

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
St. Francis City Hall 3750 Bridge Street NW
January 21, 2025
6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The regular City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Mark Vogel.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Mark Vogel, Councilmembers Kevin Robinson, Sarah Udvig, Amy Faanes, and Joe Muehlbauer.

Also present: City Administrator Kate Thunstrom, Deputy Administrator-City Clerk Jenni Wida, Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), Deputy Administrator-Public Works Director Paul Carpenter, Police Chief Todd Schwieger, Fire Chief Dave Schmidt, Finance Director Darcy Mulvihill, Liquor Store Manager Joe Pfeifer, and City Engineer Craig Jochum (Hakanson Associates, Inc.).

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: ROBINSON APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. City Council Minutes - January 6, 2025
- B. Pay Equity Report
- C. Police Department Policy Manual
- D. Resignation – Firefighter Jordan Preiss
- E. Authorization to Post for the Position of Training Lieutenant (Part-time)
- F. MMUA Safety Management Program Contract
- G. Stahl Construction – Pay Applications No. 16 – Labor & Material
- H. Acknowledgement for Exempt Permit - Raffle
- I. Animal Control
- J. Accept Donations to the Fire Department
- K. Acknowledgement/Approval of Premise Permit
- L. Payment of Claims

Udvig requested they remove item I for further discussion.

Robinson asked them to remove item B for further discussion.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: UDVIG APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS A, C-H, and J-L.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

Robinson asked if the information that was gathered during the compensation study was beneficial for the pay equity report. Finance Director Mulvihill explained that what was done in the compensation study does not affect the pay equity report as this looks at male-classified jobs versus female-classified jobs.

Robinson asked what would happen if they would have found any discrepancy in the pay equity report. Mulvihill said they would need to make adjustments to the lower job classifications and pay them a higher wage. She noted the Council would have to implement a strategy to increase these wages.

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: UDVIG APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA ITEM B.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

Udvig shared that she was contacted by several residents who were not happy with the City's selection in Animal Control Officer. She said she would like additional language added to the contract to assure the residents that they will not go down the same path they have already been down with this individual. She added that she has spoken with Police Chief Schwieger and this is the only option for Animal Control in the City. She noted that the residents who contacted her said they do not care how much they would have to pay to have a better Animal Control system in place. She stated she would like language added about posting animals when they are found and the payment types that are accepted. She said if this is their only option for Animal Control then she wants to make sure they are giving their residents everything they need to feel comfortable with this.

Robinson asked what would happen if this temporary contract had to be extended. He said this is something that they could discuss further in a work session.

Faanes shared that she was also contacted by several residents regarding this. She agreed that she would like to see additional language in the contract surrounding the posting of lost animals and forms of payment accepted. She added that she would also like someone from the City to be notified anytime a pet goes to Gratitude Farms so they can keep a log of where these pets are at all times. She asked if they have an update as to when Online Retrievers will be able to

resume service. Schwieger shared that Online Retrievers went on leave for personal reasons and he has not inquired with them on when they will be able to resume services. He said they are hopeful it will only be 60 days as originally stated, which would have them resuming service at the end of February. He noted that the contract with Gratitude Farms will be reviewed every 30 days to ensure the services are abiding by the contract. He stated he will notify Staff and the Council of any communication he receives from Online Retrievers.

Robinson asked what would happen if Gratitude Farms disagreed with the contract amendments that are being suggested. Schwieger said in this case police officers would have to be the ones transporting the animals to a boarding facility.

Robinson asked what other cities Gratitude Farms serves. Schwieger said they serve the cities of Blaine, Linwood, and Isanti County.

Muehlbauer noted that this contract is between the City and the vendor and they are not barring anyone from doing business in the City and private individuals can call whoever they would like to pick up an animal. He explained that if someone calls the City and reports a dog loose, then they would contact Gratitude Farms or whoever they have a contract with. He noted that there are still responsibilities on the pet owner to begin with.

