



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

Regular Council Meeting

April 23, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Supple at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Council Members Present: Mary Supple, Mayor; Sharon Christensen; Simon Trautmann; Sean Hayford Oleary; and Ben Whalen

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Mary Tietjen, City Attorney; Sack Thongvanh, Assistant City Manager; Jay Henthorne, Public Safety Director/Police Chief; Jennifer Anderson, Support Services Manager; Karl Huemiller, Recreation Services Director; and Chris Swanson, Management Analyst

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Supple led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPEN FORUM

Mayor Supple reviewed the options to participate:

- Participate live by calling 1-415-655-0001 during the open forum portion
- Call prior to meeting 612-861-9711
- Email prior to meeting kwynn@richfieldmn.gov

Kathleen Balaban, Richfield resident, expressed concern that the City Manager would top out the pay scale within five years and questioned what would happen after that. She believed the city was overpaying on the pay scale. She agreed this needed to be done but wanted it to be done correctly by changing the staff titles before the Compensation Plan was finalized.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/Whalen, S/Trautmann to approve the minutes of the: (1) City Council Work Session of April 9, 2024; (2) Regular City Council Meeting of April 9, 2024.

Motion carried: 5-0

ITEM #1	APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
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M/Hayford Oleary, S/Whalen to approve the Agenda.

Motion carried: 5-0

ITEM #2	PROCLAMATION TO RECOGNIZE ARBOR DAY 2024
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Mayor Supple read aloud the proclamation.

ITEM #3	PROCLAMATION CELEBRATING MARTIN “MARTY” KIRSCH FOR HIS EXEMPLARY SERVICE AND UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO RICHFIELD
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Mayor Supple invited Martin “Marty” Kirsch and read the proclamation.

Mr. Kirsch thanked everyone for the honor.

Mr. Bob Donley shared how his family met Mr. Kirsch and how he was always a gentleman and proud of his statute in Richfield. He was blessed to have known Mr. Kirsch and glad he was being recognized for his contributions by the City of Richfield.

Mayor Supple read comments received by Pastor Krause, Sidney Rehwaldt, Susan Moss, and Reverend Mark Johnson congratulating Mr. Kirsch and thanking him for his work on behalf of the city as well as Mount Calvary Lutheran Church.

Council Member Hayford Oleary thanked Mr. Kirsch for his work and leadership on the Transportation Committee and it was an honor for him to continue the work that Mr. Kirsch had started.

Council Member Trautmann thanked Mr. Kirsch and lifted up the many conversations he had with him over the years. He believed Mr. Kirsch not only loved the City of Richfield, but also the citizens. He thanked Mr. Kirsch for his leadership.

Council Member Whalen thanked Mr. Kirsch for his service and commitment to the community and for all of his work on the various committees as well as his work on the Council over the years.

City Manager Rodriguez thanked Mr. Kirsch for his service to the City of Richfield, and stated staff appreciated everything he had done over the years.

ITEM #4	CONSENT CALENDAR
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City Manager Rodriguez presented the consent calendar.

- A. Consider Richfield Fire Department Membership with the Hennepin County Fire Chief’s Association (Staff Report No. 56)

RESOLUTION NO. 12199

RESOLUTION APPROVING MEMBERSHIP IN THE HENNEPIN COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION, INC.

- B. Consider a resolution authorizing staff to submit an application for an equipment voucher rebate via the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program and authorize staff to execute an agreement if the project is approved by the Department of Energy (DOE). (Staff Report No. 57)

RESOLUTION NO. 12200

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING STAFF TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR AN EQUIPMENT VOUCHER REBATE VIA THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT (EECBG) PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT IF THE PROJECT IS APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

- C. Consider a resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for an Economic Development Initiative-Community Project Funding Grant in the amount of \$3,000,000 to assist with funding of the Wood Lake Nature Center Building Project (Staff Report No. 58)

RESOLUTION NO. 12201

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) FOR AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE-COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,000,000 TO ASSIST WITH FUNDING OF THE WOOD LAKE NATURE CENTER BUILDING PROJECT

- D. Consider the approval of a resolution of support for a Community Project Funding (CPF) grant application for design plan development for the replacement of the 73rd Street Pedestrian Bridge over I-35W (Staff Report No. 59)

RESOLUTION NO. 12202

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR A COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING (CPF) GRANT APPLICATION FOR DESIGN PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE 73RD STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVER I-35W

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

Council Member Whalen highlighted and thanked the staff for their continued work toward the Climate Action Plan. He also thanked staff for continuing to find ways to fund the pedestrian bridge.

