

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular Council meeting, Monday, November 20, 2023, at 6:02 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at 1850 Lewis Avenue with Mayor Leon Rockingham, Jr. presiding.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. INVOCATION

IV. ROLL CALL

Upon roll call being taken, the following members were present:

Present: Jackson, Evans, Allen, Murphy, January

Absent: Coleman, Smith

Mayor Rockingham asked Alderman Coleman the reason for absence; Alderman Coleman said work.

Alderman January moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to approve remote participation via Zoom for Alderman Coleman.

Attorney Adam Simon explained that per City Code 2-2-2 F1C that there were 3 allowable remote participations per year. He recited the code. Mayor Rockingham said that elected officials needed to attend meetings after 3. Alderman Evans asked if leaving early was applicable to the code; Attorney Simon said it was not specific to that. Mayor Rockingham said it does not state requirements for Committee Meetings.

Mayor Rockingham also noted that Alderman Smith was absent and out of town.

4-1 Presentation – Resolution Honoring Pastor James Buckman, Faith Lutheran Church (Lake Forest)
City Clerk Lori L. Collins read the Resolution.

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman January to approve the Resolution Honoring Pastor James Buckman of Faith Lutheran Church (Lake Forest).

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Alderman Allen thanked Pastor Buckman for his service to North Chicago and the help with the youth; he read presented a plaque to the Pastor. Pastor Buckman showed gratitude for the members of the church and the church for helping neighboring community.

4-2 Presentation – Resolution Honoring Reggie & Christi Boyson, Construction Consultant
City Clerk Lori L. Collins read the Resolution.

Alderman January moved, seconded by Alderman Jackson to approve the Resolution Honoring Reggie & Kristi Boyson, Construction Consultant.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Mayor Rockingham read the plaque honoring the Boyson's. He said that he appreciated them for helping build North Chicago and living in the community. Mr. Boyson thanked everyone for attending; Mrs. Boyson was happy and humble for recognizing them.

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **November 6, 2023**

5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **November 6, 2023**

- 5-3 Approval of Treasurer's Report – **September 2023**
- 5-4 Approval of Ordinance Amending **Title 4; Chapter 3**; increasing the number of Board of Fire & Police Commissioners from **3** to **5**
- 5-5 Approval of ShotSpotter Contract Renewal 3-Year Extension in **Not to Exceed Amount of \$118,800 (\$39,600 Annually)**
- 5-6 Approval of Proposal from Hutchinson Design Group Ltd. for Water Treatment Plant Roofing, Window Replacement & Masonry Restoration Project **Not to Exceed Amount of \$150,000**
- 5-7 Approval of Proposal from CTW Wells and Pumps for High Lift Motor Maintenance Project **Not to Exceed Amount of \$30,147**
- 5-8 Approval of Traffic Signal Maintenance Rate and Damage Repair Agreement with Meade Electric in **Not to Exceed Amount of \$60,000**

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to approve the Omnibus Vote Agenda Items 5-1 thru 5-8 as presented.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Allen, Evans, Murphy

Nays: January

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rayon Edwards – Various

Mr. Edwards announced December 17th holiday event for the children. He stated his hope that Alderman Coleman would start attending the meetings and that he was elected to be present. The elected officials worked for the people and if not present they were not doing the people's work. Disappointed with the number of registered voters versus the number of people that voted. "The people need to be talked to."

Mayor Rockingham thanked Mr. Edwards for his statements and work with the city. Alderman Coleman thanked Mr. Edwards for holding everyone accountable.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

- 7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF TAYLOR WEGRZYN AS ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve Taylor Wegrzyn as Economic & Community Development Director.

Alderman January asked if he was full-time; Mayor Rockingham said yes. Mayor Rockingham welcomed and congratulated Mr. Wegrzyn as the new Director.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen, Murphy, January

Nays: None

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

- 7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH SEECO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC. IN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$17,780 FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND GEOTECHNICAL SERVICES

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the contract with SEEKO Environmental Services, Inc. in amount not to exceed \$17,780 for environmental and geotechnical services.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen, Murphy, January

Nays: None

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

7-3 CONSIDERATION /APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL FROM PETER BAKER & SONS CO. FOR
PAVING WORK ON VICTORIA AVENUE IN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000
(WAIVER OF COMPETITIVE BIDDING REQUIREMENTS REQUESTED)

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve proposal from Peter Baker & Sons Co. for paving work on Victoria Avenue in amount not to exceed \$50,000 (waiver of competitive bidding requirements requested).

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen, Murphy, January

Nays: None

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

7-4 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION APPROVING A DONATION
AGREEMENT WITH ABBVIE, INC.

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve a Resolution approving a donation agreement with Abbvie, Inc.

Alderman January stated there was no amount stated. Attorney Simon explained that it was typical to state the amount if the City were expending funds. Alderman January insisted that the amount needed to be said and not be on the agenda. Attorney Simon clarified if the question was whether it could be voted without the amount being on the agenda. Alderman January said the amount was not clear; he said **\$147,000**.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen, Murphy, January

Nays: None

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

7-5 CONSIDERATION /APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$ 793,391.98
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$ 33,897.95
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 78,428.63
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 407,394.08
Retiree Premium Fund	\$ 3,173.24
 TOTAL	 \$ 1,316,285.88
 Special Bill Run - Addition	 \$ 293.09
Legislative - Deletion	\$ 599.00

MOTION:

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to pay the City Bills of Council Run 11/20/23 in the amount of **\$1,316,578.97 when funds available.**

Alderman January asked if there were sufficient funds available. Comptroller Tawanda Joyner acknowledged there were funds, checks to be cut the following day and sent Wednesday. Ms. Joyner said that all revenue was **\$34,410,207.13** before cutting checks. Alderman January questioned balance of Water Fund end of Thursday, Ms. Joyner stated the amount of **\$7,735,206.92**.

Alderman Jackson questioned bill under legislative in the amount of **\$599** for wages. He asked if the bill was processed properly to get approved and what services. He noted that the aldermen were told not to practice that.

Alderman Coleman asked for motion to appeal the Chair, seconded by Alderman January to allow Alderman Coleman to speak prior to Alderman Jackson's question.

ROLL CALL FOR APPEALING CHAIR:

Ayes: Coleman, Evans, January

Nays: Jackson, Allen, Murphy, Mayor Rockingham (tiebreaker)

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Jackson restated his questioned if the bill was authorized and noting that the elected officials were told not to partake in hiring people for wages; he was not looking to pay the bill. Mayor Rockingham asked the Comptroller if she authorized the payment; she said no but was asked to put on the bill run.

Alderman Coleman noted that in a previous meeting the Mayor made an illegal purchase and asked how it is determined when and how to follow the rules; should all expenses be reviewed. He said that Attorney Welch in that meeting was told the **\$599** was acceptable.

Attorney Simon said that the Mayor was Chief Executive Officer of the City and the aldermen were legislative; the Mayor was also a Department Head with different spending authority. It was in writing advising against aldermen hiring people to due City business without going through the process. Attorney Simon said the Mayor has more authority than the aldermen.

Alderman Evans asked why Alderman Jackson did not address him directly prior to the meeting. He noted Attorney Welch saying that the city could be sued if the bill was not paid. There was nothing in the code that said he could not do it. He suggested not just focusing on the aldermen but the entire bill run and he was not going to do anything illegal.

Alderman January asked the Attorney what was written about spending by aldermen. Attorney Simon referred to a memo of August 1, 2023. Alderman January said it was in writing and that is what needed to be done to be germane as to what the city was doing. If someone was hired it would need to go through Council; she did not agree. There was no pre-approval.

Alderman Murphy asked if there was a way to get a copy of the meeting and recited 3.1-40-40 of the Illinois Municipal Code; the City Clerk said that she would provide the recording. Attorney Simon explained the risk when someone was characterized as an employee of the city (taxes, worker's compensation, and other risks;) no hiring unless through Human Resources. If there were an opportunity to review in advance, they could possibly have been hired as an Independent Contractor to make sure both parties agreed they were not an employee.

Treasurer Vance Wyatt asked if there was W-9; Alderman Evans said no. Attorney Simon said that one tax form was only part of the process. Treasurer Wyatt asked if he and the Clerk had the same spending authority being Department Heads/executives; Attorney Simon said he would not consider the 2 positions as executive, only elected officers. Mr. Wyatt asked what branch the Clerk and Treasurer were; Attorney Simon said Department Heads.

Alderman Coleman said it was a good point for concern of liability; the City would get sued for not paying the bill. He asked that it was tabled until there was an opportunity to review what Attorney Welch said.

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman January to Table the bill under Legislative for \$599.

Alderman Coleman asked to include in the motion "table until the next meeting.

Alderman Allen amended motion, seconded amended by Alderman January to Table the bill under Legislative for \$599 until the next meeting.

Alderman Evans questioned consistency of attorneys and it was just an opinion.

ROLL CALL TO TABLE BILL OF \$599:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Allen, Murphy, January

Nays: Evans

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to pay the City Bills of Council Run 11/20/23 in the amount of **\$1,315,979.97 when funds available.**

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Allen, Murphy, Mayor Rockingham (tiebreaker)

Nays: Coleman, Evans, January

Absent: Smith

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

4th WARD MEETING

Alderman Allen announced the 4th Ward Meeting, December 16th, 11 a.m. at City Hall.

9-1-1 FOR MILITARY HOUSING

Alderman January asked if there was an update on the miss calls for 9-1-1 be the military housing residents. Police Chief Perez said there was no further information at the time.

3rd WARD

Alderman Evans announced 3rd Ward Meeting at the Youth Center, December 19th, 5-9 p.m. February 24th there would be a live band and fashion show at the Paris Banquet Hall for \$35.

VARIOUS

Mayor Rockingham said that he attended Senator Johnson at Kuneo Estates event and received awards for Foss Park District (skateboard park), the North Chicago Library and Veterans Memorial. He invited everyone to the tree lighting ceremony, November 27th at 6 p.m. He announced the passing of Glenn Ryback (Mayor of Wadsworth). He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Alderman Allen announced the passing of ex-firefighter Patrick Michael and gave the arrangements. He also recognized that ex-Fire Chief Richard Turner was in hospice. Alderman Coleman thanked the Mayor for working with 2nd Ward constituents.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council; a motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Jackson that the meeting stand adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk