

City of Loretto
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
279 N. Medina Street, Council Chambers
November 14, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Koch called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Mayor Kent Koch, Council Members Brenda Daniels, Greg Elsen, and Ben Scanlon.

Members absent: Council Member Melissa Markham

Also present: Medina Police Sergeant Dave Hall, Stantec Engineer Nick Wyers, Public Works Director Jake Leuer, and City Clerk Treasurer Mary Schneider.

There were no people in the audience.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. SET AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

4. MEDINA PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

Medina Police Sergeant Hall presented the October Police Report, noting 92 total calls for service, of which 80 were general patrols.

5. OPEN FORUM

No one came forward to speak during the Open Forum.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Resolution 2023-35, Designating 2024 Polling Place
- b. Resolution 2023-36, Renewing Mayor's Monarch Pledge for 2024
- c. End Probationary Period for Michelle Palmer, Approve Wage Increase
- d. Ratify Mediacom Service Agreement
- e. Siren Maintenance Agreement Renewal
- f. Paid Time Off Policy Amendment
- g. Holiday Tree Placement
- h. City Council Minutes of October 12, 2023
- i. November Bills
- j. Monthly Balance Sheet

On a motion by Daniels, seconded by Scanlon, to approve the CONSENT AGENDA as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

7. ACTION/PLANNING

a. Special Assessment Policy

Council reviewed Street Reconstruction Bonds as an alternative to Improvement Bonds when the special assessment percentage is below the twenty percent threshold required for Improvement Bonds. Clerk Treasurer Schneider noted that Street Reconstruction Bonds would be appropriate for the 2023 Street Project if the Council chose to adopt Option No. 3 from the engineering memo as the method for assessing corner properties.

Schneider noted that with Option No. 3, properties would be 100% assessed when the street improvement includes the street that matches the property address. If over fifty percent of the length address street is improved, the assessment would be triggered. Utilities would be fully assessed at the time of replacement.

Council directed Schneider to bring back an amended Special Assessment Policy to the December council meeting, adding Option 3 from the engineering memo for assessing corner properties with language added on how to assess Medina Street corner properties.

b. Resolution 2023-31, Ordering 2023 Street Improvement and Preparation of Plans

On a motion by Scanlon, seconded by Daniels, to adopt Resolution 2023-31, A RESOLUTION ORDERING IMPROVEMENT AND PREPARATION OF PLANS FOR THE 2023 STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council directed Schneider to work with Northland Securities on next steps for Street Reconstruction Bonds for the 2023 Street Improvement Project and send letters to affected property owners letting them know the status of the improvement project.

Engineer Nick Wyers stated that the timing of going out for bids will be tight and a special meeting in late January may be needed to keep on schedule for the bonding process.

c. Pond and Ditch Cleanout Project Quotes

On a motion by Scanlon, seconded by Elsen, to award the ditch project to Blackstone Contractors, LLC for \$13,966.12 and the base quote for the 2023-24 Pond Maintenance project to Blackstone Contractors, LLC for \$118,638.33.

Motion carried unanimously.

d. County Road 19 Watermain Project Open House – Setting Date and Time

On a motion by Elsen, seconded by Daniels, to hold an Open House for the County Road 19 Watermain Project at City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, November 28th from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Hiring Permanent Part-time Public Works Employee

Council directed staff to proceed with the hiring process for a public works maintenance worker and bring back a recommendation to hire to the December meeting.

f. Bonding Bill Projects

Council discussed projects that could be pursued for bonding bill funding, including the Water Treatment Improvement Project and Stormwater Pond Cleanout Projects. Mayor Koch stated the Water Treatment Project could cost four to five million dollars, depending on when it happens, and there are multiple stormwater ponds that will need to be cleaned out in the coming years. Koch stated he saw a past bonding bill award for a small city similar to Loretto where the language read "predesign, design and construct waste water, clean water and storm water infrastructure." Koch stated that something similar may serve Loretto well for the projects mentioned.

Council Member Elsen asked if the city would be required to do the project if the funding were awarded, is there a local match required, and is it possible to get full funding for a project. Koch stated the City would still have final authority to approve moving forward on a project, there is no local match required and it is possible to get full funding. Koch stated the bonding bills are legal documents, and it's important to get the language right.

Council consensus was to move forward with working with our legislators on a bonding request for the Water Treatment Improvement Project and Stormwater Pond Cleanout Projects.

8. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. Holiday Train - December 13, 2023
Council reviewed. No action taken.
- b. Hennepin County HERC Communication
Council reviewed. No action taken.
- c. Hennepin County Proposed Property Tax Comparisons
Council reviewed. No action taken.

9. MONTHLY STAFF REPORTS

- a. City Hall
 - 1) Budget Discussion

Schneider reported that the two watermain breaks on County Road 19 cost the city over \$90,000 in repairs. Due to this depletion of the city's reserves, Schneider recommended a fifteen percent increase to the water utility rates, instead of the ten percent that was discussed at the Budget Workshop. Council directed Schneider to bring the fifteen percent increase to the December meeting.

Council discussed adding a security deposit to the Park Rental Fee Schedule, to provide a method for the city to recoup losses when the city incurs additional costs resulting from field use. Council directed Schneider to bring this back to the December meeting.
 - 2) Additional Meeting Logs

Schneider requested additional meeting logs be turned in by December first, so council compensation checks can be ready for the December council meeting.
 - 3) 2024 Council Meeting Schedule

Council reviewed. No action taken.
- b. Streets

No items were brought forward.
- c. Water
 - 1) EPA Water Technical Assistance for Pilot Study

Schneider reported that the Water Treatment Pilot Study appears to be eligible for federal grants through the EPA Water Technical Assistance Program. Council directed Schneider to check with Stantec if there would be additional engineering costs that should be added to the grant request and proceed with the application. Mayor Koch stated there may be technical support for filling out the application and recommended reaching out to Congressman Phillips' office for assistance.

Schneider reported MXU box installations are approximately thirty-six percent complete.
- d. Wastewater

Public Works Director Jake Leuer reported on backups at the wastewater lift station due to rags getting caught up in the pumps. Leuer stated he is working with the pump company to replace them and looking at different options for pumps. Leuer stated the rags are a combination of

disposable wipes and cloth rags that people flush down toilets after which they make their way to the lift station pumps.

Council discussed the financial impacts of the changeover from private sewer ponds to joining the Metropolitan Council Environmental System. Koch noted the city's 2024 Municipal Wastewater Charge came in significantly higher than what was estimated. This is likely due to surface water (rain and snow melt) that is collected in the sewer ponds and is getting pumped through the system.

Council directed Schneider to prepare a financial summary showing the impact of the changeover.

- e. Parks
No items were brought forward.
- f. Stormwater
No items were brought forward.

10. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Koch reported on four meetings he attended over the past month: Northwest Hennepin League of Municipalities; West Suburban Fire Quarterly Meeting; Highway 55 Corridor; Future Fire Services Meeting.

11. ADJOURN

On a motion by Daniels, seconded by Scanlon, to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.
Motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

Mary K. Schneider, City Clerk Treasurer

Kent Koch, Mayor