Council Member Trautmann thanked staff, along with Ilhan Omar, and the Senators who worked hard on the \$3 million the City was able to secure for the Wood Lake Nature Center.

Motion carried: 5-0

ITEM #5	CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS, IF ANY, REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR
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None.

ITEM #6	<p>CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 925 RELATING TO THE ABATEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH NUISANCES AND ASSESSMENT OF ABATEMENT COSTS TO PROPERTY (STAFF REPORT NO. 60)</p>
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Council Member Trautmann presented Staff Report 60.

M/Trautmann, S/Christensen to approve an Ordinance amending section 925 of the Richfield Code of Ordinances relating to the abatement of nuisances and assessment of abatement costs to property and approve the Resolution approving summary publication of an Ordinance amending Chapter 9 of the City Code.

BILL NO. 2024-05

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 925 OF THE RICHFIELD CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATING TO THE ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES AND ASSESSMENT OF ABATEMENT COSTS TO PROPERTY

RESOLUTION NO. 12203

RESOLUTION APPROVING SUMMARY PUBLICATION OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 9 OF THE CITY CODE

Council Member Whalen thanked staff for their work and noted there had been a 70 percent increase in cases.

Manager Anderson noted the significant increase in cases was what pushed this forward. She indicated with this amendment to the Ordinance, it would hold the process to a stricter standard.

Mayor Supple appreciated the clarity and resources as she knew this was an ongoing problem. She thanked staff for addressing the problem.

Council Member Trautmann questioned Subsection Seven and asked if this was too broad and asked if this would allow the city to enter people’s homes where they would not normally have the right to enter them. He indicated he was concerned about this. City Attorney Tietjen responded that this language came directly from State Statute and had been incorporated into the Ordinance.

Police Chief Henthorne stated this was State Statute and they have had issues in the past with people interfering with the city’s ability to abate unsanitary conditions.

Manager Anderson noted it was rare if someone did not initially let the city in, but in the rare instances where this did occur, this clause would be helpful. Council Member Trautmann believed the language would be helpful, but questioned if it would be too broad and left the door open to cases they did not anticipate.

Council Member Whalen stated he read this as not having a blanket permission to access a property.

City Attorney Tietjen stated she agreed with Council Member Whalen’s comment and stated the city did not enter a property unless there was consent from the property owner and in the rare instance when there was not consent, the city would go to the Court for permission to enter the property before any work was done.

Council Member Hayford Oleary asked why the city repeats the language in the State Statute. City Attorney Tietjen responded that the reason was primarily to give information to people reading the Ordinance rather than them having to try and locate the State Statute.

Council Member Hayford Oleary noted if the State Statute was changed, would the city's Ordinance supersede the State Statute, or if the city would have to follow the revised Statute. City Attorney Tietjen responded that the Ordinance would need to be amended if that occurred.

Council Member Trautman stated he appreciated Council Member Whalen's comments, but he was still uncomfortable with the language being in the Ordinance. He believed the State law was not a good law and he did not want it repeated in the City's Ordinance. He noted if the law was amended at the State, it would still be in effect in the city unless the city amended the Ordinance. He indicated he did not want to approve something he considered overly broad.

Mayor Supple called the question.

Motion carried: 5-1 (Council Member Trautmann)

ITEM #7	IMPLEMENT THE COMPENSATION AND CLASSIFICATION STUDY FINDINGS AND APPROVE RECOMMENDED GENERAL AND SPECIFALIZED PAY GRADES AND PAY PLANS. (STAFF REPORT NO. 61)
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Council Member Whalen presented Staff Report 61.

Manager Thongvanh thanked the Council for the opportunity to work on this project, to staff for filing out their questionnaires for their positions, to the committee for their work on this, and to Manager Haefner for her work and dedication to this project. She indicated this would now the City to be competitive in the market.