Udvig said she still thinks there should be additional language in the contract. She added that there are not a huge amount of animals that end up having Animal Control called on them; however, she wants to make sure that they have language in the contract that would give residents peace of mind.

Faanes stated there has always been a lot of confusion around where the dogs that are found will be posted and it takes people a few days to find them.

Muehlbauer asked if they are going to add new language to the contract, how this would affect things moving forward. Schwieger said they would amend the language in the contract and send it to the vendor to sign.

Faanes noted that their requests are ones that are common and reasonable for Animal Control practices and should not be an issue.

Robinson asked if there are other Animal Control Services in the area that they could look into. Schwieger explained that there are a number of boarding facilities in the area; however, they are either not taking new contracts for service or will come and pick up the animals.

Robinson asked if it is unusual for a City of this size to have their police officers pick up these animals. Schwieger said there are a few cities that do have their police officers pick up animals; however, most of them have Community Service Officers who do this.

Mayor Vogel said he does not want the police officers to be responsible for picking up and transporting these animals when there are other things they need to be doing. He suggested they add the suggested language to the contract and hope the vendor approves of these changes. He added that there are other things they can discuss in the future for the Animal Control contract.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: MAYOR VOGEL APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA ITEM I, WITH CONTRACT LANGUAGE ADDED TO REQUIRE CREDIT CARD AND CASH PAYMENTS AND PROVIDING A CLEAR POSTING REQUIREMENT TO BE SHARED WITH THE CITY.

Ayes: Muehlbauer, Robinson, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: Faanes and Udvig

Motion carries: 3-2

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Liz Fairbanks, 24360 Yukon Street, came forward and shared her appreciation for the discussion in regard to animal control and the Council and Staff doing their due diligence; however, she is extremely disappointed in the situation. She said she does not want the owner of Gratitude Farms near her dog or her property whatsoever. She stated she fears for her dogs' health and safety. She noted that the language could be an oversight; however, things have been going downhill. She added that the owner of Gratitude Farm has inconvenienced a lot of residents in both St. Francis and East Bethel. She suggested they require there to be a paper trail for any holds and this should be reported to Staff. She added that they should also all for pickups of animals in St. Francis rather than at her boarding facility in East Bethel. She suggested the City look into adding their own Animal Control and asked what would be done if Gratitude Farms was not an option.

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS - NONE

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. 2024 Code Revisions – 2nd Reading

Ordinance 339 - approving amendments to Chapter 4 Building Regulations and Permits in the City Code

Resolution 2025-04 authorizing summary publication of ordinance 339

Ordinance 340 - approving amendments to Chapter 7 Right-of-Way/Traffic/Parking/Streets in the City Code

Resolution 2025-05 authorizing summary publication of ordinance 340

Ordinance 341 - Chapter 8 Modifying Public Protection

Resolution 2025-06 authorizing summary publication of ordinance 341

Ordinance 342 - approving housekeeping amendments to Division 4, 6, and 7

of the Zoning Code
Resolution 2025-07 authorizing summary publication of ordinance 342

Thunstrom reviewed the Staff report in regard to the 2024 code revisions.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: FAANES TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 339 APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 4 BUILDING REGULATIONS AND PERMITS IN THE CITY CODE.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: UDVIG TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-04 AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY OF PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 339.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: UDVIG SECONDED: ROBINSON TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 340 APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 7 RIGHT-OF-WAY/TRAFFIC/PARKING/STREETS IN THE CITY CODE.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECONDED: MUEHLBAUER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-05 AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY OF PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 340.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: ROBINSON TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 341 - CHAPTER 8 PUBLIC PROTECTION.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: UDVIG SECONDED: FAANES TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-05 AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY OF PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 341.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECONDED: UDVIG TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 342 APPROVING HOUSEKEEPING AMENDMENTS IN DIVISION 4, 6, AND 7 OF THE ZONING CODE.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: FAANES TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-07 AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY OF PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 342.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

B. Cannabis Zoning Code Amendment – 2nd Reading

Ordinance 343 amending the zoning code to allow cannabis uses

Resolution 2025-08 authorizing summary publication of Ordinance 343

Thunstrom reviewed the Staff report concerning the cannabis zoning code amendments.

