

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
OCTOBER 12, 2020**

The following are the minutes for the regular meeting of the City Council held at 7:00 pm on Monday, October 12, 2020, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 590 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E., Columbia Heights, Minnesota.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Schmitt called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Present: Mayor Schmitt; Councilmember Buesgens; Councilmember Murzyn, Jr.; Councilmember Novitsky; Councilmember Williams

Also Present: Kelli Bourgeois, City Manager; James Hoeft, City Attorney; Jim Hauth, Utilities Superintendent; Karen Karkula; Nicole Tingley, City Clerk

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. MISSION STATEMENT**, Read by Mayor Schmitt

Our mission is to provide the highest quality public services. Services will be provided in a fair, respectful and professional manner that effectively address changing citizen and community needs in a fiscally-responsible manner.

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember Novitsky, to approve the agenda as presented. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

**5. PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, RECOGNITION, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GUESTS**

**A. Polish American Heritage Month Proclamation**

Mayor Schmitt read the proclamation designating October 2020 as “Polish American Heritage Month” in the City of Columbia Heights. Karen Karkula accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Columbia Heights Sister Cities.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

(These items are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted as part of the Consent Agenda by one motion. Items removed from consent agenda approval will be taken up as the next order of business.)

**A. Approve Contract with OPG-3 for Online Permitting Software Integration**

MOTION: Move to approve the proposal from OPG-3 in the amount of \$22,200.00 to integrate online permits and licenses with Permitworks; and, furthermore, to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement for the same.

**B. Approve Resolution No. 2020-87, Amending the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Water Infrastructure Replacement Fund and Authorizing the Purchase of Neptune Registers and Sensus Radios from their Sole Source Vendors**

MOTION: Move to approve Resolution No. 2020-87, a resolution authorizing an amendment in the amount of \$86,000.00 to the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Water Infrastructure Replacement Fund.

MOTION: Move to approve purchase of registers and radios needed to transition from the Neptune radio system to the Sensus radio system for all commercial water meters from their respective sole source vendors.

**C. Approve Business License Applications**

MOTION: Move to approve the items as listed on the Business License Agenda for October 12, 2020, as presented.

**D. Review of Bills**

MOTION: Move that in accordance with Minnesota Statute 412.271, subd. 8, the City Council has reviewed the enclosed list of claims paid by check and by electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$1,571,900.40.

*Motion by Councilmember Murzyn, Jr., seconded by Councilmember Williams, to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

**7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-88, Levying and Adopting the Assessment for Alley Light Area No. 677-47**

Mayor Schmitt opened the public hearing regarding a proposed alley light installation located in the east-west alley between Fairway Drive and Highland Place from West Upland Crest to East Upland Crest, using one Xcel Energy LED cobra street light to be installed on an existing pole behind 2105 Fairway Drive.

Sheri Isaacs, a Columbia Heights resident, expressed her support and the support of six neighbors she queried for the alley lighting, citing safety issues. Mayor Schmitt quoted the additional cost to the nine affected parcels as being \$1 per month (though the cost may increase with increases in electric rates). Mayor Schmitt and Councilmember Murzyn, Jr., expressed support for the lighting.

Ms. Isaacs asked whether a night watch light could be installed, rather than the proposed cobra light. Superintendent Hauth said he had no additional information after he had spoken with Kevin Hansen, the Public Works Director, earlier in the day and he had confirmed that cobra lighting had been selected.

Councilmember Buesgens asked if there would be a problem if the resolution was approved as cobra lighting though residents who were contacted by Ms. Isaacs preferred night watch lighting. Superintendent Hauth reported night watch lighting, according to City policy, is assessed to 100 feet in each direction instead of 150 feet for the cobra option, so it would change the number of parcels in the assessment.

Councilmember Buesgens asked Ms. Isaacs whether affected residents would be all right if a cobra light was approved, and she responded that residents were anticipating the night watch light because that is what she had believed would be installed when she queried her neighbors.

Discussion ensued as to whether there would be an assessment problem should the lighting selection change, and Attorney Hoeft recommended tabling action on the resolution until a decision could be determined regarding the lighting selection. Superintendent Hauth also supported tabling further action because 51% approval is required by affected residents, adding that Public Works would make every effort to complete any installation in a timely manner, which was a concern of Ms. Hauth.

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember Williams, to table Resolution 2020-88, being a resolution of the City Council of the City of Columbia Heights levying and adopting the assessment for alley light area No. 677-47, to the City Council Meeting of Monday, October 26, 2020. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

## **8. CITY COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Councilmember Novitsky said distance learning is going well for his family.

Councilmember Murzyn, Jr., reported that the VFW will host an outside band event on Saturday, October 17, 2:00-6:00 pm, with a cover charge of \$5.00 and food available for purchase.

Councilmember Williams said he had the privilege of visiting Poland and his tour of Auschwitz Concentration Camp had been eye opening. He encouraged everyone to try to tour that country and expressed support for Sister Cities.

Councilmember Buesgens reported one member of the Daughters of the American Revolution had volunteered with others at Sunshine Gardens at Lomianki Park to help plant trees, and work at the garden should be completed on Thursday planting garlic. She continued to deliver leftover produce to fellow chicken keepers in town; and attended the LMC's Cities Meet-up, which was comprised of some area city managers, city councilmembers and mayors, and said it was interesting to hear how other cities are also dealing with COVID-19, projects, etc. Councilmember Buesgens sadly reported the passing of Pat Sowada, who was very involved as a community volunteer, and said she will be missed.

Mayor Schmitt reported that she will be participating in upcoming Zoom meetings for the Mississippi Watershed and League of Minnesota Cities.

Manager Bourgeois reported that Director Hansen has confirmed that Public Works will be having some virtual meetings on the 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue project from Central to Stinson and there will be interactive mapping available. There is need to schedule a meeting for canvassing of the elections on either Thursday, November 12, or Friday, November 13 – suggesting that the afternoon or evening of November 12 would be her preference. The City Council work session regarding budgets will be held at the Public Safety training room on Monday, November 2. There have been issues for the Council regarding equipment failure and new cabling will be installed within the next month.

Manager Bourgeois announced that the League of Minnesota Cities will attend the October 26 City Council Meeting to present the City with a check in recognition of the composting program. Columbia Heights Public Schools Adult Enrichment, with the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, will show short films via Zoom about the Mississippi River on Tuesday, October 20, and Tuesday, November 17; interested residents may register online on their website.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember Williams, to adjourn. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

Meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Nicole Tingley, City Clerk/Council Secretary