City of Columbus
Regular City Council Meeting
February 14, 2024

ATTENDANCE SHEET

PLEASE PRINT

Name:	Address:
BARB BOBICK	8414 140TH AVE.
Lynn Carver-Quinn	7540 152nd Ln NE
Ethan Weiche	1600 Marshall St. NE Ste #1, Minneapolis, MN
TIM O'CONNOR	13960 LAKE DR. NE

City of Columbus
Regular City Council Meeting
Hybrid Interactive Technology Format
MN Statute, Section 13D.021
02.14.2024

The 02.14.24 meeting of the City of Columbus City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Jesse Preiner at City Hall. Present were Councilmembers Rob Busch, Ron Hanegraaf, Janet Hegland and Sue Wagamon; Interim City Administrator Jack Davis, City Attorney Bill Griffith, Public Communication Coordinator Connor Keith, and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

Also in attendance: Anoka County Sheriff Brad Wise, Lieutenant Jessica Slavik, Deputies Thompson and Graham, Investigator Sean Merritt, Planning Commission Co-Chair Barb Bobick, Planning Commission Chairperson Lynn Carver-Quinn, Ethan Weiche and Tim O'Connor.

Not in attendance: None.

A. CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

1. Call to Order - Regular Meeting 6:11 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance

B. CONSENT AGENDA

3. Agenda Approval with the addition of C.12, Personnel Committee Finance Director Recommendation
4. Approval of the January 24, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes
5. Pay Bills as Posted

Motion by Hegland to approve Consent Agenda items Nos. 3-5 with the Addition of C.12 Personnel Committee Finance Director Recommendations. Hegland also noted she had made some minor corrections to the Minutes. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

C. PRESENTATION

1. Public Open Forum

There were no participants.

2. Meet the 2024 ACSO Deputies and Sheriff's Office Report – Sheriff Brad Wise and ACSO Liaison, Lieutenant Jessica Slavik

Sheriff Brad Wise presented an overview of their staffing, an update on new jail negotiations and he extended an invitation the Council to tour the facility once done.

Lieutenant Jessica Slavik introduced two new Sheriff's Deputies, Isaac Thompson and Jordan Graham, along with Investigator Sean Merritt. She recapped the 2023 law enforcement calls for service noting the City had 2,434 calls for service, which was a slight increase of 76 calls. She stated there was a

notable increase in traffic stops.

Council, Lieutenant Slavik, and Deputy Thompson discussed the reasons for the increase traffic stops, a decrease in mailbox thefts, and speeding on the gravel road which included increased enforcement and patrolling the roads more often.

Informational; no action required.

3. Planning Commission Report – LCI Enterprises LLC CUP and Commission Officer Approvals

Busch presented the Planning Commission's February 7, 2024, consideration of LCI Landscape's application for a Planned Unit Development Conditional Use Permit (PUD CUP) at 13960 Lake Drive NE. He indicated the Planning Commission's concerns were there were no dates or timelines for completion with respect to septic, well, or fencing. The Commission did like the landscaping plan. He updated the Council on the election the Commissioners made as to who would be the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Tim O'Connor, LCL Landscapes, 13960 Lake Drive NE and Ethan Wahl, Blumenthal's Architecture, 1600 Marshall Street NE, Minneapolis approached the podium for questions.

Hegland suggested Finding of Fact number seven be rewritten with wording she had prepared. She asked Mr. O'Connor if the Finding was accurate. Mr. O'Connor agreed with the language as proposed and noted they were made aware of the situation sometime after they purchased the property and started moving in. He indicated they had the City Inspector look at both buildings and they were informed it might be cheaper to build a new building than to try to update the buildings. However, they found that building a new building would be too expensive, so they then looked at bringing the two existing buildings up to Code.

Hegland requested with respect to the Standstill Agreement another Finding be prepared noting the language said they would have within 30 days of the effective date to submit an application for a CUP, but they made their first application on November 14, 2023 which was nine months after the effective date.

