

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on January 7, 2019. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. asking that everyone join in the Pledge of Allegiance. Judge Bradley Walker of the District Court gave the Oath of Office to newly elected Council Member Oachs, Council Member Norland, and Mayor Dehen. The following were present for roll call: Mayor Dehen, Council Members Whitlock, Steiner, Norland, and Oachs, City Administrator Harrenstein, City Attorney Kennedy, Finance Director McCann, Community Development Director Fischer, Public Works Director Host, and City Clerk Van Genderen.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve the agenda as presented. Vote on the motion: Whitlock, Steiner, Norland, Oachs, and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the minutes of the Council meeting of December 17, 2018. Vote on the motion: Whitlock, Steiner, Norland, Oachs, and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Proclamation

WHEREAS, all children in North Mankato should have access to the highest-quality education possible; and

WHEREAS, North Mankato recognizes the important role that an effective education plays in preparing all students in North Mankato to be successful adults; and

WHEREAS, quality education is crucial to the economic vitality of North Mankato; and

WHEREAS, North Mankato is home to a variety of high-quality public and nonpublic schools from which parents can choose for their children, in addition to families who educate their children in the home; and

WHEREAS, educational variety not only helps to diversify our economy but also enhances the vibrancy of our community; and

WHEREAS, North Mankato has many high-quality teaching professionals in all types of school settings who are committed to educating our children; and

WHEREAS, School Choice Week is celebrated across the country by millions of students, parents, educators, schools, and organizations to raise awareness of the need for effective educational options;

NOW THEREFORE I, Mark Dehen, Mayor of North Mankato, proclaim January 20-26, 2019 as:

NORTH MANKATO SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

And I call this observance to the attention of all of our citizens.

Public Hearing, 7 pm-City Code Chapter 157 Short-Term Rentals

Community Development Director Fischer reported the Planning Commission spent time reviewing the proposed ordinance to regulate short-term rentals, often known as Airbnb's or Vrbo's. The Ordinance would require a \$50.00 application fee, and \$45.00 license fee plus a rental inspection before a property could be used as a short-term rental. Short-term rentals would not affect the rental density cap. The goal is to ensure rental properties are safe for renters. Community Development Director Fischer reviewed occupancy, parking requirements, and the rental strike system.

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue, appeared before Council and questioned the need to regulate the short-term rentals.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the Consent Agenda.

- A. Bills and Appropriations.
- B. Res. No. 1-19 Approving Donations/Contributions/Grants.
- C. Set Public Hearing for 7 pm on January 22, 2019, for Revision of Code of Ordinances.
- D. Res. No. 2-19 Approving City Council Committee Assignments.
- E. Appointed Boards and Commission Members.
- F. Res. No. 3-19 Approving Consent Assessment.-1805 Marie Lane.
- G. Approved Audio Permit for the Anthony Ford Pond Hockey Tournament January 25-27, 2019, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm each day.
- H. Res. No. 4-19 Setting Gas Mileage Reimbursement Rate.
- I. Res. No. 5-19 Designating Official Newspaper.
- J. Res. No. 6-19 Designating Depositories for the City of North Mankato.
- K. Res. No. 7-19 Allowing the On-Sale of Alcohol at Caswell Regional Sporting Complex.
- L. Approved Park and Audio Permit for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Picnic on August 17, 2019, at Spring Lake Park Shelter #1 with Audio from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Vote on the motion: Whitlock, Steiner, Norland, Oachs, and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Public Comments Concerning Business Items on the Agenda

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and expressed concern about the proposed Auto Read Water meters, specifically survey results, possible bonding, and proposed benefits.

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive, appeared before Council and stated watering Caswell Park is expensive.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council and expressed concerns about the proposed Auto Read Water meters, specifically the use of two systems.

Business Items

Ordinance No. 111, Fourth Series An Ordinance of the City of North Mankato, Minnesota, Amending North Mankato City Code, Title XV, Land Usage, Chapter 157 Short-Term Rentals.

Council Member Norland thanked staff for reviewing short-term rentals and proposing an Ordinance to help ensure that the properties are well managed and safe.

City Administrator Harrenstein reported staff reviewed short-term rentals because they were uncertain if they could exist without an ordinance and staff wanted to make them available to the public. The Planning Commission wrestled with the ordinance before forwarding it to the Council for approval.

Mayor Dehen stated he approved of the Short-Term Rentals not affecting the rental density cap.

Council Member Oachs requested clarification on if insurance would be required for the short-term rentals. Community Development Director Fischer reported no requirements were made.

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner to Adopt Ordinance No. 111, Fourth Series An Ordinance of the City of North Mankato, Minnesota, Amending North Mankato City Code, Title XV, Land Usage, Chapter 157 Short-Term Rentals. Vote on the motion: Whitlock, Steiner, Norland, Oachs, and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 8-19 Receiving Feasibility Report and Calling Hearing for Project No. 18-07 ABCDEF Tyler Avenue Improvement Project.

City Engineer Sarff appeared before Council and presented the feasibility study for Project No. 18-07 ABCDEF Tyler Avenue Improvement Project. He reported the area for improvement was on Tyler Avenue between Cross Street and Range Street. The street and utilities are over 65 years old, and the project is included in the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan. City Engineer Sarff reviewed the sanitary sewer conditions, the watermain, storm sewer, and street and surface along with the proposed improvements for the project. He reported there were 21 existing boulevard trees and it is recommended to remove 16 trees. Seven of the trees are ash which are scheduled to be removed, one is unhealthy, four are too large for the boulevard, and four are misshapen and damaged by trimming for the power line. City Engineer Sarff indicated the City would offer replacement trees for those removed, but the trees will need to be placed in the yards as the boulevard will be too small. City Administrator Harrenstein reported the City tries to preserve trees when possible, but must consider the hardship on the trees during the reconstruction process which may make the tree a danger to the residents due to instability. City Engineer Sarff reported that staff reviewed the Complete Streets Policy and reviewed pedestrian accommodation requirements and 5 foot wide ADA accessible sidewalks will be constructed on both sides of the street. Staff also reviewed bicycle accommodations and determined the addition of on-street or off-street bicycle lanes are not considered feasible for this project. City Engineer Sarff reviewed the estimated project cost: Street-\$284,000, Storm Sewer-\$71,500, Sanitary Sewer Mainline-\$21,000, Watermain Mainline-\$58,600, and Water Services-\$35,300 for a total estimated project cost of \$521,600. City Engineer Sarff reviewed the City Assessment Policy and reported the estimated assessments per property ranged from \$11,600 to \$13,830. He stated the City has in the past used an assessment cap and is recommending an assessment cap of \$6,000 which is the same as what was used on the Jefferson Avenue project. City Engineer Sarff reported the assessments would meet the 20% requirement for a General Obligation Bond. City Administrator Harrenstein noted that to complete City improvements, certain projects are governed under State Statute 429. Attorney Kennedy noted that assessment must reflect the benefit to the property. City Administrator Harrenstein requested the City Engineer review what will happen if the City changes the trajectory of the sewer. He noted some residents had indicated sewer backups following changes to sewer trajectory after other similar projects. Council Member Whitlock indicated he had been approached concerning ensuring street lights were considered during the project. City Engineer Sarff reported a cost allowance was included in the Tyler Avenue project. Council Member Norland reported she had driven through the area and noted the sidewalks were in rough condition. City Engineer Sarff reported some of the sidewalks were in rough condition, but some had recently been replaced and that may need to be factored into the assessment process.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland to adopt Res. No. 8-19 Receiving Feasibility Report and Calling Hearing for Project No. 18-07 ABCDEF Tyler Avenue Improvement Project. Vote on the motion: Whitlock, Steiner, Norland, Oachs, and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Receive Information on Auto Read Water Meters.

City Administrator Harrenstein reported that a survey was completed in 2018 with approximately 61% of respondents indicating they did not want to pay for the amenity of self-read meters. He indicated the City listened and will not be mandating the service, but the City is listening to those who do want the service. City Administrator Harrenstein stated the City would not be borrowing money to move forward with the program. The meters will be the new standard meter for new construction, and water meter replacements must have the new meter. Individuals who are interested in an auto-read water meter may request one. Council Member Steiner requested clarification on if it would be mandated. City Administrator Harrenstein clarified at this time it would not be mandated, he could not foresee the will of the Council.

