

City of Columbus
Regular City Council Meeting
Alternative Meeting Format
MN Statutes, Section 13D.021
04.13.2022

The 04.13.2022 meeting of the City of Columbus City Council was called to order at 6:43 p.m. by Mayor Jesse Preiner at City Hall. Present were Councilmembers Robert Busch, Janet Hegland, Shelly Logren and Sue Wagamon; City Engineer Kevin Bittner, City Attorney Bill Griffith, Public Communication Coordinator Connor Keith, City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

Also in attendance: Planning Commissioner Bob Berens, Park Board Chairman Mark Daly, Mike Meyer, Natalie Ryder (via Zoom), John Williams

1. **CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**
 1. **Call to Order – Regular Meeting – 6:43 p.m.**
 2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 3. **Motion – Agenda Approval with Additions**
 4. ~~**Motion – Approval of the 03-23-2022 City Council Meeting Minutes**~~
 5. ~~**Motion – Approval of the 02-09-2022 City Council Meeting Minutes**~~
 6. **Motion – Approval of the 12-08-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes**
 7. **Motion – Approval of the 12-14-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes**
 8. ~~**Motion – Approval of the 11-22-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes**~~
 9. ~~**Motion – Approval of the 12-29-2021 City Council Meeting Minutes**~~
 10. **Motion – Approval of the Senior Accountant Job Description**
 11. **Motion – Pay Bills as Posted**

Motion by Hegland to approve the Consent Agenda items 3, 7, 10 and 11. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Hegland suggested edits be made to the 12-08-2021 minutes, both of which were to No. 9’s Planning Commission Report. One sentence, originally written as, “There was some question from the group about whether there should be a change to the language regarding pool covers before Council approval,” was advised to read as: “There was some question from the group whether there should be a change to the ordinance requiring fencing around the pool by adding covers as an alternative to the fencing.” The second edit had to do with the City’s moratorium for dog kennel businesses and to include dog training facilities.

Motion by Hegland to approve Consent Agenda item 6 as written with two changes. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

3. PRESENTATION

12. Public Open Forum

No participation.

13. Planning Commission Report

Planning Commissioner Berens provided a review of the April 6, 2022, Planning Commission Meeting. He shared that a non-binding concept review plan was presented by Blaine Brothers representatives, who are proposing to move their truck and tractor trailer frame, suspension and alignment business to the City's Commercial Highway District in along the east side of Interstate 35. Berens shared that the Planning Commission felt the project should instead be in the Light Industrial Zone to the south of the sites Blaine Bros. was looking at.

Berens continued, sharing the discussion the commission continued reviewing Chapter 7's Commercial Standards Ordinance Amendment Plan, specifically regarding Chapter 7a about exterior masonry and masonry products and how different materials and products fit within the City's definitions. Preiner inquired if the results from the survey sent to all Planning Commissioners on this topic was submitted to Associate Planner Ben Gutknecht. Berens confirmed it was and that Gutknecht will compile reports to introduce to City Council for review.

14. Park Board

Park Board Chairman Daly provided a review of the March 29, 2022, Park Board Meeting. He shared that the Park Board continues to work on a Master Park Plan. They also passed a motion recommending the Council keep the proceeds from the sale of Hagert Park in the parkland fund (404) to resurface the park trail.

Preiner asked how long until the trail would need to be redone. Windingstad shared that it would be in the next couple years, which was confirmed by Mursko to be no more than five years. Preiner inquired if the funds from selling Hagert Park could be distributed across multiple accounts and budgets. Griffith confirmed that the funds are not earmarked and can go into multiple funds.

Daly continued, detailing the proposal for planting 12 trees in the Columbus City Park – nine maple trees along Kettle River Blvd and three hackberry trees along Notre Dame – receiving bids for the purchase, installation and first watering of the trees of \$7444.55 from Abrahamson Nurseries and another bid for buying the trees at \$2401.75 from Bachman's.

Wagamon noted that the Bachman's quote didn't include planting or watering and if they had a bid with those items. Daly said Gutknecht had inquired, but that he did not have that a bid with those costs.

Hegland asked Windingstad if the Public Works Department could plant the trees. Windingstad said they could, but that was not the direction of the original proposal for this project. Windingstad continued, saying that the cost Public Works might incur would rival the estimates, it just wouldn't be a cost the City would see as easily. Wagamon requested the Park Board get a cost estimate from Bachman's that included installation and a first watering.

Daly continued, saying that the 6-8 person Events Subcommittee did not receive any volunteers from the Park Board, but that they would be interested in being reorganized into a Parks & Rec. department that received a set budget to start with smaller events.

Mursko shared that a meeting of the City Council's Event Subcommittee has been scheduled for Friday at 9 a.m.