Hegland stated she wanted to ensure both the applicant and the City had very clear expectations of the conditions and when the conditions had to be met. Griffith recommended a short-form Development Agreement which would address these concerns and if the conditions were not met the City could pull the CUP. He recommended the City require some deposit of funds that could be returned at the end of the project to ensure the project is completed.

Hegland requested the first page of the application be re-signed as it said the site and buildings were residential, which was incorrect. She also requested a condition that any trucks coming into and out of the property be covered. She believed there was confusion as to whether the Building Official had said that the office space was okay to be temporarily used. She asked if the Building Official had done an inspection to see if the office space could be used, which was required by the Standstill Agreement.

Mr. O'Connor responded he was not sure what paperwork had been done when the inspector came out. Davis stated he would check to see what had been done.

Hegland noted when she checked with the City there were no records of inspection between the Standstill

Agreement and the present. She acknowledged that Covid, the moratorium, and frequent staff turnover left the project being put on the wayside until this summer. She indicated if the property had been inspected, there should be some paperwork. Griffith responded that was something that could be handled internally.

Hegland asked the Council if they were okay with the tradeoff of the landscaping plan they were provided for the lessening the requirements for the exterior performance standards. Wagamon and Preiner indicated they were okay with it.

Busch noted in his research, the property pulled up as Escape Properties LLC and he asked if they were working with a general contractor. Mr. O'Connor explained who Escape Properties was and indicated whatever LCI could not do themselves, they would do through a general contractor. Griffith indicated the conditions would run with the property so the new owners would be bound to the conditions even if LCI went away

Wagamon asked if their intention was to grow the business and the City wanted to put in extra assurances that they would meet the rules and timeframes. Mr. O'Connor responded they did plan to grow the business in the future years.

Wagamon stated LCI had a great business and the City was pro-business. Hegland echoed her comments and was happy LCI was in the City, but she wanted to make sure everyone was clear about the expectations.

Findings of Fact

1. The City received a PUD CUP application from LCI Enterprises Inc., DDBA LCI Landscapes, and Escape Properties LLC, property owner, ("Applicant") on November 14, 2023. The application was found to be incomplete. Upon receipt of additional information, the application was found complete on December 20, 2023.
2. The 60-day review deadline is February 18, 2024, and the 120-day review deadline, if necessary, is April 18, 2024.
3. The property in question is a total of 6.13 gross acres, located at 13960 Lake Drive NE, legally described as that part of the South Half of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 33, Township 32, Range 22, lying westerly of County Road 23, except the south 400 feet thereof, Anoka County, Minnesota ("Property") [PID: 33-32-22-21-0004].
4. The Property is zoned Commercial/Industrial Light (C/I-Light) and is designated Commercial/Industrial in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
5. The neighboring properties directly to the north consists of a car repair center and two residential properties, the neighboring property to the south consists of an excavating and utilities company, and the neighboring property to the west is a residential property. To the east of the Property is Lake Drive NE and a storage facility.
6. The Property currently consists of an existing 2,330 square foot residential building and a 1,441 square foot accessory building in the rear. Additionally, the current site includes a paved driveway and gravel parking area.
7. The Applicant purchased the Property on February 24, 2021 and has been operating as a noncompliant

business since 2021. There was a year and three months between the purchase date and the enactment of the Commercial/Industrial District moratorium, which began May 25, 2022 and was repealed January 12, 2023. The Applicant indicated during the Public Hearing on January 17, 2024 that they were not aware that a CUP was required, and therefore did not apply for one during that period of time prior to the moratorium.