Public Works Director Host reviewed the Auto Read Water Meter information including the procurement process, which included five (5) companies. He reported the City chose Ferguson Waterworks. The system includes a belt clip receiver and a tablet. City employees will drive through the community to obtain the water readings. The results will include daily graphing, high usage detection, and leakage detection. The City will stock a supply of the new meters and residents can request the installation of the new meters. City staff will read the auto meters on or near the first of the month with a data drop to the City's utility billing system Tyler Technologies. Public Works Director Host reported the cost for meters: 5/8"-\$190.95, 3/4"-\$267.53, 1"-\$345.20, 1-1/2"-\$716.64, 2", 3" and 4" will also be available. City staff will install the meters at a \$42.00 rate with a 1-hour minimum. Homeowners may also request a professional plumber install the meters. The cost to the City includes the reader and tablet for approximately \$2500.00, and with the use of the Tiered Software, the cost per installed meter is \$0.75 per meter in service. No additional cost will be added to the residents' utility bill for the use of the meter. Council Member Whitlock requested clarification if the new meters were installed on the Jefferson Avenue Project. Public Works Director Host reported the plan is to install the meters in the houses affected by the Jefferson Avenue Project. City Administrator Harrenstein reported the plan would be to install the new meters during most reconstruction projects and the cost will be included in the assessment to the property. Council Member Oachs reported she was not in favor of the project, but sees how in the long run it could benefit the City. She requested clarification on any additional fees included on the utility bill. City Administrator Harrenstein reported the resident would pay for the meter and installation, but there will not be any monthly fee. Mayor Dehen stated while he was campaigning door to door, many residents requested clarification on why the City has not moved to auto read meters. Public Works Director Host reported the new system would have a minimal impact on utility staff because the City has approximately 7500 meters and staff should be able to read those meters in approximately 3 to 4 hours. Council Member Oachs requested clarification on software security. Public Works Director Host reported the system is a web-based software and Ferguson Waterworks secures the site.

Open Forum

Patrick Baker, 3 Civic Center Plaza, appeared before Council on behalf of Greater Mankato Growth and encouraged the City Council to consider indoor recreation options. Mr. Baker reported Greater Mankato Growth would support the planning, the facility and a community request for bonding dollars with the goal of making the region a hub for amateur sports.

Derek Brown, 204 Queens Court, appeared as President of the Tennis Association and requested Council consider an indoor facility that would accommodate court activities.

Earle Peters, 140 Marion Lane, Mankato, appeared before Council on behalf of Mankato Area Pickleball Association and encouraged the Council to consider an indoor sports facility that would accommodate court activities such as pickleball.

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and encouraged Council to create criteria for the use of the sales tax dollars before meeting with user groups.

Rich Lund, President of the Mankato Soccer Association, appeared before Council and reported there were over 1600 youth players and he was there to support indoor sports facility that would accommodate court activities that may also be used for soccer. He was also excited to announce that the greater Mankato area would have an additional entertainment option hosted at the North Mankato Caswell Soccer fields because Mankato United has been awarded the Women's Premier Soccer League franchise and will be launching in late summer or early fall. Mr. Lund thanked City Administrator Harrenstein and Caswell Sports Director Tostenson for their assistance in putting the proposal together.

Matt Mangulis, of the Mankato Area Girls Fastpitch Association, appeared before Council and thanked North Mankato for being a good partner and supporter of MAGFA.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council and requested an apology for the December 3, 2018, presentation on taxes that was based on 11 homes, which included his.

Kim Spears, 916 South Avenue, appeared before Council and requested clarification on if the auto read water meters had batteries and their life expectancy. Public Works Director Host reported the batteries had a 20-year warranty.

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive, appeared before Council and wanted to remind people to wear reflective clothing for visibility when walking or biking at night. Mr. Henry also reviewed an article in the Free Press with information from State Auditor Rebecca Ott in which he reported she said debt service should not be more than 20% of a budget and he indicated North Mankato's is 35%. Mayor Dehen reported that the City Council has taken steps to pay down the debt as quickly as possible.

City Administrator and Staff Comments

City Administrator Harrenstein thanked the recreation groups for coming out and reporting on unmet needs. He thanked the volunteers who filled the user groups' boards for all of their hard work in bringing professional groups to the area and supporting all ages of sports. He requested direction from the Council concerning the use of Sales Tax dollars.

Public Works Director Host reported the warming house would be open for the Anthony Ford Pond Hockey Tournament. He also mentioned that the street department would be rolling out the new tandem truck with snow plow.

Mayor and Council Comments

Council Member Oachs thanked the public for the opportunity to serve and stated she looked forward to working with the Council Members.

Council Member Whitlock reported he toured the warming house and it is beautiful and thanked Mr. Peters for speaking on behalf of the pickleball association.

Council Member Norland reported an erratic driver and encouraged people to drive safely.

Council Member Steiner reported the Nicollet County Board gave an additional \$5,000 to the North Mankato Taylor Library.

Mayor Dehen reported the Anthony Ford Pond Hockey tournament will be held on January 25-26, 2019.

Mayor Dehen reported Mankato/North Mankato was listed as the 9th safest city.
Mayor Dehen noted that January 10, 2019, would be North Mankato’s 120th Anniversary.

There being no further business, on a motion by Council Member Norland, seconded by Council Member Steiner, the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk