

City Council Proceedings

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State of Minnesota
Counties of Scott & Le Sueur
City of New Prague

} Special City Council Meeting
Monday, March 1, 2021

Conducted via GoToMeeting due to the COVID-19 Pandemic which is preventing attendance at the regular meeting location.

Mayor Duane Jirik called the online meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Jirik, Bass, Ryan, Seiler, and Wolf

Staff Present Online: Mike Johnson, Ken Ondich, Matt Rynda, Barb Ulschmid, and Ken Zweber

Others Present Online: EDA Board President Brent Quast, EDA Board Member Troy Pint and Patrick Fisher.

Mayor Jirik asked if there were any additions to the Council agenda? There being none, motion by Seiler, seconded by Bass to approve the Agenda as published. By roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion carried (4-0).

Planning/Community Development Director Ken Ondich explained to the Council that the New Prague Utilities Commission (NPUC) and City of New Prague had applied for a variance to construct an addition onto the existing building located at 200 7th Street NW to allow the construction of a building addition less than the normally required 40' front setback to both 7th Street NW and 1st Ave. NW. While completing background work on the variance request, it was noted that the property on which the building currently sits is two different parcels with a 16.5' platted public right-of-way between them. The proposed building addition would encroach into the existing right of way and therefore it is necessary to vacate the unused right of way. The vacation will ultimately allow the two parcels to be combined into one parcel, thereby "cleaning up" the site by having one remaining parcel.

6:03 p.m. Councilmember Wolf joined the meeting.

Director Ondich indicated that Staff does not believe there are any utility lines (public or private) located in the right of way to be vacated. Since the Introduction of the Ordinance, the public notice was published in the New Prague Times and notices were mailed directly to utility companies so they could provide comments on the vacation request. There were no concerns from any utility company.

Mayor Jirik officially opened the public hearing at 6:04 p.m. and allowed for public comment. Adam Obermeyer with Bevcomm Communications asked for clarification regarding a fiber that runs north and south along the boulevard and wanted to make sure that was OK as is. Director Ondich stated the fiber is OK as is and would not be vacating the existing easement that lies along that side of property and can stay in place.

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There be no additional comments, motion by Bass, seconded by Wolf to close the Public Hearing at 6:06 p.m.

Motion by Ryan, seconded by Bass to approve the *ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE #320 VACATING CERTAIN PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY IN THE PLAT OF NEW PRAGUE OUTLETS*. By roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

EDA President Brent Quast provided an overview of the Summary Report on EDA Activities and Community Economic Indicators. The Councilmembers thanked Mr. Quast for his time and the details provided and brought the Council up to date on all the good done for the City. Councilmember Bass inquired about discussion she's heard on an Indoor Shooting Range to be possibly going within Industrial Park. Ondich said a Public Hearing took place at last week's Planning meeting for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment and will likely be placed on the March 15th Council Agenda for further discussion.

Planning/Community Development Director Ken Ondich requested approval of a resolution covering a variance request presented at the February 24, 2021 Planning Commission meeting. There were no public comments received on this agenda item and it was unanimously approved. The applicants, City of New Prague and New Prague Utilities Commission, are proposing to construct a 95' x 145' (13,775 sq. ft.) building addition onto their existing 80' x 100' shop located at 200 7th Street NW. The building height would be similar to the existing building at approximately 22' tall. The space is needed for increased parking and equipment storage, a dedicated wash bay, additional parts storage, staff office and work areas as well as modern rest rooms, locker rooms and lunchroom areas which will provide for an adequate working space for the water and electric department field service personnel for 15 to 20 years of anticipated growth.

Motion by Ryan, seconded by Bass to approve *RESOLUTION 21-03-01-01 APPROVING VARIANCE (#V1-2021) TO ALLOW A BUILDING VARIANCE FROM THE FRONT YARD SETBACK ALONG 7TH STREET NW FROM 40' TO 29.7', A BUILDING VARIANCE FROM THE FRONT YARD SETBACK ALONG 1ST AVE., NW FROM 40' TO 16.3' AND FINALLY A PARKING LOT VARIANCE FROM THE FRONT YARD ALONG 7TH STREET NW FROM 15' TO 8.7' LOCATED AT 200 7TH STREET NW, NEW PRAGUE, MN*. By roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

Mayor Jirik revisited City Administrator Mike Johnson's letter of retirement/resignation submitted at the February 16, 2021 City Council meeting with a retirement date effective August 20, 2021. Mayor Jirik asked the Council on how they would like to proceed to fill this pending vacancy. General information was provided for review and to be used for the City Administrator Hiring Discussion.

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Also, as background for this discussion, Mayor Jirik explained how he was involved in the City's 2008 search recruitment process when he was a Councilmember and they utilized an Executive Search Firm for the City Administrator position. At that time, Jerry Bohnsack was retiring after 32 years of service to the City and was replaced by Mr. Johnson. Mayor Jirik also explained that the City can post the vacancy internally and handle the process that way should the Council so chose. The Council discussed and agreed by utilizing an Executive Search Firm (3rd party provider), they have the expertise to find qualified candidates, schedule the interviews and weed through the candidate list for the Council. Also, these firms provide a replacement guarantee should the selected candidate not work out. The City Administrator position is a vital position to the City. Several Councilmembers shared they have experience in working with an Executive Search Firm. The Council agreed they would like a 3rd party provider taking them through the process and agreed in receiving RFP's from the four (4) Executive Search Firms on the services they can provide and the cost.

Mayor Jirik informed the Council he intends to get the Council RFP's of the four companies provided by City Administrator Johnson. Mr. Johnson explained that he received the names of the following four companies from other Cities that used Executive Search Firms for their professional services. (1. Baker Tilly US, LLP, St. Paul; 2. DDA Human Resources Inc., St. Bonifacius; 3. GOVHR USA, Cottage Grove; 4. The Mercer Group, Inc., Mendota Heights;) within this meeting's packet for review for the next City Council meeting on March 15th.

After discussion, motion by Jirik, seconded by Bass to go forward with requesting RFP's from Baker Tilly US, LLP, DDA Human Resources Inc., GOVHR USA, and The Mercer Group, Inc. By roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

Mayor Jirik asked if there were any questions on the Consent Agenda. There being none, motion by Seiler, seconded by Wolf to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- A. February 16, 2021 Special City Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Claims for Payment - March 1, 2021
- C. Approval of 2021-2022 Liquor, Beer, Wine and Miscellaneous Licenses - City Administrator Johnson
- D. Approval of League of MN Cities Liability Coverage Waiver Form
- E. MN Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit (Raffle) for New Prague Clay Target Club event on May 27, 2021 at the American Legion Clubroom, 300 Lexington Ave. S., New Prague.

By roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

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Miscellaneous Items:

Mike Johnson - Followed up with the Council on the scheduling of a special joint meeting with the City Council and New Prague Utilities Commission to update the Compensation Plan, discuss Pay Comp Issues, Pay Equity, etc. Hasn't been reviewed since 2014 (7 years ago). The Council agreed to schedule the meeting for Tuesday, March 9th and decided on 5:00 p.m. as the start time. Also present at the meeting as a Consultant will be Leah Davis - CPA, President of AEM Workforce Solutions partner with Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP, an auditing firm that also helped with the adoption of the updated Personnel Policy.

Mike welcomed Matt Rynda to his first Council meeting as the Public Works Director.

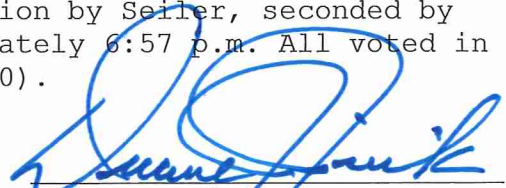
Matt Rynda - Spoke with Deutsch Construction, the Contractor that's taking down the Armory. They have plans to start demolishing the inside this week. Next week, potentially the outside of the building pending weather conditions.

There being no additional business, motion by Seiler, seconded by Wolf to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:57 p.m. All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried (5-0).

ATTEST:



Michael J. Johnson
City Administrator



Duane J. Jirik
Mayor