8. The proposed use for the Property is for a 'Contractor Shop with accessory Yard-Limited', per the Columbus City Code of Ordinances.
9. The Applicant is applying to a PUD CUP to request a deviation from City Code's performance standards limiting the exteriors of commercial buildings to 50% metal on residential facing sides due to existing screening on the Property and distance to the residences.
10. The existing residential building will be converted to a commercial office to comply with commercial building code per the architectural plans dated 12.20.23.
11. The new office space will consist of six offices, a reception area, conference room, break room, and a shared office space, as well as two restrooms and a mechanical closet, per the architectural plans dated 12.20.23.
12. The existing accessory structure will be used for small equipment storage and maintenance, and will be updated to meet energy code requirements, per the architectural plans dated 12.20.23.
13. There are 8-10 maximum on-site staff members, who will be generally operating in the office space from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and approximately 5-10 operation and production staff that start and end their day on the Property. The business is seasonal and staff numbers and hours of operation will decrease in the winter months. Equipment utilized for snowplowing in the winter months are kept on job sites.
14. The existing accessory structure exterior consists entirely of standing seam, while the updated office building will consist of a combination of metal paneling and stone facing Lake Drive, as depicted in Architectural Plan sheets A401 and A402. The City Code limits building exposures facing residential districts to 50% metal materials within the Commercial/Industrial Light District, which is not met by the accessory structure or by the western and northern facing sides of the office.
15. There is an extensive existing wooded area in the western half of the Property. The Applicant has provided photographic viewsheds to the north and west to illustrate that neither building is visible to the adjacent residential zoning districts and should not require non-metal building treatments.
16. There is substantial ornamental landscaping proposed around the office building, as depicted in the landscaping plan dated 02.02.24. The existing number of overstory trees exceeds ordinance requirements.
17. A row of five, 180 s.f., concrete-block bunkers are proposed along the northern edge of the property to store bulk materials, and screen them from view, as depicted in Architectural Plan Sheet A101.
18. Temporary storage of backhauled, clean fill will be located in the southwest corner of parking lot, averaging a total of 200 cubic yards and 10-15 feet in height.
19. There are 41 proposed parking stalls on the Property, including 2 handicapped accessible stalls. Ordinance requires 11.38 parking stalls for the 2,276 square foot office facility, and 1 parking stall for the 1,441 square foot storage building, for a total 13 parking stalls. The stalls are separated into office, warehouse, and company truck parking areas. Parking stall dimensions, aisle dimensions and front yard setback are consistent with ordinance requirements. The proposed parking on the Property exceeds ordinance requirements.
20. The Applicant owns 12 company trucks and 6 trailers, as well as several small Conex boxes, which will

be stored in the rear parking lot when not on job sites.

21. Two large Conex boxes have been utilized as temporary storage until construction efforts are complete, at which time the Applicant intends to remove the boxes
22. A corrugated steel dumpster enclosure is proposed on the western side of the accessory structure to match the existing building.
23. The development will require a new SSTS. The Applicant has submitted a design for the new SSTS.
24. The Property contains two wetlands to the east and west of the buildings, previously delineated, which will not be impacted by the proposed development.
25. Site drainage includes a rip-rap drainage ditch and silt fence along the north side of the property, and an expansion of the existing basin to the west of the existing accessory structure. The Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) has reviewed proposed development plans on the Property and issued a Conditional Approval Pending Receipt of Changes (CAPROC) on November 8, 2023.
26. Anoka County Highway Department (ACHD) has been contacted regarding the new driveway, as well as the change in the Property's use from residential to commercial.
27. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed PUDS CUP on January 17, 2024.

