

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF FRIDLEY
MARCH 23, 2020**

The City Council meeting for the City of Fridley was called to order by Mayor Lund at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Lund
Councilmember Tillberry
Councilmember Eggert
Councilmember Bolkcom
Councilmember Ostwald

OTHERS PRESENT: Wally Wysopal, City Manager
Daniel Tienter, Director of Finance/City Treasurer/City Clerk
Brian Weierke, Director of Public Safety

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED CONSENT AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES:

1. **City Council Meeting of March 6, 2020.**

APPROVED.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. **First Reading of Ordinance No. 1378 Amending the Fridley City Charter Entitled Administration of City Affairs; Section 6.05, Purchases and Contracts;**

and

First Reading of Ordinance No. 1379 Amending the Fridley City Charter Entitled Administration of City Affairs; Section 6.07, Further Purchases and Contracts

Walter Wysopal, City Manager, asked that this item be moved to “Old Business” as it is for a second reading.

THIS ITEM WAS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA AND PLACED ON THE REGULAR AGENDA UNDER OLD BUSINESS.

- 3. Adopt Resolution No. 2020 – 15 Approving Authorizing Signing an Agreement with Patrol Officers for the City of Fridley Public Safety Department for the Years 2020 and 20201.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2020 - 15.

- 4. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-16 Approving Gifts, Donations and Sponsorships for the City of Fridley.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2020 - 16.

- 5. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-17 Authorization Application to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) for 2020 Regional Solicitation Grant Funds to Support Construction of a Multi-Use Trail and Sidewalk Along 53rd Avenue.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2020 – 17.

- 6. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-18 Approving Agreements for a Community Solar Garden Subscription.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2020 - 18.

- 7. Approve Award of 2020 Cooperative Street Maintenance Contract, Project No. ST2020-10.**

Mr. Wysopal stated this is an annual contract in cooperation with several other cities.

APPROVED.

- 8. Receive Bids and Award Contract for the 2020 Well Rehabilitation Project No. 20-448.**

RECEIVED BIDS AND AWARDED CONTRACT TO KEYS WELL DRILLING COMPANY, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA.

- 9. Receive Bids and Award contract for the Oak Glen Creek Pond Expansion Project Phase 2 No. 2019-519.**

Commissioner Bolcom asked regarding the contract the City has with Treehouse that the project be completed by June 30, 2020, not knowing what will be going on with the COVID-19 pandemic, does staff feel comfortable they can have an extension of that date.

Mr. Wysopal replied the City Engineer believes it is a doable date.

RECEIVED BIDS AND AWARDED CONTRACT TO KUECHLE UNDERGROUND, INC.

10. Approve 2020 Reappointments to the City of Fridley Commissions.

Mayor Lund stated the packet lists Greg Ackerman as one of the existing Parks and Recreation Commission members. He has moved and resigned several months ago.

APPROVED AS CORRECTED.

11. Claims: (188376 - 188498).

APPROVED.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the proposed consent agenda with the removal of Item No. 2. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OPEN FORUM, VISITORS:

No one was present in the audience.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

MOTION by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the agenda with the addition of Item No. 2. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OLD BUSINESS:

2. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1378 Amending the Fridley City Charter Entitled Administration of City Affairs; Section 6.05, Purchases and Contracts;

and

Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1379 Amending the Fridley City Charter Entitled Administration of City Affairs; Section 6.07, Further Purchases and Contracts

MOTION by Councilmember Bolkcom to waive the reading of the ordinance and approve the Ordinance No. 1378 on second reading and order publication. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION by Councilmember Bolkcom waive the reading of the ordinance and adopt Ordinance No 1379 on second reading and order publication. Seconded by Councilmember Eggert.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS:

12. Mayoral Declaration No. 2020-01 Declaring a Local Emergency.

Mayor Lund stated this may not be surprising to most people since other cities have already adopted a declaration of a local emergency. They have taken some time to see what would happen as things keep evolving on a day-to-day basis. He said it was time for Fridley to declare a local emergency.

Mayor Lund said by issuing this Declaration, he was declaring that a local emergency exists in the City of Fridley and thus, it will invoke the City’s Emergency Operations Plan.” The Declaration was included in the agenda.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked if the Mayor was declaring that a local emergency exists effective as of 7:00 p.m. on March 23.

Mayor Lund stated yes.

13. Adopt Ordinance No. 1380, Enacted Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, Extending the Period of a Mayor-Declared Local Emergency.

MOTION by Councilmember Eggert to adopt Ordinance No. 1380, Enacted Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, Extending the Period of a Mayor-Declared Local Emergency. Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Wysopal stated staff has been working the last couple weeks on all the details and implications the Coronavirus pandemic with have on the City. He said he would like to share what they have developed.

Mr. Wysopal said this falls under their continuity of operations plan. This is specifically related to infectious disease control, and it is in response to this Declaration of Emergency. They have identified the essential and non-essential services that will be provided by the City and determined how long they will be delivered during this time of emergency. As they know, the

state of emergency the Mayor has declared is somewhat open-ended although they are following very closely what the State and Governor are doing.

Mr. Wysopal stated first they looked at all of the departments, Public Safety, Finance, Community Services, Employee Relations, Public Works and Community Development.

Mr. Wysopal stated first, under Public Safety, they will continue to see police and fire response to emergency services. There may be some procedures the Chief may institute to make sure the City's employees are protected. If you call 911, Anoka County Dispatch will answer, and the City of Fridley police and fire departments will respond to emergencies. The City will provide police and accident reports that normally people are looking for. A little bit later he will be directing them to the City's website for phone calls. They will be issuing the required gun permits and will be doing investigations as required. They will also be doing any other federally or state-mandated items.

Mr. Wysopal stated the Finance Department/City Clerk, will be accepting utility payments and inquiries regarding the utility bills if the inquiries are called in or emailed. They will do final water meter readings because with the new water meters being remote devices, they do not need to go into the home to get that final reading. People who are selling their property and want to get their utilities changed over will be able to do that.

Mr. Wysopal stated they will be processing the bills that will need to be paid and the receivables. They will be doing payroll and benefit administration. They will also be prepared to do any election registration or absentee voting should this pandemic emergency extend beyond this period of time.

Mr. Wysopal stated as to the Public Works Department, the utilities will continue to be monitored and maintained to make sure people's water and sewer work appropriately.

Mr. Wysopal stated the Street Department will be ready to plow streets, fix holes, and those type of things. They will be maintaining City signals and replacing signs as necessary. They will be providing fleet maintenance, particularly for the Public Safety vehicles. They will also be providing building maintenance for the essential services that will be provided at the Civic Center.

Mr. Wysopal stated as to Community Services and Employee Resources, the area that combines both the traditional recreation services and also human resources, they will be continuing the HR support staff. This department also houses the City's communications program and, under times of emergency, getting the word out is important and essential.

Mr. Wysopal stated the Community Development Department will be processing any land use applications that come in. At the present time, there is one that is under that 60-day rule they have to process through. It has been through the Planning Commission, and they need to make sure it gets to the City Council. They need building permits, particularly for new construction. As a modification to the process, they are not going into people's homes but are asking for pictures so they can provide proof that the work was done appropriately.

Mr. Wysopal stated the HRA and City Council have functions they need to continue to do, pay bills, etc. That continues to be an essential service as is refuse and recycling.

Mr. Wysopal stated the City Manager's office will be providing oversight for all those departments. What they looked at is the service delivery for those essential services. What they are saying is people will continue to staff for things such as public safety. If you dial 911 you will see police and fire show up. If there is a utility problem, the utility people will show up to take care of that. They are, though, directing people to the City's website and asking them to email City employees directly. They will have all the directories available on the website so if someone has a particular concern involving recycling or whatever it might be, they will be able to e-mail or phone that employee directly.

Mr. Wysopal stated because of the technology advances, any employees who will be working remotely will have the ability to answer the City's direct phone line at their home.

Mr. Wysopal stated the City will also continue to operate its utility drop box in front of the Civic Campus, and the police phone which is in the vestibule of the front door at the Civic Campus will remain open. Members of the public who need to get to see someone in Public Safety will be able to dial the number on the phone and dispatch will get one of our officers there to attend to their needs.

Mr. Wysopal stated because of the nature of the coronavirus and its spread, limiting the amount of public contact is desirable. Staff is recommending that on Wednesday, March 25, at the close of business until April 6, the Civic Campus be closed. They have been operating on a limited basis. They are to the point, however, where it is necessary to close.

Mr. Wysopal stated if people need to pay for things, they can do it on-line or over the phone. If they need a permit, they can apply for it on-line. They have the workforce ready to serve people. They are asking that with the Council's consent or acceptance of that tonight, they would close the Civic Campus to public entry. All business would take place either on-line or on the phone. If it is a matter of public safety, when you dial 911, they will be there. The park shelters would remain available to people. Generally, they do not start programming those until Memorial Day, so they are open there for people to use. The Springbrook building would remain closed as well, but the park would remain open for people to walk through.

Mr. Wysopal stated he has recommended keeping the City Council meetings and advisory commissions meetings as scheduled. They are not making any changes right now for the City Council meetings; however, the Mayor has the authority to direct the City Council meetings to be held via telephone. The City has that capacity where they could have one person from the Council, from the staff, be here at City Hall to monitor that. All the councilmembers could call in and conduct business that way. A declaration by the Mayor is required to do that. It would be posted on the City's website. They can also use the internet to skype with someone if they needed to. They also have the option of cancelling a City Council meeting if there is not any 60-day rule type of documents that need to be approved. When it comes to paying the bills, the City can approve them administratively under its guidelines under the City's purchasing policy; but they would have to bring them to Council for review at a later date.

