

City of Rockford, Minnesota Special Council Meeting Minutes 12:00 p.m., Friday, November 13th, 2020

The City Council Meeting was called to Order by Mayor Renee Hafften at approximately 12 p.m. Council Members Scott Seymour and Rick Martinson were present. Debbie Buoy was absent.

City Administrator / Attorney, Dan Madsen was also in attendance.

New Business: Canvassing Board Oath of Office

Administrator / Attorney Madsen swore in members of the Rockford City Council by giving them the Canvassing Board Oath.

New Business: Resolution #20-53 Canvass the 2020 Rockford Municipal Elections

Madsen then reviewed the canvassing documentation and Resolution, and read aloud the votes of each candidate running for a position on the Rockford City Council. After recital and review, **MOTION** was made by Hafften, and seconded by Martinson, to approve Resolution #20-53 and Certify the 2020 General Election Results.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Martinson and Seymour.

New Business: Resolution #20-54 Appointing Council Vacancy

Administrator / Attorney Madsen explained that he had discussed how to fill the position vacated by Councilman Ted Hill on August 31st, 2020. The Council had met several times over the past few months to review the best path forward on filling the vacancy. The Council again discussed the option of holding a Special Election, and the option of making an appointment to fill the vacancy. The Council then discussed whether it was better to accept applications or to appoint the third highest vote getter in the municipal election. As discussed previously by the Council, candidates for Council sign up and run campaigns and are thereby vetted by the community as to their fitness to serve on the City Council. Madsen read from the Memorandum and Resolution, highlighting that less than one percent vote difference separated the second and third candidates, and only a two percent vote difference separated the first to the third candidate for City Council.

The Council discussed and interpreted the close election results as an indicator that all of the candidates were nearly equally desired by the community and were all therefore fit to serve. After additional policy discussion and review, including the challenges of holding a special election, the detriment and benefit of appointing now versus

accepting applications, and the current status of the City Council, **MOTION** was made by Hafften, and seconded by Martinson, to appoint Scott Seymore to fill Ted Hill's vacated seat and pass Resolution #20-54 to that effect. It was noted by Mayor Hafften that the Council would have four seated members until January, when Denise Willenbring would take the oath of Office, and that this was an acceptable scenario given all of the circumstances involved.

Motion Carried: voting in favor, Hafften and Martinson. Seymour abstained as the member being appointed.

New Business: Resolution #20-55 Accepting CARES Act Funds from the City of Greenfield

Administrator / Attorney Madsen explained that the City of Greenfield had made a generous donation of a portion of their Cares Act funds in the amount of \$22,000 to the City of Rockford for use to support the Rockford Fire Department. Madsen explained that the funds would be applied to the Fire Department payroll during the Cares Act covered period. Members of the Staff and Council thanked the Council and Staff of Greenfield for the generous donation. **MOTION** was made by Martinson, and seconded by Seymour, to approve Resolution #20-55 accepting the donation.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Martinson and Seymour.

New Business: Accepting Cares Act Grant Agreement

Administrator / Attorney Madsen explained that Staff had drafted the attached Grant Agreement to be signed by all businesses and nonprofits receiving grant funds under the Cares Act Small Business and Nonprofit Grant Programs. Staff and the Council reviewed the Agreement and noted that the terms were consistent with the programs. **MOTION** was made by Martinson, and seconded by Seymour, to approve the Grant Agreement.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Martinson and Seymour.

Old Business: Resolution #20-56 / Fourth CARES Act Expenditures

Administrator / Attorney Madsen outlined the history and policy of the three previous Cares Act Resolutions, and then this last Fourth Resolution approving municipal purchases with Cares Act Funds.

Madsen explained that the first purchase highlighted were for webcams for all Staff computers, including Public Works and the Fire Chief. These would allow staff to teleconference from their computers and workstations with other staff and other

consultants and people without needing to meet in person. Each webcam cost \$179.99, with the total being \$2,125.91.

The second purchase proposed was for Public Works Phones that were the same, and on the same network, as City Hall. These phones can be taken home and used remotely, and the total cost was \$247.78. The phones even ring at home if the city number is called, so long as the phone is hooked up. That allows for easier and better remote work, and less need to venture into the office if illness or Executive Order prohibit such travel.

The third purchase was for laptops for the Council, Staff and Public Works vehicles that would allow and support distance work in case of illness or Executive Order closure. The Council requested laptops based upon their ability to use them and ease of use, noting that the laptops had cameras built in that were zoom capable. Staff recommended three laptops for City Hall use so Staff could use them if necessary or if they needed to be home due to illness or Executive Order. Laptops for Public Works vehicles allowed them to work independently, not need to group up or meet at Public Works to share information, and communication could be now held while on site without needing to return to Public Works for maps or to share additional information with others.

All of these were found by the Council to be valid purchases to support municipal operations and staff safety due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. These purchases totaled \$31,044.49.

Finally, Madsen explained that the final purchases: video cameras, city hall phones, and laptops for staff and council. All unused funds, including any residual revenue due to clerical error or oversight, of the remaining Cares Act Funds be used to pay down the Payroll portion of the Sheriff's Contract. Madsen highlighted and reviewed the detailed spreadsheet that provided that just over 74% of the City's hourly rate of \$78.25 per hour was paid as "payroll costs" to the County. As such, these costs could be paid by Cares Act funds. The City had approximately \$80,000 remaining in Cares Act Funds that were recommended to be put towards this Payroll cost.

Members of the Council and Staff reviewed the Memorandum and Resolution and discussed closing out the Cares Act Funds as provided therein.

MOTION was made by Seymour, and seconded by Martinson, to approve Resolution #20-56 purchases noted and to use any and all remaining Cares Act Funds to pay for the

payroll costs of the Sheriff's Contract during the Cares Act covered period as provided in the Resolution.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Martinson and Seymour.

Adjournment:

Motion was then made by Seymour, and seconded by Martinson, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION Carried: Voting in favor; Hafften, Martinson and Seymour and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:25 p.m.

Typed this 16th day of November, 2020.

Dan Madsen

City Administrator, Special Counsel

City of Rockford Minnesota

All meetings of the Rockford City Council are video recorded and available for viewing on-line at www.cityofrockford.org. Meeting minutes are intended to be a general synopsis of the meetings of the City Council, and more detail regarding discussions and policy considerations is provided by watching the recording of the meeting.

Approved:

Renee Hafften
Mayor

Attest:

Dan Madsen
City Administrator, Special Counsel