Conditions

1. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon recommendations of the City Engineer.
2. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon recommendations of the City Attorney.
3. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon plan review and approval by the Building Official.
4. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon plan review and approval by the Forest Lake Fire Department.
5. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon requirements by the Anoka County Highway Division.
6. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon requirements by Rice Creek Watershed District.
7. Approval of the PUD CUP is contingent upon the enactment of a Short-Form Development Agreement and landscape deposit to ensure performance with this PUD CUP.
8. Once authorized, the Applicant shall construct and maintain all site improvements consistent with the Planned Unit Development Conditional Use Permit Application, dated December 20, 2023; Site Plans dated September 14, 2023 (Sheets S1 and C1-C5); Architectural Plans dated December 20, 2023 (Sheets A001-A402); Screening Plans dated December 20, 2023; Narrative dated December 20, 2023; Photometric Plans dated January 11, 2024; and Landscaping Plans dated February 2, 2024; except as may be modified with City approval.
9. Approval of the PUD CUP authorizes all-metal building exteriors facing residential zoned properties, provided existing or new vegetation is maintained to provide 95% opaque screening to the west and north of the business operations all year long.
10. Outdoor storage of purchased materials (topsoil, sand, Class V, lime rock and mulch) be contained within the concrete bunkers to the north of the Property and shall not exceed the height of said bunkers. Backhauling of clean fill from job sites will be stored temporarily in the equipment storage area until removed for other jobs. Maximum storage of back hauled fill shall not exceed 200 cubic yards or 10 feet in height.
11. All buildings, landscaping, and site improvements shall be maintained in good condition throughout the duration of the PUD CUP.
12. All trucks hauling materials to and from the facility shall be covered to reduce airborne particulates.

13. All site lighting shall be downcast and shrouded as required by Columbus Ordinance Section 7A-813 for outdoor lighting standards.
14. The PUD CUP is contingent on the installation of a compliant SSTS by August 1, 2024 and the completion of the office remodel, by December 31, 2024. The two large existing Conex boxes on the Property will be removed upon the completion of all required site improvements.
15. Approval of the PUD CUP does not absolve the applicant of any other permitting requirements such as Building, Watershed District, County, etc.
16. The Applicant shall reimburse the City for all out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the review and issuance of the PUD CUP and for all ongoing inspections and enforcement actions required for the PUD CUP.
17. Any expansion or intensification or change in the approved is of the Property requires an amendment to the PUD CUP.
18. The PUD CUP, once issued, may be revoked upon a finding by the City Council that the property and/or use is not in compliance with the conditions for approval of such use, following notice and hearing.

Motion by Hegland to approve the Conditional Use Permit with the conditions set forth in the staff report and with the additional conditions brought up tonight including but not limited to covering the trucks, and make the corrections on the CUP and the date in the Findings, along with the additional condition brought up during the discussion and requiring a short form development agreement along with a landscape deposit to ensure performance with the requirements of the CUP. Seconded by Preiner. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Busch asked if there would be a stipulation on any subcontractors regarding the covering of trucks. Griffith responded it would be up to the applicant to communicate this condition to the subcontractor. Mr. O'Connor noted the only trucks on their property which were not their own would be delivering materials and they would be told to put tarps on.

Motion by Hegland to approve the appointment of Lynnett Carver-Quinn as Planning Commission Chairperson and Barb Bobick as Planning Commission Vice Chairperson for calendar year 2024, or until the appointments of the Commission are made for the 2025 officers. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

4. 147th Avenue Pavement Repairs Project – Final Payment

Davis presented the final estimate to Bituminous Roadways for the 147th Avenue pavement repairs, noting the Consent of Surety to the final payment is included as well as the Contractor Affidavits from the Department of Revenue. He recommended Council approve the final payment as presented in staff's report dated February 14, 2024.

Busch asked if the City was holding anything back if anything arose in the spring. Bittner responded there was a 2-year warranty period that would kick in after the final payment was made.

Motion by Preiner to approve the final payment to Bituminous Roadways for the 147th Avenue repair

project as presented in the staff's report dated February 14, 2024. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

5. 2024 Pavement Management Projects

Davis presented the 2024 Pavement Maintenance Program consisting of crack sealing, chip sealing, and microsurfacing for approximately 15 miles of the City's bituminous streets as well as the Public Works and Fire Hall surface lot. He reviewed the estimated cost breakdown, noting the project costs are covered in the 2024 pavement maintenance budget. He explained that three separate contract bids will be solicited. Staff is asking the Council to authorize staff to develop the final bidding documents and advertise for bids. If approved, bids will be opened in early March and the Council will consider awarding the bid at its meeting on March 13, 2024.