Mr. Wysopal said staff is recommending that the Planning Commission meet as needed. They are also recommending EQEC and Parks & Recreation Commission meetings be cancelled until further notice.

Mr. Wysopal talked about services that have been temporarily discontinued. If someone needs a fire inspection of common area apartments, the City is not doing those just yet. The reason for stopping the inspections of commercial properties, etc., is they need to limit the staff who are getting exposed to the public just in case the City needs them to help in their department. In the Finance and City Clerk department, there will be no visits by the assessors. They do not plan to do any until summer. All of the work the assessing is doing will be done on-line.

Mr. Wysopal stated they are also recommending and advising that the liquor store close its operations at the end of the evening on Wednesday as well. They believe that all City employees should be treated fairly and equally. They have been operating very well over the last few days. They have limited the number of customers who can come into the store to 12. They are not asking to declare the liquor store as an essential service even though one could probably make an argument that the financial support it gives to the City is essential. At this time, they are recommending they close operations for the good of the employees' health and to stave the spread of the virus into the public.

Mr. Wysopal stated the Public Works crews will not be doing any park maintenance right now. They will have to reevaluate should this last into the spring and summer when you have a lot growth of the grass and other things, that they might need to take care of. If there are emergency repairs, they certainly can do that as well. The Public works director, Jim Kosluchar, is modifying all of his staff to make sure that not all of the Public Works employees are working at the same time so that if one employee were to be contracting the virus or need to be quarantined, only that group of employees would need to be responding in the same way. He is modifying his workforce in that way, as are all the other departments, and the last few days have allowed them the time to figure those things out. Public Safety has done the same thing.

Mr. Wysopal stated as to the Community Services/Employee Relations Department, they are recommending that all recreation programs be cancelled until further notice. They will continue to plan for the summer and are very hopeful they will have recreation programs for the summer. However, at the present time for the next few weeks they are suspending all those things. They also declare that the Cable Television Service is not a necessary essential service for recording Council meetings and that type of thing.

Mr. Wysopal stated as to Community Development the rental inspections and code enforcement will be temporarily discontinued. They do not think this is particularly the time to be riding on homeowners to do certain things, to clean up, and they are going to be generous about that.

Mr. Wysopal stated, also, the City is not enforcing the temporary sign ordinance right now unless there is a public safety issue. If you have driven around town, you will notice that some of the restaurants have put up temporary signs to note that although they are closed for in-store service, they remain open for car side delivery and that type of thing. They will be allowing that at least during this emergency. The declaration of the emergency by the Mayor and ordinance by

the Council gives the City the ability to adjust those ordinances so they are doing this within its authority during this unusual time.

Mr. Wysopal stated he and the department managers have developed innovative approaches for employees to work remotely and if they need special accommodations. They have a checklist of questions to ask an employee such as whether there is an underlying health issue, do they need to take care of their children, etc. There is a tough balance between protecting the health of the City's employees and the health of the citizens. They did not want everybody to just up and run away and not protect the residents, so they were methodical about its review.

Mr. Wysopal stated since that time, they have approved about 20 employees to work temporarily under a very identifiable work plan. They made sure they had the technology and ability to provide them with the support and the follow-up with their supervisor on a daily basis. They have prepared for this and as an organization, he can tell Council they are ready to close the doors, do business on-line, do business by phone; and they will still respond to 911 and utility concerns. They have modified their work force, so they do not inadvertently spread the disease.

Mr. Wysopal said finally, they are also trying to balance all these things with the new federal laws that relate to the Family Medical Leave Act to make sure they are compliant. They want to make sure that when this is over and are back to normal operations, they do it in a manner that does not jeopardize anyone's health. When they reopen, they have to make sure everyone is reasonably healthy. They are not letting anybody come back who could infect others and then go through this cycle again.

Mayor Lund stated he thinks it is very prudent. If they err, it is on the side of safety because that is paramount. He believes the liquor store is meeting the social distancing rule and taking the necessary steps more so than other places he has seen. You go to Sam's Club on a Saturday, there is no way there was any social distancing or anything.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked whether the bathroom would be closed at Springbrook and only the park itself open.

Mr. Wysopal replied, the bathrooms are open right now. If we go forward with the closure, they would recommend closing the bathrooms.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked whether they anticipate any layoffs.

Mr. Wysopal replied they are not promising there will not be layoffs, but they have done everything they can to make sure that the City will not have to lay anybody off. He asked Mr. Tienter about the liquor store.

Daniel Tienter, Director of Finance/City Treasurer/City Clerk, replied, as they have closed the liquor store, they have identified in the City's work plan some additional projects that can occur for the immediate future. However, if this were to drag on for a series of, say, a month or so, they may have to make some decisions, especially with the part-time staff, about whether they

could continue to work until the liquor stores open again. He thought they would end up furloughing them until such a time when they could return to work when the liquor stores are open.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked as to the e-mail, if someone is out or out sick, then automatically do they attach their e-mail account to someone else if. If, for example, Mr. Tienter is out then whoever is next in line would answer his e-mails?

Mr. Wysopal replied that is a great process issue for them on customer service. As they are writing up their requirements, they will make sure that is included that if the employee is not working that day or is sick, that they forward the e-mail to their boss so they can keep track of those things.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked and as to continued updates, anyone who is on the website will know what is going on because she knows they have heard from our President, but she does not believe that on April 6 this is going to be over. It will be ongoing for some time.

Mr. Wysopal replied there will be periodic updates.

Councilmember Bolkcom states her last question is for the Director of Public Safety, she asked whether the City has plenty of masks and safety equipment for Public Works and Public Safety.

Brian Weierke, Director of Public Safety, replied they actually stocked up pretty well for the H1N1 about six, seven years ago; and they have had them in stock ever since. Thankfully they did that and are in really good shape as far as PPE equipment.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated one of the things she has heard is when there is a safety call put out, the firemen go in and if they need the police, they direct them to come in so they are also doing some of that protection for the staff if they do not need to enter, is that correct?

Director Weierke replied, they did make some procedural changes with the way they have dealt with medicals. Right now, Fire is the responding unit. The officers are going to each one because sometimes they will go on a medical and find there was actually a crime that had occurred and may need to follow up on that. Once they get there, they are staying outside, to minimize the amount of staff who are exposed. Fire Departments, EMT, EMR trained personnel are taking the steps to go in and take care of it. They are also working with Allina who is doing a terrific job in responding and getting them out of there in a quick fashion. If they are getting reports of flu-like symptoms, etc., they are not going in at all and letting Allina take care of it. They made that change two weeks ago.

Mayor Lund stated he has heard there is a call out from Allina for masks and people are actually making them. He asked if they knew what the status was and if they need to reach out to the community for assistance.

Director Weierke replied they will always be looking for masks. The National Guard is out commandeering masks right now and giving them out to some of the health care facilities. However, Allina has reached out to Fridley personally and said if there is anyone who is willing to make them or if somebody is stockpiling them to please drop them off at the local hospitals to let them use them.

Director Weierke stated and to answer the question about whether they could use more help, absolutely! If there are people in the community who have the ability and the fabric to make those and help out, just give them a call or contact the Public Safety Department who will get them to the person they can talk to about dropping them off and what needs to be done.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated just to be clear, those masks do not take the place of N-95's. They go over the top or underneath to protect so that when those are soiled, they still have their N-95 masks. It is an important thing and it is great that people are helping out. The Minnesota Nurse Association got thousands of masks that were delivered at the MNA Office so that has really helped, and she knows there are a bunch coming in from out state, too.

Councilmember Eggert stated they have heard about all the economic impacts on family, people, jobs, employment. He would say in Mr. Wysopal's determination going forward with staff, he understands they have a full complement of staff now and some of the programming and things going forward the City may not be hiring part-time people. He would urge Mr. Wysopal to seriously consider in the case of the liquor store, consideration for those part-time employees. The economic impacts, even for part-time employees, are critical, too.

Mr. Wysopal replied, well received. Mr. Tienter was referencing some other projects and things where they could move some of those employees to if they needed to. They have the liquor store, too, on Central where they are looking at doing some rehabilitation work inside, so they do have some opportunities. However, absolutely, the employees have been good to the City; and they want to be good to them.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked whether the extension for tax filing impacts the City's funds.

Mr. Wysopal replied, it will if this continues. City staff is working on "what if" scenarios.

Councilmember Ostwald asked if they have seen any increase in calls for help or questions for assistance related to the health concerns right now.

Director Weierke replied, no, they have actually seen the opposite. Usually on a typical day, they will have about 100 to 120 pages of police calls from the night before. However, now there are maybe 40 pages. They have also changed some of their procedures. They are taking reports over the phone. They are meeting people at the door and asking them to come outside. They are asking them to go on-line. These procedures have helped that. They are seeing people actually doing a very nice job of behaving themselves and helping Public Safety and understanding what is going on.

MOTION by Councilmember Bolkcom to continue the City's Operation Plan for Infectious Disease Control dated March 23, 2020. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

14. Informal Status Reports

There were no reports.

ADJOURN:

MOTION by Councilmember Ostwald, seconded by Councilmember Eggert, to adjourn.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Denise M. Johnson
Recording Secretary

Scott J. Lund
Mayor