

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS MN
ANOKA COUNTY

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
OCTOBER 15, 2018

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

Members present: Mayor Steve Feldman, Councilmember Joe Muehlbauer, Robert Bauer, Rich Skordahl

Members absent: Jerry Tveit

Also present: Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps, (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), City Engineer Craig Jochum (Hakanson Anderson), City Administrator, Joe Kohlmann, Community Development Director, Kate Thunstrom, Police Chief, Todd Schwieger, Fire Chief, Dave Schmidt, Public Works Director, Paul Teicher, Liquor Store Manager, John Schmidt, Finance Director Darcy Mulvihill & Acct Tech/Deputy Clerk, Lori Streich

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA BY MUEHLBAUER, SECONDED BY BAUER; ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSES.

4. CONSENT AGENDA - *All matters listed within the Consent Agenda are considered routine items to be enacted upon by one motion by the City Council. Items on the Consent Agenda are reviewed in total by the City Council and may be approved through one motion with no further discussion by the Council. Any item may be removed by any Council Member, staff member or person from the public for separate consideration.*

A. City Council Minutes – October 1, 2018

B. Proclamation proclaiming October as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” – Res. 2018-36

C. Embedded Systems, Inc. Contract Renewal for 2019

D. Authorization to Join MESERB (MN Environmental Science & Economic Board)

Resolution 2018-37 and Joint Powers Agreement

E. Payment of Claims

Councilmember Bauer wanted to make the public aware that they are proclaiming October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Wear purple and show your support on Thursday.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA BY BAUER, SECONDED BY MUEHLBAUER; ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSES.

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sarah Udvig 3709 229TH Lane NW thanked Police Chief Schwieger and Fire Chief Schmidt. They are doing an excellent job. Too often they are not thanked. She also attended the french toast breakfast at the fire station, and it was a wonderful event.

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS

NOTHING

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

NOTHING

8. OLD BUSINESS

NOTHING

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 243, Second Series – Approving the Sale of City owned Real Estate (First Reading)

Kohlmann explained that they have a piece of real estate that was a remnant from the Bridge Street project. The County purchased the home to put a road through. This is the piece of leftover land and the County insisted that the City take possession of it. The adjoining property owner approached the city inquiring on purchasing this particular piece of property. If the city is interested in getting rid of it, Public Works and Community Development have identified no need for it whatsoever. We were just stuck with it, so to speak. It could be declared surplus and authorize moving forward with the potential sale through negotiation with the property owner.

Feldman said this designated area is a thin area and there are three homes in that area. Two were taken down, and this individual resident was not taken down. They lost the privacy that they had before that road came in because they cut down the trees. It's basically a narrow piece of land that is no good to anyone, and they are willing to buy it at a reasonable price. What they want to do with it is put up a berm with evergreens so they can get their privacy back because there is a lot of traffic on that road.

Muehlbauer thinks it's a good idea to get it sold if it doesn't do us any good.

Bauer said that he drives by this property every day. They lost a lot of privacy when that road went through. Every single holiday this property owner had decorated their home. A couple of years ago they had some vandalism and then refused to put their decorations out anymore. Bauer would hope that our residents would support them and give them some privacy again. He wants to thank this property and hopes that they would decorate their home again. This was one of the better homes to be decorated and to see them have to stop, it's sad.

Skordahl said that if we do not have to go out into the market and try to get the best deal, and if the city doesn't have a use for it, then he's all for the idea of letting this run its course and seeing if we can come to an agreement.

Feldman agrees with everything that has been said and since it's really good to nobody but this property owner, and the fact that they are interested in buying it for a reasonable price, it would be a good thing all the way around.

MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 243, SECOND SERIES – APPROVING THE SALE OF CITY OWNED REAL ESTATE (FIRST READING) BY BAUER, SECONDED BY SKORDAHL; ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSES.

ROLL CALL AYES: SKORDAHL, MUEHLBAUER, FELDMAN, BAUER
 NAYES: NONE

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Attending tonight's meeting is local St. Francis Cub Scouts Pack 511. They are a group of local 5th grade students whose objective is learning about local government in action.

The Cub Scouts had prepared a few questions such as how a bill becomes a law, and why Feldman wanted to become the Mayor.

Council and City Administrator Kohlmann discussed and answered their questions.

11. REPORTS

A. Department Reports – Police Department – Quarterly Report
Public Works – Monthly Report

B. Councilmember Reports -

C. Upcoming Events –

- Oct 17 Planning Commission Meeting @ St. Francis Area Schools District Office 7 pm
- Oct 20 Recycling Event @ LePage and Sons 9 am to noon
- Oct 27 Free paper Shredding & Leaf Drop-Off @ Public Works Facility 8 am – noon
- Nov 5 City Council Meeting @ St. Francis Area Schools District Office 6 pm
- Nov 6 Election Day – Polls open from 7 am to 8 pm

Police Department-Quarterly Report

Chief Schwieger explained the Police Department Quarterly Report.

Their call load went up slightly, by just about 100 more calls than 2nd quarter. Incidents that they saw an increase in were assaults, domestic type situations and juvenile activity which is pretty common in the summer months, as well as DWI's.

Officers were also busy over the summer working several TZD (Towards Zero Death) initiatives in areas of seat belt and speed enforcement. They are doing a great job of getting these drivers off the road that shouldn't be on.

Also in the 3rd quarter, officers attended and completed many mandatory trainings such as Emergency Vehicle Operators Course, CPR First Aid, Department shoots and several online courses that they participated in. Officers have also begun to complete the newly mandated training in areas of conflict management, cultural diversity, crisis intervention and mental illness.

Effective this year, Minnesota police officers need to complete 16 hours of continuing education in this category in order to renew their licenses every three years.

Officers have also continued to participate in the outreach efforts. August's National Night Out was a huge success. There are several more events this Fall that they will be participating in. Next month they are having a senior fraud seminar that looks like it will be a good turn-out. An anti-bullying pizza party is planned for area school kids in October. They are hoping to have another Winning With Cops event before the year is up. They just had one last week and it was another good turn-out.

The Police Department application closed today for the police officer opening. They are hoping to have an officer at least at the field training status by the first of the year.

Feldman said that as he's been walking around the neighborhoods, he's gotten a lot of good compliments on the Police Department. Residents like the committee oriented way of thinking, making the police officers more accessible and approachable. Chief Schwieger took the ball and ran with it and he appreciates that.

Muehlbauer likes the reports that come out. They are very detailed. Anyone can look at the packets if they want to know what's going on in the city, and he encourages people to do that. He thanked the Police Department for being community oriented. He got an opportunity to speak to Officer Heeren and Sergeant Larson and compliments them as well.

Skordahl asked about the new training for officers to deal with people with mental health issues and how that's helping the officers.

Chief Schwieger said that the training itself is not necessarily new, but as of July 1, 2018, it became mandated for police officers in Minnesota to complete this continuing education in order to renew their license. They did have an officer last year attend a week long CIT (Crisis Intervention Training), which includes scenario type of training that they can learn how to talk to different people with different disorders in order to communicate with them better. The training that the officers attended last week is kind of along that same line but a little combination of reaction, cultural diversity, things that police officers do that they may not be aware that they are doing, and what they could change to make a scene go a little better. It's really all about communication, recognizing different things, and different ways of interacting with people with some types of different stages of mental illness to achieve better outcomes.

Skordahl commends the Police Department for everything they are doing and really likes the community based efforts and said to keep it up.

Bauer commented that the reports are good and the graphs are easy to read. He also said to close your garage doors if you don't want burglars, and although we are getting past motor cycle season, please be watchful of motorcycles. It's not that hard to see them, their lights are on all the time now.

Feldman wanted everyone to know that as the city and population grows, there are some things that will change, like the DWI's and the burglaries, but the police force is on top of it. One thing that Chief Schwieger has brought to this city is a community way of thinking. The police are approachable, and you can bring your concerns to them if you want them corrected. They cannot read your mind though.

Public Works – Monthly Report

Teicher said that September is normally a time where things are transitioning from green to brown and they are able to do other tasks, other than mowing, but they had a very green September and continued to mow and mow and mow and they are continuing to mow to this date.

In the water and sewer report, the removals are continuing to be of really high percentage in our constituents that were taken out of the wastewater and the water so that continues to work well. They did have a couple of pumps plugged again due to rags at the Ambassador lift station. Until people realize that rags are really an issue, we will continue to see those pumps plugged.

Bauer said that as we are getting toward the debris and last mowing, as residents, mow the first couple of rows from the street inward, sweep it up yourself, or bag it. Because if you blow the grass into the street and it goes into the storm drain, we have to pay our city employees more man hours to go dig that stuff out. We can save money by doing our fair share. We have 2 rags that were flushed. It takes two man hours to remove each rag that plugs one of our pumps. That's unacceptable. We are all paying this bill to keep our new wastewater facility up and running, and it's not a trash can. Please do not flush the rags.

Skordahl agreed with Bauer and added that if the system doesn't work and it backs up into your basement, you are cleaning it up. That's your insurance company, your efforts to clean it up, your problem. If someone in your neighborhood caused that backup, everyone is going to be mad. Quit putting rags down the toilet. Nice report like always.

Muehlbauer said he was listening to KFan and they were talking about the flushable wipes.

Feldman wanted to point out to the public that if you have a question on your meter, and you look at your bill and see a spike in it, give a call to Public Works and they will get a work order for staff to come out. Most of the time they find that flappers are the real cause for leaks in the toilet. He's also put water tips on the website.

Feldman said that the city is in a good place right now with growth for the first time in 12 years. There are a lot of plans coming forth on Bridge Street for development and signs will be seen shortly on that. Demolition starts for the church this month and the sign will read "Clearing away for future retail development on Bridge Street based on residents feedback from the St. Francis forward plan". He encourages everyone to read the packets and newsletters.

Councilmember Reports

Bauer said that October 24th is anti-bullying day. When he was growing up bullying was a big deal. It still is in our schools, and needs to take hold on our children and into the future to deal with and it comes from parenting. Stop bullying. All kids are amazing but bullying is still a problem.

He also wanted to thank the Police Department for all of the events that they have put on throughout the year. Thank you to the Fire Department for hosting the French toast breakfast. And thank you to the residents for coming out.

Skordahl reminded everyone that election day is coming up. If you can't vote in person, you can absentee vote Monday thru Thursday, 7:00 am – 5:30 pm.

Muehlbauer attended the French Toast breakfast at the Fire Station and it was nice to see the community getting together. He's also working on a more permanent solution for microphones. There are a couple different options out there and it can probably be done for under \$3,000. He will get it together and bring the information to a work session.

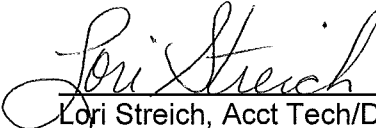
Feldman went to the French Toast Breakfast, the food was great, and he had a lot of fun talking to the public. He agrees that bullying is a problem. In his day, it was up close and personal. He can't emphasize enough between parenting and when a problem is brought to attention about this, don't take it lightly. The best way to handle it is to nip it in the bud as soon as possible. We've heard stories that it goes too far, and bad things happen. He commends the Police Department for being active in this.

Nixle is a program that is simple to sign up for. It allows the city to alert residents on school closings, road closures, storm alerts, etc. All you have to do is text "FRANCIS" (not case sensitive) to 888-777, zip code 55070. You can make it fit to your needs. It is a free service from the city and you can cancel anytime.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 6:44 pm

Respectfully submitted by:


Lori Streich, Acct Tech/Deputy Clerk