Motion by Preiner to authorize staff to develop the final 2024 Pavement Maintenance Program bidding documents and advertise for bids for the 2024 payment management project. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

6. Recording Secretarial Services Contract

Davis reviewed the costs associated with City staff preparing meeting minutes for the City Council, Planning Commission, Park Board and EDA, noting if this work is completed by a contract service, staff can be assigned to other project work. In addition, minutes would be submitted within six days and staff would be removed from having to interpret items to be included in the meeting minutes.

Davis detailed the fiscal impact, estimated costs, and explained funds for this service are available from the EDA, City Council, Park Board, and Planning Commission budgets. He referenced the rate proposal from TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc. (TOSS) versus taking the minutes in-house. He recommended the Council approve the TOSS proposal and engage their services for the taking and preparation of City Council and Commission minutes.

Busch requested an explanation of the process used for any corrections to the minutes. Davis explained TOSS would prepare the draft minutes and then it was up to staff to edit the minutes and make changes.

Hegland requested TOSS come to a Council meeting to discuss the level of detail Council wanted. Davis stated he felt Ms. Wirth, the owner of TimeSaver, would be glad to attend a meeting to discuss this.

Griffith responded it was his experience that most cities had summary minutes and either used a service or did them in house.

Council discussed that having a service do the minutes would ensure that the Minutes were more consistent and standardized, they would have a faster turnaround time than having staff prepare them, and a service had specialized transcription equipment which the City did not have.

Griffith indicated it would also help him to have a faster turnaround, particularly for discussions like tonight where a Development Agreement needed a short turnaround time.

Motion by Preiner to approve the recording secretary service agreement with TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc. (TOSS) for the taking and preparation of City Council and Commission minutes for the remainder of the calendar year 2024 as presented. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Busch – nay; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

7. City Council Recommendation Review Policy

Hegland summarized previous conversations regarding this policy and that they had decided that the solution was to have a two-week period between the time of the public hearing and the time that the Planning Commission made the recommendation, which would allow adequate time for questions of Council and for staff to do their research and bring that back to the Planning Commission before they had their discussion. She noted over time, the two-week time period had lapsed and she suggested they have a written policy that would memorialize the process and timeframe so it would be clear to everyone involved. She indicated if time were of the essence and something needed to be fast tracked, they could deviate from that policy with Council approval.

It was the consensus of the Council to direct staff to work on a draft of the policy. Davis said he would have a draft of a policy for the next Council meeting.

8. Fire Department Roof Repair Bids

Davis described the Fire Station's flat roof design and resulting issues with leaks. He noted this roof is scheduled for replacement in 2025 with $78,000 from the Fire Hall Capital Budget. However, due to the nature of recent leaks, staff recommends that replacement be advanced to 2024 to prevent further damage and eliminate the cost of a one-year temporary repair. He presented the three roof replacement bids received and recommended approval of the Central Roofing Company bid at a cost of $68,250.

Windingstad noted the previous warranty on the roof was 20 years and they had exceeded that warranty. He looked at longer warranties, but they were virtually the same price, it exceeded their budget, and they did not want to drain the fund as that would not allow them to have any funds in case something else came up that needed repairs.

Davis stated the cost of the 30-year warranty was over $100,000 and if they compared the warranty rate per year they were essentially the same. He also indicated this would not tie up all of the money into one project.

Motion by Preiner to approve a contract with Central Roofing Company at a cost of $68,250 for the roof replacement at the City Fire Hall. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

9. Midco Letter of Support – Line Extension Program Grant

Davis reported on staff's meeting with Midco to discuss underserved areas in Columbus and potential of a Border-to-Border grant or BEAD funding from the State or the second round of grants for the Line

Extension Program. He indicated there were several addresses in the City that were eligible for the funds and there were no local matching fund requirements. He noted Midco was seeking a letter of support for the project which will allow them to seek grant application and get this on their project list. He indicated staff would be getting this on the website.

