



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

Regular Council Meeting Virtual Meeting held via WebEx

January 12, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Maria Regan Gonzalez at 7:00 p.m. via WebEx.

Council Members Present: Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor; Ben Whalen; Mary Supple; Simon Trautmann; and Sean Hayford Oleary

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Pam Dmytrenko, Assistant City Manager; Mary Tietjen, City Attorney; Chris Regis, Finance Director; Wayne Kewitsch, Fire Chief; Mike Dobesh, Assistant Fire Chief; Jenell Wood, Battalion Fire Chief; Jane Skov, IT Manager; Blanca Martinez Gavina, Executive Analyst; and Kelly Wynn, Senior Office Assistant

Others Present: Heather Eastlund, Human Rights Commission Chair

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Regan Gonzalez led the Pledge of Allegiance

OPEN FORUM

Senior Office Assistant Wynn reviewed the options to participate:

- Participate live by calling 612-861-0651 during the open forum portion
- Call prior to meeting 612-861-9711
- Email prior to meeting kwynn@richfielmn.gov

Senior Office Assistant Wynn stated there were no comments or callers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/Supple, S/Whalen to approve the minutes of the (1) Special City Council Meeting of November 30, 2020; (2) City Council Work Session of December 8, 2020; and (3) City Council Meeting of December 8, 2020.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

Regan Gonzalez: AYE
 Supple: AYE
 Trautmann: AYE
 Hayford Oleary: AYE
 Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

Item #1	PRESENTATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT
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Chair Eastlund explained how the pandemic impacted many of their events including but not limited to the cancellation of Penn Fest and delay of the Citizen Award. She spoke of being hopeful to seeing somewhat of a more normal scene in 2021. The commission worked with Richfield Towers to do outreach where they were able to cater in food and spoke about the Census and other resources for residents. They also put together three proclamations recognized by Council (1) LGTBQIA; (2) Americans with Disabilities Act; and (3) 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment. She stated the commission is looking forward to working with the new Equity and Inclusion Administrator as they spend much of their time around diversity, equity and inclusion.

Council Member Supple thanked Chair Eastlund and all the commission members for their passion and enthusiasm.

Council Member Whalen clarified William Green will be the new Equity and Inclusion Administrator starting in January. He expressed gratitude to see the commission already gearing up for his arrival. He stated appreciation to the commission for asking the hard questions and the willingness to dive in.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez spoke of how thankful she was to see the commission adapting to the change and show such leadership during this time. She will be looking to all the commission to be bridge between community, Council and staff. She believed the commission is building strong foundations and is helping lead into the future.

Item #2	PRESENTATION OF SWEARING-IN OF COUNCIL MEMBERS ON JANUARY 11, 2021
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A video was played containing the swearing-in of Council Member Whalen, Trautmann and Hayford Oleary that took place on Monday, January 11, 2021 in Council Chambers.

Council Member Trautmann stated how it is a privilege to serve the city, take an oath to support the constitution and have a common cause even when opinions are so different. He also encouraged residents to reach out to their Council Members anytime.

Council Member Whalen welcomed Council Member Hayford Oleary and thanked residents for their support in re-electing him. He spoke of the importance to uphold the constitution and democracy. He appreciated everyone who continues to recognize the importance of democracy even in troubling times.

Council Member Hayford Oleary stated he is excited to serve Richfield and be able to engage more with residents.

Council Member Supple congratulated everyone.

Item #3	FIRE CHIEF WAYNE KEWITSCH CAREER RECOGNITION
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City Manager Rodriguez spoke of the small ceremony the Richfield Fire Department put on to recognize badging's of new firefighters, promotions and honoring the career of Chief Kewitsch. She explained what a legacy Chief Kewitsch is leaving and personally thanked him for his leadership and friendship.

Assistant City Manager Dmytrenko expressed gratitude for over twenty years of work from Chief Kewitsch and what a wonderful person and leader he was for the city. She wished him happiness and health going forward.