Mayor Vogel asked if they set the distance requirements from schools at the maximum distance that was allowed. Thunstrom said yes and explained that the distance requirement is 1000 feet from schools and 500 feet from daycares, treatment centers, and parks.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: ROBINSON TO ADOPT THE ORDINANCE 343 AMENDING THE ZONING CODE TO ALLOW CANNABIS USE.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carries: 5-0

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: FAANES TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-08 AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY OF PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 343.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Feasibility report for the 2025 Street Reconstruction Project
Resolution 2025-03 Receiving report and ordering plans and specifications for the 2025 street reconstruction project

City Engineer Jochum reviewed the Staff report in regard to the feasibility report for the 2025 street reconstruction project.

Faanes asked about the City parking lot that is a part of this project and noted that it does not seem to fit with the road improvements. She asked what the intended uses of the parking lot are. Thunstrom explained that the parking lot has been in discussion since the early 2000s. She noted that it was meant to support the businesses in the area and the park. She added that this is also a part of the greater downtown development plan which would support the walkability of downtown.

Robinson asked if there will be any other assessments that will be done. Jochum said no and explained that the City no longer assesses for street improvements.

Robinson asked if the whole City will be notified of this project or if it will just be

sent to those who are in the area. Jochum said the public hearing notices will only be sent to those properties that are being assessed; however, there would likely be more notices sent for the neighborhood meeting.

Robinson suggested having a general posting about these neighborhood meetings so anyone in the City can attend. Mayor Vogel agreed.

Thunstrom explained that they will be sending postcards directly to the affected properties and they would expand the notification to the surrounding areas. She noted that through the GIS system, they can drop a circle on the map around this project and target all of the neighborhoods in the area. She added that all public hearings will be posted in the newspaper and online.

Deputy Administrator-Public Works Director Carpenter added that before the work begins they send out notifications of any construction or road closures to properties in the surrounding area.

Faanes asked about the cost of the parking lot itself. Carpenter stated this cost is \$158,000.

Muehlbauer noted that it is nice that they will get State aid for about half of the cost of the project.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECONDED: ROBINSON TO ADOPT
RESOLUTION 2025-03 RECEIVING REPORT AND ORDERING PLANS AND
SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE 2025 STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

B. Work Session Request

Thunstrom reviewed the Staff report and requested the Council schedule a Work Session on March 24 at 5:30 p.m.

The Council was in agreement to schedule a Work Session meeting for March 24 at 5:30 p.m.

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - NONE

11. REPORTS

A. Community Development Annual Report

Mayor Vogel requested this item be moved to the next Council meeting when Community Development Director Rieland will be in attendance.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: UDVIG TO CONTINUE THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE NEXT COUNCIL

MEETING.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

12. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

The Council shared the meetings and events they attended in the past few weeks, as well as highlighting upcoming events.

Robinson shared that there is an informational booth for Vista Prairie at County Market.

Udvig thanked residents for calling and contacting her when they have concerns of any kind and encouraged them to keep this up if they ever have questions or concerns for the Council. She added that the Chamber of Commerce will be having their annual Casino Night on January 31.

Faanes shared that she attended a speed puzzling event in Anoka and noted that it would be a good event for St. Francis in the future.

Mayor Vogel shared that he attended a Staff meeting and noted how wonderful City Staff is.

13. UPCOMING EVENTS

February 1 - City Hall Fire Station Open House 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

February 3 - City Council Meeting 6:00 pm

February 13 - Parks Commission 7:00 pm

February 18 - City Council Meeting 6:00 pm

February 19 - Planning Commission 7:00 pm

February 24 - City Council Work Session 5:30 pm

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: FAANES TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Ayes: Faanes, Muehlbauer, Robinson, Udvig, and Mayor Vogel.

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

There being no further business, Mayor Muehlbauer adjourned the regular City Council at 7:05 p.m.