Davis stated staff is recommending the Council approve a letter of support for the proposed Midco 178th/179th Avenue and Xingu Street area for a Line Extension Program Grant to serve 23 addresses that are currently underserved or have no internet service.

Busch noted he had reached out to some people that were affected by this to let them know it was on the agenda and they were very happy to hear about it.

Motion by Preiner to authorize staff to draft a letter of support for the proposed Midco 178th/179th Avenue and Xingu Street area for a Line Extension Program Grant application. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

10. Resolution 2024 – 02, Counting Write-In Votes for Local Elective Offices

Davis explained that in the last legislative session, cities were authorized to adopt a resolution governing how write-in candidates for municipal elections are counted. He presented two options as follows: Option 1 – write-in candidates must submit a written request in order to have their individual votes tallied; or, Option 2 – write-in candidates will only have their individual votes tallied if the total number of write-in votes for the contest is greater than or equal to the fewest number of votes case for a non-write-in candidate. He stated either option would create a cleaner canvas report and increases the efficiency for tabulating votes. He requested council give staff direction as to their preference.

Wagamon recommended they choose option one as that was the option the State and other counties were using.

Preiner asked roughly how much time would this save. Davis responded it would depend on the number of write-in votes there were, but from past experience if there were 100 to 200 write-in votes, it would save approximately two hours from the entire election judge process.

Motion by Wagamon to adopt Resolution 2024-02, Resolution for Counting Write-In Votes for Local Elective Office. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

11. Petting Zoo Invoice for 2024 Fall Fest

Hegland noted she had met with staff to figure out how to move forward with Fall Fest. She indicated the public had asked for a petting zoo. She noted when they inquired last year they were too late and were unable to get the petting zoo, but this year when they inquired they were able to reserve the petting zoo. She stated they required a $100 deposit which was non-refundable. She recommended they move forward with the $100 petting zoo deposit for the 2024 Fall Fest. She indicated this would not include pony rides as that was too expensive as well as having insurance issues.

Motion by Hegland to approve a $100 down payment required to reserve Haase Mobile Petting Zoo and Pony Rides for the planned 2024 Fall Fest. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

12. Personnel Committee Finance Director Recommendation

Hegland stated when Ms. Jenkins was hired, she was hired as a senior account employee in August 2022. She indicated Ms. Jenkins has now admirably gone through an entire year cycle of accounting. She noted the HR consultants suggested they create a new job description for a Finance Director. She indicated their final recommendation was to promote Cheryl into the Finance Director position at Step 5 with eligibility to advance to the next step within six months pending satisfactory performance. She indicated the budgetary impact of this promotion would be neutral for 2024. She stated the Personnel Committee was recommending approval to promote Ms. Jenkins from Senior Accountant to the Finance Director position effective immediately with an increase in her hourly salary from $42.37 to $47.69. She indicated Ms. Jenkins would also be taking on supervisory responsibilities.

Davis noted Ms. Jenkins had done a great job, was professional, had a great attitude and energy, was wonderful to work with, highly competent, and he applauded her promotion.

Motion by Hegland to appoint Cheryl Jenkins to the Finance Director position effective immediately with an increase in her hourly salary to $47.69. Seconded by Preiner . Roll call vote: Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

D. STAFF & CONSULTANT REPORTS

1. Engineer Report – County Ditch 10-22-32 Update

Bittner requested the City Attorney provide an update on County Ditch 10-22-32 presentation to the Rice Creek Watershed District. Griffith indicated at the previous Council meeting, there had been a recommendation for staff to give the presentation. However after further discussion, he was recommending the presentation not be given to the Rice Creek Watershed District because if the presentation was given and the District paid for that presentation, they had the right contractually to rely on that presentation, even if there was not a written contract. He noted this could create confusion as to who the City Engineer was working for with respect to the presentation. He stated the presentation was in PowerPoint and he recommended the City Engineer forward the PowerPoint presentation to the District.

