioning water main gate valves and adding new hydrant gate valves where not already present at an estimated cost of \$78,100 is proposed to be paid for by City Public Utility Funds. The remaining portion of \$1,364,500 is proposed to be paid from the City's Pavement Management Program Fund. Staff commended further on the project and recommended the Council receive the feasibility report and order the public hearing for the 132<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Hastings Street area rehabilitations.

Councilmember Massoglia discussed the townhomes at the corner of Aberdeen Street and stated he wanted to be assured these townhomes would not be assessed again in the future because they were corner lots. He also requested further information regarding the rate charged to townhomes. Mr. Schluender reviewed the project area with the Council and explained how townhome properties were charged 50% while single family properties were charged 35% due to density. However, when calculated, single family homes still paid more per unit for assessments. He noted that these four townhomes would not be part of the future Aberdeen project and therefore would not be further assessed.

Councilmember Hovland asked if the City was starting to gain ground on the Pavement Management Program (PMP). Public Works Director Haukaas stated he believed the City was starting to gain ground due to the significant projects that have been completed the past several years. He commented on the City's five year plan and stated the City would continue to make strides towards improving the City's streets.

Councilmember Paul asked if these streets needed repair or reconstruction. Mr. Haukaas reported the level of reconstruction needed for each of these streets was considered through the feasibility study. He stated if a full reconstruction was not needed then spot curb repair was completed along with a mill and overlay. He commented further on how staff proposes the most cost effective work for each street.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

13.3 Resolution No. 21-005, Receive Feasibility Report and Order Public Hearing for the 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue/101<sup>st</sup> Avenue Rehabilitation, Improvement Project No. 21-08.

Moved by Councilmember Robertson, seconded by Councilmember Jeppson, that Resolution No. 21-005, "Receive Feasibility Report and Order Public Hearing for the 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue/101<sup>st</sup> Avenue Rehabilitation," be approved.

Mr. Schluender stated at the Council meeting held on September 21, 2020, council initiated this project and ordered the preparation of a Feasibility Report. The report outlines the 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue/101<sup>st</sup> Avenue Rehabilitations project consisting of 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Trunk Highway 65 to 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue from 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue to University Avenue. It was noted the project area consists of a State Aid collector route with curb and gutter. The proposed project would rehabilitate 99th Avenue/101st Avenue, from Highway 65 to University Avenue by means of a mill/overlay. It is also proposed to perform a chip seal on the milled surface, just prior to paving the overlay. The purpose of this treatment method, which is known as a Texas Underseal, is to extend the life of the mill/overlay and delay reflective cracking. Staff commented further on the proposed improvement upgrades and recommended that Council accept the feasibility report and order the public hearing.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Councilmember Hovland stated there may be a need to appoint Council liaisons to the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon and Veterans Memorial Park organizations. Councilmember Robertson reported it was her understanding former Mayor Ryan planned to remain highly engaged with both of these entities and formal City support via liaisons was not required.

Councilmember Hovland explained Blaine has made a commitment to being a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon community and he believed it would not hurt to have a Council representative at these meetings. He stated he



would be more than happy to attend these meetings. Mr. Huss reported the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Committee is a private organization that has a chapter in Blaine and does not have a specific Council liaison. He reported former Mayor Ryan served on this committee as a private citizen and not as a member of the Blaine City Council. He indicated the City has made occasional contributions from the charitable gambling funds to the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Committee, as has been done with other 501C3 organizations in Blaine. He stated it was his understanding this was not a City sponsored group.

Councilmember Robertson concurred with Mr. Huss stating Beyond the Yellow Ribbon was similar to the Rotary Club.

Councilmember Hovland commented he would like to see the City Council be supportive of Beyond the Yellow Ribbon as this group was worthy of the City's support.

Councilmember Paul stated Blaine has been designated a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon City. Ms. Sorensen reported this was the case then noted City had not had a formal liaison to this group but would reach out to former Mayor Ryan and member Terry Wold to clarify what support the City Council could offer going forward.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Hovland, to adjourn the meeting at 9:03PM.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

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Tim Sanders, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk  
*Submitted by Minute Maker Secretarial*