15. **Blake Drilling Building Elevations**

John Williams and Mike Meyer, representatives from Blake Drilling Company, presented to the City Council updated building elevation facing the public right of way for their proposed warehouse/office building project CUP.

Mursko reiterated the history of the project, sharing that Blake had always planned to build this building since purchasing the property and building their first structure six years ago and the updated elevations were to propose a building compliant with the current building standards.

Williams said the newest rendering of the building is of the east side facing Lake Drive, which features 50.41 percent non-metal to adhere to the current ordinance in the area.

Motion by Busch to approve the Blake Drilling building elevation dated 03/30/2022 meeting the 50 percent design standard as stated in the C/I District. Seconded by Preiner.

Hegland recommended the motion specify the east elevation since the three other sides had already been approved.

Busch moved to approve the Blake Drilling building elevation east side dated 03/30/2022 meeting the 50 percent design standard as stated in the C/I District and a condition of their Conditional Use Permit Amendment Application PC22-10X. Seconded by Preiner. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

16. **PTO Local Charitable Gambling Premise Request**

Mursko clarified that the resolution approved the activity at the location, but not the actual gambling license itself, as that is the state's gambling board's responsibility. The resolution outlines the dates and type of gambling activity on the premises for zoning purposes in the application.

Motion by Preiner to approve Resolution 22-06 authorizing the Columbus PTO to conduct excluded Bingo and raffles at the premise located at 17345 Notre Dame St. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

17. **Proposed Adopt-a-Roundabout Program**

Mursko referenced a discussion from the EDA meeting immediately prior to the City Council meeting, indicating that at least two businesses had inquired about an "Adopt-a-Roundabout" program.

Preiner expressed that he would like something drafted to ensure the area is well maintained. While he is OK with the area remaining grass, knowing how expensive it is to landscape these areas, he is open to a business sponsoring that upkeep to dress the area up.

Wagamon agreed with Preiner, saying she liked the idea of another entity improving the area to get recognition in-turn.

Logren inquired if both roundabouts had water access. Windingstad shared that the roundabout on County Road 23 had water access, but the roundabout connecting Broadway and Kettle River does not. Logren asked how the roundabout without water access was watered, which Windingstad said was not maintained or watered, partially because landscaping roundabouts not only requires drought-resistant landscaping, but also salt-resistant plants. Mursko confirmed that both parties interested in joining a potential program are aware that one roundabout does not have water access.

Motion by Wagamon to approve drafting a policy and program to adopt a roundabout in the City of Columbus. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

18. North Metro Animal Care and Control Letter

The City received a letter of notice that North Metro Animal Care and Control was closing and therefore discontinuing service effective June 1, 2022. Wagamon ensured that even though the letter indicated Andover, Mark Anderson of North Metro Animal Care and Control meant Columbus. Mursko shared that she thought it was a simple typo since they service so many communities. Wagamon continued, inquiring if this meant the City would need to find a new animal control vendor. Mursko shared that animal control is not only in charge of catching and holding loose animals, but also that they oversee inspecting and enforcing rules for kennels. Since Muddy Paws and other residential kennels operates in Columbus, this is a necessary contract to find a replacement for both listed services.

Hegland expressed that she felt the best person to talk to in solving this problem is Anderson as he can recommend a new vendor. She volunteered to get in contact with him.

Busch asked Mursko how much the City was paying North Metro Animal Care and Control. Mursko shared that he was paid hourly when service was needed, approximately \$500 per year.

Motion by Preiner to accept the North Metro Animal Care and Control Letter of Discontinuation of Services and direct staff to research what services are available in the area for animal control. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland -aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

4. STAFF & CONSULTANT REPORTS

19. Engineer's Report

Bittner shared that Anoka County provided their options for improvements at Camp Three Road and Kettle River Boulevard at last night's City Council Workshop. Their options included short and long-term concepts, with the Council preferring a short-term improvement of improving sight lines at the intersection, including tree removal on the privately-owned northeast corner with emphasis on initiating additional discussions with the property owner with the potential of purchasing additional easement area and replacing removed trees, and a long-term action of closing the section of Camp Three between Kettle River and Lake Drive, creating a roundabout or further improvements, including the addition of turn lanes. Bittner said the next step in that project would be for Anoka County to apply for funding for the project, specifically targeting a Highway Safety Improvement Program Grant due June 1.

Busch shared that he was only in favor of the short-term solution as he didn't want to spend City money to make those changes.

Hegland clarified that the motion is only approving the application for the grant, not the project itself.

Motion by Hegland to approve moving forward with Concept No. 1 for the short-term, which would include meeting with the property owners to discuss purchasing easement, replacing trees and/or fence solution, and Concept No. 3 for the long-term with the understanding that Anoka County will submit Concept 3 for a HSIP federal funding grant in May 2022. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner -aye. Motion carries.