Davis requested Bittner give an update as to what the next steps were in trying to get some resolution to this problem. Bittner updated the Council on the technical meeting he attended at the District with the DNR, a hydrologist, a technical expert, and the engineer from the District where they discussed further steps on the modeling of the ditch and surrounding public waters to determine what the impact of the ditch repair project alternative would have on the adjoining public waters. He indicated the DNR was currently reviewing the District's hydrologic model of the ditch to determine whether it was appropriate to further evaluate impacts to the public sector. He noted the review was ongoing. He indicated he was supportive of the proposed repair project, however, he was unsure if the particular project would alleviate the issues experienced by the property owners. He believed the project was a good one and he could support it.

Hegland asked if Bittner had any comments on the recent RCWD workshop meeting. Bittner indicated the purpose of the discussion at the workshop was to address board members questions on how a ACSIC profile was determined. He noted the next workshop discussion will be related to how the ACSIC for 10-22-32 was determined and where more intense questions would be answered.

It was the Council's consensus that the Rice Creek Watershed District would be provided a copy of the presentation Bittner gave at the Council workshop and nothing further.

2. Attorney Report

No report.

3. Mayor & City Council Members' Report

Hegland updated the Council on the recent Sunrise Watershed WMO meeting at which she transitioned from the board's chairperson to treasurer and Columbus resident Tim Melchior reappointed as secretary. The meeting also featured a 10-year review of its projects, and Administrator Jamie Schurbon announced the SRWMO had brought in $1.3 million in grants. Finally, SRWMO awarded the contract for water quality monitoring and administration of the WMO to the Anoka County Conservation District.

Busch indicated he was at a recent political event where he was able to lobby on behalf of Running Aces.

Preiner had no report.

Hanegraaf updated the Council on the recent Park Board meeting. Seven members of the public attended the meeting, including the Columbus Lions Club which requested to use Columbus City Park for quarterly events. A consensus of the Park Board agreed that this is a good idea. A representative from the Forest Lake Area Fastpitch Association (FLAFA) was also in attendance to request the installation of roofs over the dugouts. FLAFA indicated it has funds available to contribute to the improvement. Windingstad will research the City's options and will provide the information at the next Park Board meeting.

The Park Board voted to recommend approving a bid to remove 21 trees from Columbus City Park to Uppercut Tree Services. A discussion regarding moving park lighting will be continued at the next Park Board meeting, as well as a discussion about options for resurfacing the tennis courts and including pickleball courts. Finally, the Park Board considered installing lights or hosting a tree lighting in the City Park for the holiday season.

4. Code Enforcement Report

No report.

5. Public Works Report.

Windingstad stated that the Public Works would be out at 4 a.m. to clear the streets of the snow.

Windingstad noted there was Lions Club dinner on March 6 at 7:00 p.m. Hegland asked Griffith if those Council and Commission members who had RSVP'd for this event need to pay for their dinners. Griffith responded if it was a community event, then it would be under the exception and if food was incidental to the meeting rather than the purpose of it, then it was fine.

6. Public Communications Coordinator Report

Keith noted Carlos Avery was encouraging public feedback on their recent 10-year master plan. He indicated their link would be on the City's website. Wagamon requested the Council be emailed when the link was available.

Griffith stated the City should look at or analyze any previous master plan for Columbus and Carlos Avery. Hegland agreed this would be a good opportunity to get a better sense of how willing they were to recreate Carlos Avery.

Busch noted in the past five years, Carlos Avery had bought 100 plus acres of property to add their property. Griffith noted it would be interesting to see how those acquisitions fit with the commitment that was made to the community and how it fit into the Master Plan.

7. Interim City Administrator's Report

Davis reminded everyone to vote on March 5 for the Presidential primary or vote early through absentee ballots or early voting process.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- Planning Commission/City Council Joint Meeting – February 21, 2024, at 6 p.m.
- City Council Meeting – February 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.
- Calendar of Meetings

F. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectively submitted:

Connor Keith

Connor Keith, Public Communications Coordinator

Drafted by: Kathy Altman
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.