Fire Chief Kewitsch thanked staff and Council for all the support. He stated how firefighters are in the business of being with people on the worst day of their life and the mission comes first.

Senior Assistant Wynn expressed her gratitude for being able to work with Chief Kewitsch and the amazing team he has built.

A video was played containing clips from the badging ceremony and recognition of Fire Chief Wayne Kewitsch's career from Monday, January 11, 2021 as he is leaving the Fire Department.

Council Member Supple gave best wishes and thanked Chief Kewitsch for everything he has done for the community and how he had always been the calm voice of reason.

Council Member Whalen spoke of Chief Kewitsch's reliable leadership for the city and wished him well for whatever comes next.

Council Member Trautmann thanked Chief Kewitsch and wished him blessings on his life. He expressed gratitude for him and all the firefighters. He stated Chief Kewitsch was a leader among leaders due to his integrity and ability to communicate essentials with grace and humility.

Chief Kewitsch stated he was truly blessed to work for the City of Richfield for over twenty years. He spoke of how much he loved his job and was so fortunate to feel this way while leaving a job.

Council Member Trautmann explained how the Richfield Fire Department has been an instrumental part of his life and how they bring health, life and safety every day to the community. He stated how Chief Kewitsch’s body of work can literally be translated into lives saved.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez spoke of how fortunate she was to be able to attend the ceremony. She stated what an incredible foundation Chief Kewitsch had built over the years and how he is absolutely one of Richfield’s biggest heroes. He has been a shining example of steady leadership and guidance.

Item #4	APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
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M/Whalen, S/Trautmann to approve the agenda

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Hayford Oleary: AYE
- Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

Item #5	CONSENT CALENDAR
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City Manager Rodriguez presented the consent calendar.

A. Continue a public hearing to consider the approval of a resolution regarding the modification of the Redevelopment Plan for the Richfield Redevelopment Project Area, the establishment of the 2020-2 Tax Increment Financing District: Emi (a redevelopment tax increment financing district), and the proposed adoption of a Tax Increment Financing Plan. Staff Report No. 01

B. Consider approval of a Joint Powers Agreement between the City of Richfield and the Metropolitan Council (Metro Transit) for construction of the D Line Bus Rapid Transit Project. Staff Report No. 02

RESOLUTION NO. 11812

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT FOR THE METRO TRANSIT D LINE PROJECT

C. Consider the first reading of an ordinance amending City Code Subsection 721.03 related to connections and discharges to the stormwater system and schedule a second reading for January 26, 2021. Staff Report No. 03

D. Consider resolutions designating official depositories for the City of Richfield for 2021, including the approval of collateral. Staff Report No. 04

RESOLUTION NO. 11813

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING CERTAIN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AS DEPOSITORIES FOR THE INVESTMENT OF CITY OF RICHFIELD FUNDS IN 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 11814

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING CERTAIN SAVING AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS, BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS AS DEPOSITORIES FOR THE DEPOSIT AND INVESTMENT OF CITY FUNDS IN 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 11815

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING U.S. BANK A DEPOSITORY OF FUNDS OF THE CITY OF RICHFIELD FOR THE YEAR 2021

E. Consider a resolution authorizing the use of credit cards by City employees otherwise authorized to make purchases on behalf of the City. Staff Report No. 05

RESOLUTION NO. 11816

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF CREDIT CARDS BY CITY EMPLOYEES OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED TO MAKE PURCHASES ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF RICHFIELD FOR THE YEAR 2021

F. Consider approval to designate an Acting City Manager for 2021. Staff Report No. 06

M/Supple, S/Whalen to approve the consent calendar.

Council Member Whalen encouraged residents to listen to the work session from December about the D-line transit. He stated it is the most highly used bus routes and is excited to see that improved through Richfield.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

Regan Gonzalez: AYE

Supple: AYE

Trautmann: AYE

Hayford Oleary: AYE

Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

Item #6	CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS, IF ANY, REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR
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None

Item #7	CONSIDER THE DESIGNATION OF A MAYOR PRO TEMPORE FOR 2021. STAFF REPORT NO. 08
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Mayor Regan Gonzalez read staff report 08 and thanked Council Member Trautmann for performing as the 2020 Mayor Pro Tempore and appointed Council Member Supple to resume duties for 2021.