Bittner continued, sharing a JPA for the reconstruction of W Freeway Drive in the City of Columbus necessary to handle the grants funding the improvement.

Motion by Preiner to approve a Joint Powers Agreement with Anoka County for the North W Freeway Drive City of Columbus project 2021-03 Anoka County Contract 0008574. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

20. Attorney's Report

Griffith shared that he and Mursko had been in conversation with the receiver of the St. Clair Lakes project after receiving a notice that the property is in receivership and will be transferring from the developer to the builder. The builder has been made clear that no construction can commence before the City has a chance to review the documents so that they don't put the City at risk and to get assurances from Lake Elmo Bank, who issued the letter of credit, that they will stand by their letter of credit notwithstanding this change.

Hegland asked if the new builder is aware that they are obligated to fulfill requirements from the DNR for the area at risk of it being the City's responsibility. Griffith said they are, and that the City is responsible only for enforcing the conditions.

Mursko shared that at the preconstruction meeting, the developer had submitted an informal amendment to the CUP to reduce the setback to garages from 30 feet to 25 feet as he feels the additional square footage for the houses will make them more marketable. A formal request will be submitted in the next couple weeks.

21. Mayor & City Councilmembers' Report

Logren and Wagmaon had no report.

Hegland shared that she was asked to participate on the *Everybody Belongs* steering committee weekly in the Forest Lake School District, run by Superintendent Steve Massey and focused on promoting engagement in the community and inclusivity. She also forwarded an article in the *Star Tribune* to Mursko and Griffith saying that the federal infrastructure bill had earmarks for Minnesota and wondered if it was worth touching base with Representative Tom Emmer and Senator Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith's offices to see if Columbus could receive any of those funds. Griffith said that it's always a good opportunity to inquire about getting involved in earmarking funds for the City but cautioned against investing too much effort into something before determining if the City has a true opportunity.

Hegland motioned to direct the City Attorney's office to inquire with Senators Klobuchar and Smith and Representative Emmer's offices to determine whether there's a second round of earmarks or an opportunity to still have some of those dollars directed directly to the City for broadband. Seconded by Wagamon.

Logren inquired if this is simply inquiry, as she didn't want to jeopardize the work being done at the state level. Hegland and Griffith ensured it was.

Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Busch shared that he'd been meeting with *City Leaders Against Wage Theft and Tax Fraud* and that they would be conducting an educational workshop in St. Paul. He was also reached out to by the Parent Advisory Council who asked if Columbus' Public Works Department was interested in participating in Big Rig Day where children get to explore big trucks and machines. Windingstad shared that his team had shied away from that because it was outside Columbus. Griffith advised the City to confirm that these types of events would be covered within City Limits and to compose a policy to standardize answers to these types of requests.

Preiner had no report.

22. Public Works' Report

Windingstad requested approval to order a road grader due to a 9-12 month lead time for delivery upon order. Hegland inquired if Public Works had been accruing for this type of purchase. Windingstad confirmed that the money was in the 2023 budget.

Motion by Preiner to approve the order of a M150 Caterpillar road grader from Ziegler for the seven-year buy-back price of \$370,250. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

23. Public Communications Coordinator's Report

Keith updated the Council on the internal survey results regarding the City newsletter, sharing that the Council predominantly agreed on the format of the distribution but that a consensus needed to be reached regarding the frequency of the newsletter and when it would be dispersed. The Council concluded that they would like two editions a year, one in spring and another in autumn, with the spring edition being printed and distributed by mail.

24. City Administrator's Report

Mursko shared that the Anoka County Economic Development Program allows participating cities to make use of Economic Development services in a voluntary cost-share program that would cost the City \$237 this year. Mursko recommended the City approve this cost-share again this year.

Motion by Preiner to approve the voluntary cost-sharing agreement for Anoka County Economic Development Calendar Year 2022 in the amount of \$237. Seconded by Wagamon.

Logren inquired what the cost-share entitled the City to and what would happen if the City opted out. Mursko said the County wouldn't entirely drop the City, but that the County's resources just wouldn't be as readily available.

Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

25. 182nd Cul-de-Sac Purchase of Easement

At this time, Mayor Preiner closed the City Council meeting to execute a closed meeting under Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.05, subd. 3(c), to develop or consider offers or counteroffers for the purchase or sale of real or personal property.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

The next Planning Commission Meeting is on 04.20.2022 at 6:30 p.m.

The next City Council Meeting is scheduled for 04.27.2022 at 6:30 p.m.

The LBAE Meeting is scheduled for 04.28.2022 at 6:30 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting closed at 8:51 p.m.

Motion by Hegland to adjourn. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Connor Keith, Public Communications Coordinator