

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
St. Francis City Hall 3750 Bridge Street NW
March 17, 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, Community Development Director Jessica Rieland, 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, and Liquor Store Manager Joe Pfeifer

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: FAANES 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 - March 3, 2025

B. City Council Work Session Minutes - February 24, 2025

C. Hiring Part-Time Firefighter - Contingent

D. Restricting Parking on Woodbine Street and 229th Lane

Resolution 2025-15 restricting parking on Woodbine St and 229th LN

E. Payment of Claims

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

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

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Nita Soren, came forward to represent her son who lives at 2345 Ambassador

Boulevard. She said it has come to her son's attention that they have torn down all of the trees behind his home making room for an apartment complex that is in progress. She asked if this is true. City Administrator Thunstrom explained that these trees are being removed for a road and one of the projects that is being discussed in this area is an apartment building; however, there is still a public process it has to go through in order to be approved.

Nita shared that her son's yard is fenced in and if an apartment complex is going in right behind his property, he is concerned that children who live in the apartment complex could climb his fence to get to the Middle School across the street from him. She noted that if the entrance for the apartment complex is going to be on Ambassador, then they need to consider the traffic this would cause. She asked if her son and the other homeowners in this area will receive letters and be informed as this process continues. Thunstrom reiterated that the only thing moving forward right now is the road. She explained that the developer wants to go through a concept phase with the Council and the Planning Commission to gain interest on the project. She noted that after this they would start working on steps that would require the letters being mailed to neighbors and other notifications to these residents. She said the Planning Commission will be reviewing this in April and the Council will review it after that.

Muehlbauer suggested contacting Staff with any other questions about this, or any other, future developments as the rumors seen on Facebook are not often correct.

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS - NONE

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A. *Dangerous Dog Ordinance Amendment – Second Reading
Ordinance 345 Amending the City Code Chapter 8 Section 3-1 Animals, Dog
Licensing and Regulation
Resolution 2025-16 Summary Publication of Ordinance 345*

City Clerk Wida reviewed the Staff report in regard to the dangerous dog ordinance amendments.

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: FAANES TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 345 AMENDING THE CITY CODE CHAPTER 8 SECTION 3-1 ANIMAL, DOG LICENSING, AND REGULATION.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried: 5-0

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: FAANES TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-16, SUMMARY OF PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 345

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

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Fleet/Body Camera System

Police Chief Schwieger reviewed the Staff report concerning the fleet and body camera system used by the Police Department.

Robinson asked about the life expectancy for the body cameras that were purchased in 2021. Schwieger said they were hoping to get four to five years of use out of them.

Robinson asked about the life expectancy for the new body cameras. Schwieger said it should be about the same, four to five years.

Mayor Vogel asked what committee makes the decisions on these cameras. Schwieger explained it is himself and the records Staff. He shared that they received a few demonstrations from multiple vendors to make their decision.

MOTION BY: UDVIG SECOND: ROBINSON TO APPROVE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE FLEET/BODY CAMERA SYSTEM.

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

Nays: None

Motion carries: 5-0

10. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - NONE**

11. **REPORTS**

A. Fire Department Monthly Report - February

Fire Chief Schmidt reviewed the Fire Department monthly report for the month of February. He shared they responded to 62 calls for service, with an average of 2.3 calls per day. He noted their busiest day of the week for calls were Mondays. He added that they gave mutual aid for four events throughout the month. He said there were 15 fire events for the month and 47 EMS calls. He shared that the average time on scene was 25 minutes. She stated there were no property losses during the month of February.

Robinson asked if the Fire Department was involved with the controlled burn on Highway 47 last week. Schmidt said no and explained that this is typically done through the DNR.

Robinson shared that he has seen a lot of people burning things throughout the City. He asked if the Fire Department is able to stop these people from burning if they see it happening. Schmidt explained that if they see something that is out of the ordinary then they can act. He noted that restrictions come into play with permitted burns. He added that most people who are burning are highly responsible.

Robinson asked if people can still burn when it snows. Schmidt said yes, as long as there is continuous snow coverage.

Mayor Vogel shared that he does not like the system for burning permits. He noted that these permits are not put into the system. He asked if there is a way that they can lobby the DNR to come up with a system that would allow dispatch to be able to know about these permits when someone calls in a concern with a burn. Schmidt said he can ask these questions when he meets with the DNR and the County.

Muehlbauer noted that it is still best practice to have the Fire Department respond if someone calls in a fire that happens to be a permitted burn, in case there is an emergency that they may need to attend to.

Mayor Vogel asked about the increase in calls for service and if there is anything they can attribute that to. Schmidt said it has been a very busy spring and over just the past few days they have received calls for grass fires and mutual aid. He noted they can anticipate a 3% to 7% run volume increase year-to-year. He added that there are opportunities for some community education. He explained that with Vista Prairie coming to town this may cut down on the EMS calls for seniors who are trying to extend their stay in their independent living situation. He noted that the seniors that they respond to frequently are typically on waiting lists to be placed in a senior living center. He added that there is also an issue with affordability for these living facilities.

Faanes asked if the DNR still has the Smokey the Bear signs that let people know the fire danger for the day. Schmidt said they do at their DNR stations. He shared that he encourages people who want to have a recreational burn to go to the DNR website as it is updated daily with the fire risks for the day and what the restrictions are for burning.

The Council thanked Schmidt and his Staff for their hard work.

12. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

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

Udvig shared that the Charter Commission met and they discussed dismantling the Charter and moving to a statutory City and moving the Mayor's term to four

years. She said they will be meeting with the League of Minnesota Cities to discuss moving to a statutory City and they will be taking the length of the Mayor's term to a vote for the residents to have their say.

Robinson thanked Thunstrom and Public Works Director Carpenter for joining him at the Capitol for the Capital Investment Hearing. He shared that the Citizens Academy is coming up on April 9 and 16 and encouraged everyone to attend.

Muehlbauer encouraged everyone to attend the Citizens Academy as well as it is a great experience and can give a different perspective on the Police Department.

Mayor Vogel thanked Robinson for sitting in for him and going down to the Capitol for the Capital Investment Hearing. He shared that the League of Minnesota Cities newsletter has a list of House and Senate files that they meet to pay attention to in regard to the State wanting to take away City control for zoning. He shared that he has been discussing with Thunstrom the requirement for all Staff to attend every Council meeting. Muehlbauer said he is not opposed to allowing Staff to skip Council meetings if they do not have an item that they are presenting. He noted that if a resident has a question relative to that department, they can always call or email that Staff person. The rest of the Council agreed.

13. UPCOMING EVENTS

March 19 - Planning Commission Meeting - Cancelled
March 24 - City Council Work Session - 5:30 pm
April 07 - City Council Meeting - 6:00 pm
April 09 - Citizens Academy
April 16 - Citizens Academy
April 21 - City Council Meeting - 6:00 pm
April 23 - Citizens Academy
April 26 - Spring Recycling Day 8:00 am - 12:00 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 6:40 p.m.