

**CHISHOLM CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – JUNE 8, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor John Champa called the City Council Meeting to order in the City Hall Council Chambers at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members April Fountain, Marty Halverson, Adam Lantz, Cheyenne Mikkola-Rahja, and Mayor John A. Champa

Absent: Councilor Travis Vake

Also present: Administrator Stephanie Skraba, Attorney Colleen Kosluchar with Trenti Law Firm, Building/Zoning and Safety Director Mandy Galli, Consultant Engineer Jim Johnson, Public Works Supervisor Larry Folstad, Parks/Trails/Recreation Director Bridgit Maruska, City Clerk-Treasurer Eileen Zah, Confidential Administrative Assistant Susan Trunk, Attorney Mia Thibodeau with Fryberger, Buchanan, Smith & Frederick, P.A, Cheryl Brottem, John Newbauer, and Mesabi Community TV.

ADOPT THE AGENDA

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to adopt the agenda with additions:

- 1) Accept the SEH 2022 Street Rehabilitation Change Order 1.
- 2) Resolution No. 0622-63 to Establish an Absentee Ballot Board.
- 3) Resolution No. 0622-64 Chisholm Consenting Host for CHC Bond.
- 4) Request from Cheryl Brottem to waive the short-term rental application fee.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

John Newbauer requested the Council to address an issue concerning the speed limit adjacent to the Vaughan Steffensrud School playground. The concern first started in 2019 and drivers continue to speed in the area. Law Enforcement had been there and set up a speed zone during school hours, but Mr. Newbauer expressed that they should be there during non-school hours. He presented the city council with a Petition for Local Improvement that contains 20 signatures from concerned parents, teachers and homeowners from the properties of 9 ½ St. NE from 1st Ave to 3rd Ave NE requesting a speed zone of 20 MPH to be posted around the school area. He remarked that not only are their elementary students in the area, there are play grounds, soccer leagues and kids crossing the street. He expressed that he does not understand why nothing has been done about it. Mr. Newbauer also expressed thanks to Larry (Public Works Supervisor) and his staff for working so hard and getting things done around the city. Cheryl Brottem requested the City Council to waive the short-term rental application special use fee. Prior to the ordinance being published, she had arranged to rent space for 3-4 weeks to Event Planners from Northern Lights Festival as she had done the previous year. Once she learned of the ordinance, she felt obligated to honestly come forward instead of possibly violating the ordinance. Ms. Brottem requested the fee be waived since she is assisting the city in gaining revenue, there are extra costs she will need to take on in order to rent the apartment (i.e.-cleaning), that she typically uses the space only for friends and family at no charge, and she is on a fixed income which would make the fee a hardship to pay.

REPORTS

Councilor Fountain reported that she and the rest of the council attended a working session on Monday June 6th and thought it went well. There are lots of great things happening in Chisholm this summer including the Chisholm Public Library summer reading program "Read Beyond the Beaten Path" that began on June 6th and goes until July 15th. In addition, the library has some great programs coming up for all ages. The Wall That Heals arrives in Chisholm in less than two weeks. The United Way was still looking for 100 volunteers to assist. If you were interested in volunteering, you could call 254-3329.

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There will be music at Pocket Park, Downtown Chisholm on Tuesdays from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. June 14th through August 16th. St. Louis County Fair is looking for vendors and crafters for the fair. If you are interested, contact the St. Louis County Fair at stlofair@uslink.net. The Chisholm All Class Reunion is August 3rd through the 7th. Minnesota Discovery Center is having Bands, Brews and BBQs on Thursdays from 4 to 8 p.m. The museum of mining is open in the summer from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and Sundays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Councilor Halverson reported that he attended the school meeting at Valentini's the prior evening for information on the proposed school project. He said it was very interesting and they have done a lot of good hard work. He has also had a number of meetings with the contractor at Redhead Mountain Bike Park, Rock Solid, Larry, Pat, and the casual labor that will be out there during the summer. He also reported that he has been talking to a lot of people with the Mesabi trail and DNR about the Memorial Day rain storms that flooded the Mesabi Trail east of town where it goes under 169 and the north rim trail at Redhead that remained closed. They will be adding an additional culvert on Redhead to help the situation and Mesabi trail is working on their issues.

Councilor Mikkola-Rahja reported that she also attended the working session on Monday, a police commission meeting Tuesday, and a public hearing prior to the council meeting.

Councilor Lantz reported he attended the business meeting for the fire department and would like to congratulate Jason Worlie, Assistant Fire Chief for 14 years of service with the Fire Department. He acknowledged him as being a great leader and thanked him for all that he does for the community. He also attended the working session to discuss dangerous animals and vehicles and boats in the Redhead Mountain Bike Park. He felt it was a good meeting and they all seemed to be on the same page. They are looking into ways to strengthen down on dangerous dogs. There was an EDA meeting on the following Friday where they would be discussing project status and future projects.

Mayor Champa reported that the working session was interesting but there was some frustration during the dangerous animals' discussion in reference to a recent incident when a dog attacked another dog leading to its death. He thought that the dog should be held until it is deemed not dangerous. There are criteria if a dog is deemed dangerous, but the window of time between an incident and deeming the animal dangerous is concerning. City Attorney Lindsay is looking into it. When Councilor Halverson asked the mayor if the dog's owner was able to post the bond, he responded that he believes that Police Chief Manner said the dog is gone. The mayor said that it was nice to see a lot of things going on in the City of Chisholm such as building construction, additional court yards, businesses reopening and people purchasing property.

Fire Chief Chris Masucci reported that last month was probably the busiest month in 10 years. They had 29 calls and are on pace to do 200 calls this year when they typically do 130-140 per year. He expressed his thanks to all the members showing up and putting in the time as it feels like a full-time department. Annual pump testing began in June for all fire trucks to get their pumps certified. The aerial fire truck has a fuel leak and they are waiting on parts. The fire fighter members do about 7000-8000 feet of hose testing every year and hope to get it done in 1-2 days. They will be doing training every Wednesday so people may see them out in town. After nearly a year and a half in the making, the department has acquired a house to burn located at Long Lake. They plan on burning it this fall and doing some search & rescue along with other training at the location this summer. Last fall they purchased ropes, harnesses and helmets for low and high angle rescues. A team of 6 fire fighter members will start training with the help of Hibbing, then those 6 members will bring what they learned back to the department to train others. The fire department has 24 members and is waiting on one more to do their physical, bringing them to 25, but they could use 5 more members. When asked if there was an agency that can track data that could provide them with perspective as to why their calls have increased, Fire Chief Masucci responded that their calls go into a national data base but do not necessarily reveal why the calls have increased. He noted that they have had a lot of power lines go down from wind and storms where they need to go and protect those down lines until power company gets there. They also are getting cancellation calls and had about 6 structure fires between them and Hibbing.

Building/Zoning and Safety Director Mandy Galli reports they had a planning commission meeting on Monday. The Chisholm Library tuckpointing project started on Monday and will likely take most of the summer. They will be working Monday through Thursday on the project and it will look very nice when it is done. She has received three applications for the IRRRB Residential Redevelopment Program and is looking for two more. She was also looking into partnering with the City of Buhl for that program. If anyone has structures that they want to be demolished they should contact her. Permits continue to come in each day. There are a number of calls coming in regarding storage containers. Some residents are requesting to place them in city limits, however, there is nothing in the ordinance permitting them. She did issue one temporary permit that has now expired and the storage container needs to be moved. As of now, storage containers are not allowed in city limits.

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The planning commission discussed it and will be discussing it further. In her research, she has found that other cities are not permitting them either. When responding to them being allowed in commercial areas, Director Galli said that there is nothing in the ordinance that allows them. She has reached out to City Attorney Lindsay to gather additional information.

Consultant Engineer Jim Johnson reported that the street rehabilitation mill and overlay is underway and believes it will be completed the following day with paving starting the following week. Responding to the mayor's request to update him on the past inquiries to reduce speed limits adjacent to Vaughan Steffensrud School playground, Consultant Johnson said he would need to review the files on the speed study. Last fall and winter they had the planning process for safe routes to school, then the directors changed that were working with the regional planning authority out of Duluth, and now the committee needs to reconvene to put together an action plan of what physical improvements need to be made along with what educational things need to be done within the school and the police department. Part of the physical improvements including sidewalks, handicap ramps at intersections, speed signage, crossings, markings and drop off areas adjacent to school need to be considered when they reconvene prior to moving into phase two for the necessary funding. The mayor asked if they put it on the agenda for the next council meeting to reduce the speed limit 24/7 what issues would that create? Consultant Johnson responded that the Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control has a specific section of the chapter that addresses pavement marking, signage, speed limits, etc. and it is also covered in state statutes. He believes you can drop the speed limit adjacent to school property to 15 miles per hour but no more than 20 miles below the current posted speed limit. In terms of enacting it, as long as it is in performance of state statute it could be enacted. He will provide a copy for council of state statute chapter 169 subsection that details the speed zones in school areas. The mayor remarked that he shares Mr. Newbauer's concerns and is willing to bring it to council.

Public Works Supervisor Larry Folstad reported that they are patching and potholing with summer help and sweepers are going pretty much every day. They are supporting the mill and overlay project by fixing man hole covers and things that are broken so that when the new pavement is laid it looks good. The flowers from the new vendor that came in look great. The camp ground is doing very well. Casual labor is down to 15 out of 20 people hired and he is considering a 3rd round of hiring to help with all the work that needs to be done. They are moving ahead with the salt shed at the public works designated area in the industrial park. The citywide cleanup will be July 11th through July 15th and is posted on the website. The alleys are getting cleaned up and grated. Some are needing more work than others and they will continue to prioritize and keep working on them.

Recreation Director Bridgit Maruska reported that she met with the Wall That Heals people and thanks to Larry it is all coming together. She now understands that since there is a shortage of summer casuals there is no promises on project dates. She has been meeting with the chamber and is very excited about the big group attending the upcoming Bike MS on July 18th and 19th. They are expecting 400-500 bikers and about 250 supporters. The beautification committee met her this week and she feels it is a valuable resource to the community. She would like to spend more time at the senior center learning the history of Chisholm because there is so much to know. The summer recreation program is almost completely ready, starts training the following week and Friday was the early bird closure date. Director Maruska attended the IROC meeting the previous evening at the discovery center. She is excited about the film premier of the national documentary "Bike Town" showing on July 22nd at the Discovery Center. The film is about small towns and how they have created bike trails within their communities. Clerk-Treasurer Eileen Zah reported that she will wait until the next council meeting to do the quarterly financial presentation because she is waiting to receive the first revenue from Medica for the ambulance department. She and Administrator Skraba are in the final stages of submitting the USDA preapplication loan package, working on obtaining some signatures, dotting i's and crossing t's and hoping to submit the following day. On Monday June 13th, the fiscal year 2021 audit is scheduled to commence. Sterle & Company auditors will be on site for 2-3 weeks in the office next to Administrator Skraba. Clerk-Treasurer Zah will present a resolution to appoint the election judges that will be finalized on June 17th at the next council meeting in July. Absentee voting will begin on June 24th, which coincides with the need to establish an absentee ballot board at the council meeting tonight.