Council Member Trautmann thanked Mayor Regan Gonzalez for her continued leadership and was grateful to have the opportunity to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez expressed the importance of rotating the position through Council.

M/Regan Gonzalez, S/Whalen to approve the City Council designation of a Mayor Pro Tempore for 2021 as Council Member Mary Supple.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Hayford Oleary: AYE
- Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

Item #8	CONSIDER CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF MIKE DOBESH TO FIRE CHIEF/FIRE SERVICES DIRECTOR FOR THE CITY OF RICHFIELD. STAFF REPORT NO. 09
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Council Member Whalen read staff report 09.

M/Whalen, S/Supple to confirm the appointment of Mike Dobesh to Fire Chief/Fire Services Director for the City of Richfield.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez stated how lucky the city and department are to have Assistant Fire Chief Mike Dobesh.

Council Member Trautmann spoke of how Assistant Chief Dobesh could be chief in a lot of cities and how fortunate Richfield is to have him.

Assistant Chief Dobesh thanked everyone for the support.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

Regan Gonzalez: AYE
 Supple: AYE
 Trautmann: AYE
 Hayford Oleary: AYE
 Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

Item #9	CITY MANAGER REPORT
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City Manager Rodriguez stated the city is implementing a new process of answering questions or concerns brought forth in the previous open forum. Questions were brought up about the 2021 budget from Richfield resident Kathleen Balaban. The city responded how staff tries very hard to balance a strong budget. The expenditures that were in question were deemed essential as a truck at Public Works needed replacement and renovations to the Wood Lake Lift Station will assist with the constant flooding. Other expenditures regarding employee reimbursement for cell phone use is a new normal with remote working. She then provided a brief COVID update including a drop in cases and deaths along with vaccines being rolled out to front line works and first responders. The city will be in contact when vaccines are available for the general public. She also spoke of the new Equity and Inclusion Administrator, William Green, starting January 19th.

Item #10	CLAIMS AND PAYROLL
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M/Supple, S/Trautmann that the following claims and payrolls be approved:

U.S. Bank	12/22/2020
A/P Checks 293025 - 293437	\$ 1,635,486.53
Payroll: 158675 – 158950 43269 - 43390	<u>686,632.50</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,322,119.03
 U.S. Bank	 01/12/2021
A/P Checks 293438 - 293910	\$ 2,227,727.76
Payroll: 158951 - 159502	<u>1,346,960.68</u>
TOTAL	\$ 3,574,688.44

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

Regan Gonzalez: AYE
 Supple: AYE
 Trautmann: AYE
 Hayford Oleary: AYE
 Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

Item #11	HATS OFF TO HOMETOWN HITS
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Council Member Hayford Oleary spoke of seeing on social media how residents are supporting each other and local businesses and sharing good experiences.

Council Member Trautmann reminded residents Wood Lake Nature Center is offering cross country skiing rentals via reservation. He again thanked Chief Kewitsch for his service and welcomed Chief Dobesh to his new role.

Council Member Whalen spoke of the meeting from Monday, January 11, 2021 where Council met virtually with Legislators to discuss city priorities. He congratulated Representative Emma Greenman on her appointment.

Council Member Supple thanked the community for continuing to wear masks along with staff for pivoting and being able to provide services for residents and for Public Works keeping the streets clear. She encouraged residents

Mayor Regan Gonzalez expressed excitement to see the transition in leadership at the Richfield Fire Department and how grateful the department has been to have Chief Kewitsch. She also stated the Richfield Ice Arena is open by reservation and encouraged residents to get over and skate.

Item #12	ADJOURNMENT
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The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:18 p.m.


Date Approved: January 26, 2021



 Maria Regan Gonzalez
 Mayor



 Kelly Wynn
 Senior Office Assistant



 Katie Rodriguez
 City Manager