M/Whalen, S/Hayford Oleary to approve a Resolution relating to the revised 2024 General Pay Plan

RESOLUTION NO. 12204

RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE REVISED 2024 GENERAL PAY PLAN

Council Member Hayford Oleary acknowledged this was a big expense and difficult to handle, but he believed it was needed to keep the city competitive with other cities and was money well spent on staff who did a great job.

Council Member Whalen agreed with Council Member Hayford Oleary's comments. He believed the city staff was the best and most important investment. He acknowledged this was a big jump for the Council as it had not been done in decades and he encouraged future Councils to look at this on a regular basis. He noted some of the numbers were still estimates due to some staff being in union positions and they would have better numbers when the budget was discussed. He felt confident they were moving in the right direction and were paying staff what they deserved for good work. He thanked the staff for all of their work on this.

Council Member Trautmann noted just as the city wanted to invest in roads and infrastructure, they needed to invest in the city's staff also to remain competitive. He believed this was worth investing in.

Mayor Supple believed it was very important to remain competitive with the surrounding communities to have the very best staff for the city. She indicated there was a cost if the city had constant turnover.

Motion carried: 5-0

ITEM #8	CITY MANAGER’S REPORT
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City Manager Rodriguez shared information regarding comments made at the previous Open Forum, one of which was the size of the proposed Wood Lake Nature Center. She noted staff and Council Member Trautmann had met with that person and staff followed up with her also to address her concerns. She stated the predesign did not include a fitness center, but it would include a flexible meeting space, and the design would incorporate the community feedback.

City Manager Rodriguez presented and updated on Mr. Ernster’s concern about voting on a salary proposal at the last meeting. She noted the agenda item had been approved and was limited to just the Council Member salaries for 2025 and 2026.

City Manager Rodriguez recognized Mr. Swanson as this was his last meeting with the city. She thanked him for all of his work.

Mayor Supple thanked Mr. Swanson and wished him well in his new adventures.

Council Member Whalen thanked Mr. Swanson. He appreciated Mr. Swanson’s quality work and contributions to the city.

Council Member Christensen thanked Mr. Swanson for helping her as the newest Council Member in navigating the city’s meetings, emails, policies, and procedures as well as bringing her up to speed on different things. She congratulated Mr. Swanson on his new position and wished him the best.

Council Member Trautman thanked Mr. Swanson for his leadership and being in a lot of key roles with the city.

Council Member Hayford Oleary thanked Mr. Swanson for being a team player and he was grateful for everything he had done for the city.

ITEM #9	CLAIMS AND PAYROLL
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M/Trautmann, S/Whalen that the following claims and payrolls be approved:

<u>U.S. BANK</u>	<u>04/19/2024</u>
A/P Checks: 327834 - 328117	\$1,214,843.49
Payroll: 186785 – 187096 43908 - 43911	<u>\$918,673.10</u>
TOTAL	\$2,133,516.59

Motion carried: 5-0

ITEM #10	HATS OFF TO HOMETOWN HITS
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Council Member Hayford Oleary noted a bike ride had recently been held for the American Planning Association National Conference where a loop was done around Richfield. He thanked the staff members and others who helped set up the ride, obtain bikes from the Richfield Public Schools Community Bike Fleet, lead the ride, and who spoke at a couple of the stops.

Council Member Christensen gave hats off to the author event at the Richfield Historical Society. She gave hats off to Earth Day and the event at the Wood Lake Nature Center.

Council Member Whalen stated between this meeting and next meeting the farmers market would be starting.

Mayor Supple stated the Richfield Historical Society was holding an event on May 4 from noon to 4 p.m. at the Bartholomew House on 6901 Lyndale Avenue South to help preserve Richfield history. She noted the US Attorney’s Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration was having a fentanyl awareness and prevention summit in recognition of Crime Victim’s Week on April 24 from 1 to 4:30 p.m. at the Southdale Library. She stated this event was open to the public, but reservations were required as space was limited. She also thanked everyone who helped clean up Veteran’s Park.

ITEM #18	ADJOURNMENT
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M/Whalen, S/Trautmann to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Motion carried: 5-0

Date Approved: May 14, 2024



 Mary B. Supple
 Mayor



 Katie Rodriguez
 City Manager



 Kelly Wynn
 Administrative Assistant