Administrator Stephanie Skraba is happy to report that the Chisholm EDA was able to purchase the building to partner with the Minnesota State Mankato Bell Engineering Program. There will be construction starting at the facility and they will be welcoming students to Chisholm that will be going to the Bell Engineering Program. She is also happy to report that the IRRRB approved two applications for the city of Chisholm, \$400,000 for phase 1 of Chisholm Public Safety Building and also \$400,000 for streets and building improvements. There are many projects moving forward for this summer and everyone is very busy. She thanked all the staff for their hard work.

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ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Lantz to accept the Consent Agenda, including the List of Bills, Minutes from the May 25th, 2022 Regular Meeting, Payroll and Overtime.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION NO. 0622-61 ACCEPT PORTABLE RADIO DONATION FROM OSSEO
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to adopt Resolution 0622-61 to accept the donation of (6) XTS2500 portable radios to be used by Chisholm Volunteer Fire Department. A letter of thanks will be sent to the Osseo Police Department.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION NO. 0622-62 FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR/TRUCK DRIVER/UTILITY WORKER**

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Fountain to adopt Resolution No. 0622-62 to appoint Michael J. Vajdl to the Heavy Equipment Operator/Truck Driver/Utility Worker position.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

BIDS FOR 5TH STREET SE INFRASTRUCTURE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to reject all bids for the 5th Street SE Infrastructure Replacement Project and to revisit it later in the fall.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

**SEH INC. CHANGE ORDER NUMBER 1 FOR 2022 STREET REHABILITATION
PROJECT**

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Halverson to accept the Short Elliot Hendrickson Inc. (SEH) change order number 1 for the 2022 Street Rehabilitation Project.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION NO. 0622-63 ESTABLISHING AN ABSENTEE BALLOT BOARD

Moved by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja and supported by Councilor Lantz to adopt Resolution No. 0622-63 to Establish an Absentee Ballot Board.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

COVID SICK PAY

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to extend Resolution 0322-35 Extending Emergency Covid-19 Leave Provisions June 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

LOST FORTY, LLC EXTENDED LEASE

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to amend and extend the lease for Lost Forty, LLC an additional 5 years.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

**DIRECT STAFF TO PREPARE THE AMENDMENT FOR THE LOST FORTY, LLC
LEASE AGREEMENT**

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to direct staff to prepare the amendment for the Lost Forty, LLC lease.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

NORTH SHORE HUMAN RESOURCE CONSULTING SERVICE AGREEMENT

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Halverson to extend the agreement with North Shore Human Resource Consulting until December 31, 2022.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

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SUMMER HOURS FOR CITY HALL AND LIBRARY

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to have summer hours until Labor Day for City Hall and the Library. The City Hall hours will be Monday through Thursday from 6:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Library Hours will be Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

SUSPEND CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS ON JUNE 22, JULY 27, AUGUST 24, 2022

Moved by Councilor Lantz and supported by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja to suspend the June 22, July 27, and August 24, 2022 City Council Meetings.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION NO. 0622-64 CONSENTING TO THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS BY THE
CITY OF VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA**

Moved by Councilor Mikkola-Rahja and supported by Councilor Halverson to adopt Resolution No. 0622-64 consenting to the issuance of bonds by the city of Virginia for the Chisholm Health Center.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

**REQUEST TO WAIVE SHORT TERM RENTAL APPLICATION FEE
FOR CHERYL BROTTM**

Moved by Councilor Fountain, not supported to waive the Short-Term Rental Application fee for the time period of July 1, 2022 through July 23, 2022 for Cheryl Brottem.

Motion Failed

Moved by Councilor Halverson and supported by Councilor Lantz to request Cheryl Brottem to register for Long-Term Rental or purchase a Short-Term Rental permit.

Voting Aye: Councilors Halverson and Lantz, Mayor Champa

Motion Carried

Voting Nay: Councilors Fountain and Mikkola-Rahja

ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved by Councilor Fountain supported by Councilor Lantz to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Voting Aye: All

Motion Carried

Attest:

/s/ John A. Champa, Mayor

/s/ Stephanie Skraba, Mayor Administrator