



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session

January 10, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The work session was called to order by Mayor Pro Tempore Supple at 5:32 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

Council Members Present: Mary Supple, Mayor Pro Tempore; Simon Trautmann; Sean Hayford Oleary; Ben Whalen; and Sharon Christensen, Council Member-Elect

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Amy Markle, Recreation Services Director; Chris Swanson, Management Analyst; and Kelly Wynn, Administrative Assistant

Others Present: Martin Kirsch, Charter Commission President

ITEM #1	SECOND DISCUSSION ON THE CHARTER COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE CURRENT CITY CHARTER.
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Attorney Tietjen reviewed previous meetings and the Charter amendment process. She then went over the original proposed change to Chapter 2 Section 2.06 and new proposed changes.

Council Member Hayford Oleary referenced some of the language and asked who would have rule if the City Manager and Mayor disagreed on a matter. City Manager Rodriguez stated the City Manager is the employee of the Council so the mayor would have final word.

Attorney Tietjen spoke of the collaborative nature of the process would not give the mayor the ability to direct say, the Police Chief to do or not do something in an emergency situation.

Council Member Hayford Oleary reiterated his question. Attorney Tietjen stated the Mayor has the ability to put things in place in an emergency situation.

Council Member Hayford Oleary asked for an example this language would regard.

Attorney Tietjen explained this is a very high-level document and is not as specific as city code language. It would be up to staff to determine when this would be utilized.

Analyst Swanson stated for most emergencies, there are already processes in place.

Attorney Tietjen spoke of a natural disaster would be a good example in having the mayor to utilize resources.

Council Member Trautmann asked about the 'ability to confer' language and is it necessary language to allow the Mayor or Council to confer with staff. Language may obscure the process.

Attorney Tietjen said it does not eliminate the council's authority to make decisions.

Council Member Trautmann expressed he does not want to change it.

Council Member-Elect Christensen recommended some alternative words of 'shall' instead of 'may.'

Attorney Tietjen stated the goal would be to keep it ultimately flexible.

Council Member Whalen agreed with Council Member Trautmann in that it felt awkward, and it is unhelpful for staff needing to loop in the whole council during an emergency and recommended the 'Mayor will be the main point of contact for the City Manager, Police and Fire Chiefs.

Council Member Trautmann dovetailed on those comments as this wouldn't change the emergency standpoint.

City Manager Rodriguez stated the code does have the mayor as the person who puts an emergency declaration in place.

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple stated she was comfortable with clarifying who the main point of contact was.

Council Member Hayford Oleary agreed with Council Member Trautmann and asked what harm it would have to include the mayor has power in a split-second moment.

Council Member Trautmann stated in split-second moments, the power is with the City Manager, Police Chief and Fire Chief.

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple asked about the process of getting back to the Charter Commission. Attorney Tietjen said it would need to be a collaborative discussion, but the Charter Commission recommends language to go to Council then the vote needs to be unanimous on language.

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple stated she was fine with the proposed language but asked for suggestions.

Council Member Hayford Oleary recommended 'the mayor may direct the City Manager.'

Council Member Whalen stated it leaves a lot of scenarios where the mayor would not do anything and leaves staff to make all decisions.

City Manager Rodriguez asked if the mayor would direct the City Manager to fire someone, they would have to do that.

Council Member Whalen said in that example, the mayor would have to prove that to maintain order, the City Manager would need to fire that person.

City Manager Rodriguez spoke of the ability for an employee to be fired on the spot but that is not possible to do that to the mayor.

Council Member Trautmann said the language is not reflected on any current leadership.

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple stated there was consensus on what to take back to charter.

Attorney Tietjen moved on the Chapter 3 section 3.01 and went over original proposed change and new proposed change.

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple asked for clarification that it can be less than 12 hours in an emergency.

Council Member Whalen asked what emergency would not go to the mayor but also be able to hold a council meeting less than 12 hours' notice.

Attorney Tietjen said the term 'emergency meeting' is defined by state statute.

Council Member Trautmann asked if there is anything where notice can be waived.

Attorney Tietjen said that is not governed by state statute but hadn't considered that language for charter. She received consensus to proposed changes and moved onto changes for Chapter 3 Section 3.04. She asked if ordinances always require majority of all members of the council. Many surrounding cities do require that but asked if council would allow some flexibility for resolutions and motions.

Council Member Whalen stated he was comfortable with motions have just a majority vote but is more hesitant to resolutions as it may include larger sums of money.

Attorney Tietjen said some resolutions do require a two-thirds majority as it may be a state statute.

Council Member Hayford Oleary expressed comfortability with keeping it ordinances only.

Attorney Tietjen reviewed Chapter 5 section 5.20 proposed changes.

Council Member Trautmann stated he was comfortable with the Charter Commission's recommendations.

Attorney Tietjen reviewed next steps.

President Kirsch thanked Council for the discussion.

ITEM #2	UPDATE ON LOCAL SALES TAX PROJECTS AND FUNDING.
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City Manager Rodriguez introduced the Local Sales Tax (LST) item and reviewed numbers provided by Ehlers regarding a bonding scenario. She believed the city can manage Vets Park and Wood Lake Nature Center (WLNC) projects but not the community center as it will be a much bigger and more costly.

Council Member Trautmann asked about paying off and refinancing old bonds at higher rates. Analyst Swanson stated the city is not looking at refinancing current debt.

City Manager Rodriguez stated Ehlers looked at outstanding debt and they could look at the option of rolling in the community center. She commented there would be two issues of bonds to stay within \$10M per year.

Council Member Whalen asked if the \$10M limit would tie up bonding for street projects.

City Manager Rodriguez confirmed it would and would need to be managed. She then reviewed principal interest and stated staff will be going back to the extension office to review projections. Staff also included a draft resolution, but final numbers are still being finalized.

Council Member Whalen asked for confirmation of numbers if the community center were to wait until 2030.

City Manager Rodriguez stated with inflation, it would \$63.8M with underground parking but \$56.8M without. Ehlers is having a difficult time projecting numbers with the uncertainty of the market.

Director Markle stated staff has reached out to other communities and gotten feedback and are exploring a North/South parking lot along with potential street parking, but both can be problematic and would be safety concerns.

Council Member Hayford Oleary recommended getting on street parking rolled into the Nicollet reconstruction.

Council Member Whalen asked about the cost of performing a parking study. Director Markle stated she would inquire about a quote.

Council Member Trautmann recommended space for a drop off lane to potentially reduce parking.

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple agreed that a parking study would be a good idea.

Council Member Hayford Oleary asked if it was standard to have a project start five years after a vote to approve project.

City Manager Rodriguez said staff would do some research and then reviewed next steps.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tempore Supple adjourned the work session at 6:43 p.m.


Date Approved: January 24, 2023



Kelly Wynn
Administrative Assistant



Mary Supple
Mayor Pro Tempore



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager