

**MELROSE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.**

A.I. #1 CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Melrose City Council met in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, July 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Melrose City Center pursuant to due notice being given thereof. Present were Council Members Tony Klasen, Joeline Wieling, and Mayor Joe Finken, City Administrator Colleen Winter, and City Clerk Patti Haase. Council Members Travis Frieler, and Justin Frieler were absent. Mayor Finken presided thereat.

The Council then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

A.I. #2 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Ms. Wieling seconded by Mr. Klasen and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as amended.

A.I. #3 OPEN FORUM

Mayor Finken then opened the floor to public comment. There were no comments.

A.I. #4 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were considered for approval under the Consent Agenda

- a. the minutes from the Council's June 20, 2024 Regular Meeting and June 26, 2024 Special Meeting
- b. List of bills in the amount of \$1,176,816.53
- c. List of investments for the month of June
- d. Donation Resolution No. 2024-33 2nd and 3rd Installment from Melrose Lions on the 2023 Pledge for the playground equipment at the Sauk River Park
- e. Molitor Excavating has submitted Pay App# 2 for the 2024 Main Street Improvements for work completed through 6/28/2024. The pay application is in the amount \$547,965.16. Of this amount, \$350,465.12 is utility, and \$197,500.04 is the general fund portion. SEH has reviewed the payment request and is recommending payment as outlined in the invoice.
- f. C & L Excavating Inc. has submitted Pay App #3 and change order #1 for the 2023 Railroad Avenue NW Street & Utility Improvements. SEH has reviewed the application and recommends payment of \$134,837.92 for the work completed through June 28, 2024.
- g. Fire Chief Tom Budde is requesting Council approval to hire Mr. Mason Horton, Mr. Gabe Schweiters, and Mr. Barry Hellermann. The interviews and physical fitness tests have been completed. The hiring of Mr. Horton, Mr. Schweiters, and Mr. Hellermann is contingent upon successful background investigations and passing pre-employment physicals.

A motion was made by Ms. Wieling, seconded by Mr. Klasen and unanimously carried to approve the Consent Agenda items.

A.I. #5 PUBLIC HEARING

- a. The Melrose City Council held a public hearing on Thursday, July 18, 2024 at 6:00 o'clock a.m. at the Melrose City Center, 225 1st Street NE, Melrose, MN, to consider the special assessments on the proposed Improvement of the "Highlands Blvd. Extension" between Highlands Boulevard NE and 1st Avenue NE, 130 feet west of Mustang Lane by new construction. A feasibility report was received by the Council on June 20, 2024.

Staff presented the Affidavit of Publication of the hearing notice which was published in the Star Post on July 3, 2024 and July 10, 2024. Notice was mailed on July 3, 2024 to the property owners affected by the special assessments, current owners Bob & Theresa Mueller, and expected future owners KL Properties, LLC. KL Properties and the city have entered into a development agreement for this expansion of residential lots.

City Engineer provided an overview of the special assessment on the proposed improvements to the "Highlands Boulevard Extension"

Mayor Finken called for public comment. There being none the public hearing was closed at 6:03 p.m.

A.I. #6 REPORTS

- a. Police Chief Craig Maus presented the Police Department's June 2024 report. He noted there were 296 calls for service during that month, compared to 232 for June 2023. A total of 19 citations were written for the month of June. There were 89 verbal warnings and 0 written warnings. The year-to-date number of calls is 1706 compared to 1610 in 2023. For the month of June 2024, the Department received 18 agency assist calls.
- b. City Attorney Scott Dymoke reported on projects he has been working on for the city:
- Community Development/Industrial – prepared resolutions vacating existing easements and approving proposed re-plat in I-94 Industrial Park. Reviewed drafts of proposed plat and identified corrections to language in the plat. Prepared drafts of closing documents.
 - Cannabis – Obtained copy of MN Cannabis Office guidelines and forwarded to City staff. Reviewed state statutes and city ordinances regulating sale of low dose hemp products. Advised City staff that vendors at Riverfest could not sell low dose hemp products.
- c. Community Development Director Sheila Hellermann provided the following update:

The Planning & Zoning Commission at its meeting on July 29th will be looking at the Preliminary Plat for KL Plat No. 1 from KL Properties, LLC for eight (8)

residential lots. At this July Council meeting we will be viewing the recommendations from the Planning & Zoning Commission for Melrose Highlands North plat.

We are looking at the week of July 15th for the closing on the lot in the industrial Park with Carstens Industries.

Storage buildings are being constructed in three different locations in the city. The Church of St. Mary's has built their shed near the cemetery. MKI Enterprises has its first shed almost done and Blue Door Storage has submitted plans for its 3rd shed for 2024, with the 4th one now being discussed.

The Planning & Zoning Commission in July will also be looking at a preliminary zoning ordinance regarding cannabis businesses. We are currently under a moratorium but plan to have something in place this fall.

The Park Board continues to discuss improvements to our parks and trails, including adding a west side park between Wobegon Crossings and the future townhome project. We have land set aside out there for that purpose.

We continue to see strong interest in projects – people looking to Melrose as a place for their businesses and homes, and developers looking here to build. We want to encourage people and businesses to or stop by to talk. Some really good things are coming out of these conversations.

Planning is underway for our Night to Unite/National Night Out which will be on Wednesday, August 7th down in the Sauk River Park. Our police, fire and ambulance departments will be there. There will be music and food. It is the weekly Farmers Market + more. We want to invite everyone to attend. City staff will be hosting the farmers market that night.

d. City Engineer Dave Blommel presented the following report:

Main Street Project

The project has made good progress since the last City Council meeting. The project has been divided into 4 informal phases. A quick summary of the work completed and approximate schedule for the remaining work is below.

Phase 1 – 2nd Ave E to 1st Ave West

- All utility work completed.
- Concrete curb and gutter completed
- Start sidewalk grading the week of July 15th

Phase 2 – 1st Ave West to 3rd Avenue West

- All utility work completed.
- Subgrade work beginning week of July 15th
- Curb anticipated the week of July 29th

Phase 3 – 3rd Ave West to 400' west of 5th Ave

- Water main work completed end of the week of July 8th.
- Sanitary sewer work from July 15th through end of July.
- Storm sewer in early August.

Phase 4

- Street work only. Curb and gutter remained in place
- Work likely in mid-August.

Railroad Avenue

The subcontractor, Mark Lee Paving, completed the final wear course on July 3. The project is substantially complete and we expect to work towards final payment at the August meeting assuming the items from the punch list are completed in time.

- e. City Administrator Winter provided an update on the fire at the Melrose Public Works building. The fire was mostly on the outside of the building. There was minor damage in the interior. Staff is working on filling the open position of Electric Operation Director, Journey Line Worker, Part-Time Streets/Parks Maintenance Worker, and Police Officer.

A.I. #7 ACTION ITEMS

- a. Mayor Finken stated that earlier this evening the Council held a public hearing to consider the special assessments on the proposed Improvement of the "Highlands Blvd. Extension" between Highlands Boulevard NE and 1st Avenue NE, 130 feet west of Mustang Lane by new construction. Notice was published in the Star Post on July 3 and July 10, 2024. Notice of the hearing was mailed to those affected by the special assessments.

Council Member Wieling introduced Resolution No. 2024-34 Resolution Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans. The motion was seconded by Mr. Klasen with a roll call vote recorded as follows:

FOR: Council Member Wieling, Klasen, and Mayor Finken

AGAINST: None

ABSENT: Council Member Justin Frieler, and Travis Frieler

- b. Mayor Finken noted that SEH has been working on the plans and specifications since the city entered into the development agreement, reaching agreement regarding the special assessments with KL Properties, LLC. A proposed resolution is attached, approving the plans and specifications and ordering the advertisement for bids.

Council Member Klasen introduced Resolution No. 2024-35 Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Advertisement for Bids. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wieling with a roll call vote recorded as follows:

FOR: Council Member Klasen, Wieling, and Mayor Finken

AGAINST: None

ABSENT: Council Member Justin Frieler, and Travis Frieler

- c. At the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting held on June 24, 2024 the Commission held a public hearing on the request of Robert & Theresa Mueller for the Preliminary Plat of Melrose Highlands North.

The Council reviewed the staff planning report that was presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission. The Commission recommended approval of the preliminary plat, with the conditions noted in the report.

A motion was made by Mr. Klasen, seconded by Ms. Wieling and unanimously carried approving the preliminary plat for Melrose Highlands North.

- d. Mayor Finken stated that Adam Paulson resigned as a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission after moving to a new position at Centracare as President of the Sauk Centre facility. Notice was published in the Star Post that we were seeking a new member. Joe Matt has applied.

A motion was made by Mr. Klasen, seconded by Ms. Wieling and unanimously carried appointing Mr. Joseph Matt to the Planning & Zoning Commission to complete the vacated term which expires December 31, 2025.

- e. Riverside Flats of Melrose LLC has substantially completed the 29-unit multi-family development at 325 1st St NE, Melrose, located on Lot 1, Block 1 of Melrose Riverview Addition. It has provided staff with its final costs, including the additional environmental clean-up expenses, as well as documentation supporting those expenses.

A motion was made by Ms. Wieling, seconded by Mr. Klasen and unanimously carried approving the Tax Increment Revenue Note and authorizing the mayor and staff to execute the same.

- f. The city and Roach Development LLC have entered into a purchase agreement for Lots 1-25, Block 2 of Railroad West. Roach Development LLC has provided the city with its TIF escrow deposit and application. The city needs to establish the Tax Increment Financing District No. 13-2 for the project, and the first step is calling for a public hearing.

Council Member Wieling introduced Resolution No. 2024 – 36 Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing on the Establishment of Tax Increment Financing District No. 13-2 – Railroad West. The motion was seconded by Mr. Klasen with a roll call voter recorded as follows:

FOR: Council Member Wieling, Klasen, and Mayor Finken

AGAINST: None

ABSENT: Council Member Justin Frieler, and Travis Frieler

- g. Police Chief Craig Maus is requesting Council consideration to obtain quotes for 2025 model year squad car. This would replace the 2013 Ford SUV, which currently has 115,000 miles on it. It is anticipated the SUV would have 125,000 - 130,000 miles on it when a new squad car would be in service. There are some concerns about lead times on squad car builds and potential limitations on the number of squad cars being built.

A motion was made by Ms. Wieling, seconded by Mr. Klasen and unanimously carried authorizing Chief Maus to obtain quotes for 2025 model squad car.

- h. Mayor Finken stated that the city received one application for the police officer position. Staff interviewed the candidate on Monday, July 15. Mr. Root is a graduate from Alexandria Technical College law enforcement program. Staff is recommending the hire of Mr. Adam Root at Step 1 on the wage scale. Following six months of full-time employment and upon a favorable evaluation, it is recommended to move to Step 2. This offer is contingent upon the successful completion of a background check, psychological examination, and a preemployment physical with drug screening.

A motion was made by Mr. Klasen, seconded by Ms. Wieling and unanimously carried approving the hiring of Mr. Root at Step 1 on the wage scale, after six months of full-time employment and upon a favorable evaluation be moved to Step 2. Employment is contingent upon the successful completion of a background check, psychological examination, and a preemployment physical with drug screening

- I. There was a new law change for Write-In Candidates. Minnesota State Statute 204b.09

Minnesota Statute 204b.09

3. Write-in candidates.

(a) A candidate for county, state, or federal office who wants write-in votes for the candidate to be counted must file a written request with the filing office for the office sought not more than 84 days before the primary and no later than the seventh day before the general election. The filing officer shall provide copies of the form to make the request. The filing officer shall not accept a written request later than 5:00 p.m. on the last day for filing a written request.

(b) The governing body of a statutory or home rule charter city may adopt a resolution governing the counting of write-in votes for local elective office. The resolution may:

(1) require the candidate to file a written request with the chief election official no later than the seventh day before the city election if the candidate wants to have the candidate's write-in votes individually recorded; or

(2) require that write-in votes for an individual candidate only be individually recorded if the total number of write-in votes for that office is equal to or greater than the fewest number of non-write-in votes for a ballot candidate.

If the governing body of the statutory or home rule charter city adopts a resolution authorized by this paragraph, the resolution must be adopted before the first day of filing for office. A resolution adopted under this paragraph remains in effect until a subsequent resolution on the same subject is adopted by the governing body of the statutory or home rule charter city.

(c) The governing body of a township, school board, hospital district, park district, soil and water district, or other ancillary elected district may adopt a

resolution governing the counting of write-in votes for local elective office. The resolution may require that write-in votes for an individual candidate only be individually recorded if the total number of write-in votes for that office is equal to or greater than the fewest number of non-write-in votes for a ballot candidate.

The Council after deliberation did not take action on the proposed resolution.

- j. Finance Director Ryan Meyer has submitted his letter of resignation effective August 15, 2024. City Administrator Winter is requesting to advertise for the Finance Director position.

Mayor Finken recommended setting the wage scale at the Average Max per the 2024 wage study. Council Member Klasen recommended that due to ongoing wage negotiations along with the cost of living adjustments that the wage for now be set at the 4% below max per 2024 wage scale. This could always be adjusted during the ongoing negotiations. Council Member Wieling said her motion was to bring the position to market value. There was no second to this motion.

After further discussion a motion was made by Mr. Klasen authorizing staff to advertise for the Finance Director position and to establish a pay scale at 4% below average max per 2024 wage study. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wieling with a roll call vote recorded as follows:

FOR: Council Member Klasen, and Wieling

AGAINST: Mayor Finken

ABSENT: Council Member Justin Frieler, and Travis Frieler

A.I. #8 OLD BUSINESS

None

A.I.#9 NEW BUSINESS

None

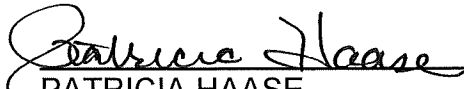
A.I. #10 NFORMATIONAL ITEMS

The following informational items were then reviewed:

- a. Utilities Commission's June 10, 2024, Regular Meeting minutes, and the June 18 Special Meeting
- b. Melrose Ambulance Department Report Summary
- c. On July 28, 2024, Accounting Clerk/Office Coordinator Stacy Funk will complete 10 years of service. She will receive a 10-year recognition award of \$25 as outlined in the City Personnel Policy Employee Recognition Program. Ms. Funk is to be commended for her 10 years of service.
- d. The following is a list of schools and/or conferences where registrations were made:
 - 1) Coalition of Greater Minnesota City Conference in Waite Park July 24- 26
Attending: City Administrator Colleen Winter, Finance Director Ryan Meyer, and Community Development Director Sheila Hellermann.

A.I. #11 ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Klasen, seconded by Ms. Wieling and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m.


PATRICIA HAASE