

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Monday, October 21, 2024, at 6:02 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at 1850 Lewis Avenue with Mayor 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, Coleman, Evans, Smith, Murphy, January

Absent: Allen

Mayor Rockingham, Jr., announced Alderman Allen was out due to family emergency and wanted to participate via Zoom; he asked for motion.

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman January to allow Alderman Allen Remote Participation (RP) via Zoom.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

No Vote: Allen

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **October 7, 2024**

5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **October 7, 2024**

5-3 Approval of **2301** Green Bay Rd. – Stormwater Easement and Maintenance Agreement (Dollar Tree/Jimmy John's)

5-4 Approval – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Waukegan and North Chicago for the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Pilot Program Grant with a Local Cost Share **Not to Exceed Amount of \$68,250**

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve items 5-1 thru 5-4 as presented.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen (RP), Smith, Murphy

Nays: January

Absent: Coleman

MOTION CARRIED

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Deborah Richards

Mrs. Richards stated that she felt like she was being humiliated by not approving the street sign in her honor. She asked why it had not been approved.

Rayon Edwards

He thanked Alderman Allen, Evans and January for speaking out against the activity at Brookstone at Coles Park. He advised that was not the only place experiencing violence and said that the neighborhood on Hervey Avenue had the same issues. There was nowhere for the children in that area to go; people speed down the street. No one checked on the tenants in the apartments at Hervey. Stated that the City needed the elected officials. People are looking for the leaders to be deemed so.

He said there was an overdose at Kukla Towers (senior building). The seniors were afraid. There were people that do not live in that building causing the problems.

Mayor Rockingham said that North Shore gas was present over the weekend on Hervey Ave. Rehab had taken place on three of the units. The three buildings previously owned by CAP was being bought by another company. The management company guaranteed change.

Alderman Smith said that he and the Economic Development Director had been in contact concerning that area; they received tickets and have been to court.

Alderman Coleman said that he spoke to several Housing Commissioners at Kukla Tower, and they would be attempting to intervene in some of the activities of that building. Also, it had been discussed for cameras placed at the front door of the building. The police would be hosting an event November 9th to possibly start a Neighborhood Watch program. He asked Mr. Edwards to assist with reaching the youth.

Kloee Moore

Ms. Moore was a resident of Brookstone at Coles Park, and she was concerned for her safety there. There were no lights at the park that she lived close to. She also asked if the cameras were working in the complex. She also had attended the prayer meeting at Brookstone.

Mayor Rockingham said that City was working diligently to make the management company respond. The City knew the lights, it was addressed to management; they stated that it was expensive, but it was management's responsibility ensuring the lights were operable. The surety bond was leveraged to get some of the work done at that property. Still working to get cameras.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL FROM EVERLAST BLACKTOP IN THE NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$544,644.52 FOR THE FOSS PARK UNDERPASS AND RETAINING WALL IMPROVEMENTS

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve the proposal from Everlast Blacktop in the not to exceed amount of \$544,644.52 for the Foss Park underpass and retaining wall improvements.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen (RP), Smith, Murphy, January

Nays: None

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL FROM EVERLAST BLACKTOP IN THE NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$109,383.50 FOR THE FY 2025 ALLEY PROGRAM

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve the proposal from Everlast Blacktop in the not to exceed amount of \$109,383.50 for the FY 2025 Alley Program.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen (RP), Smith, Murphy, January

Nays: None

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

7-3 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL TO WAIVE FIRST READING AND AWARD OF A CONTRACT EXTENSION WITH AMM ENTERPRISES, INC.

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve waving first reading and award of a contract extension with AMM Enterprises, Inc.

Alderman Jackson asked why just now being resented; stated concern of continually waiving the first readings. If there is no first reading, why have Committees, it was not acceptable. If it continued to happen, he would vote NO. Chief of Staff Greg Jackson stated that he was to blame for the lateness of the approval. The contract was soon to lapse, and he assured that he would try to prevent future waiving.

Alderman Coleman asked for clarity on the contract that was being approved. Chief Jackson explained that it was a contract prior to his employment with the City. It was a contract for 6 months and needed to finish some projects.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen (RP), Smith, Murphy

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

7-4 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF PERMIT FEE RELIEF FOR MIDWEST VETERANS CLOSET IN THE NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$4,898.71

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve the permit fee relief of Midwest Veterans Closet in the not to exceed amount of \$4,898.71.

Alderman January did not mind relief of fees for a non-profit but asked how to ensure that they are building according to City qualifications, specifications and inspections. Mayor Rockingham explained that the specifications were still required; there just wouldn't be any fees for the permits.

Alderman Murphy was in strong support of the work of the Midwest Veterans Closet. Did not want the City to set a precedence at not charging the fees. Asked to strongly consider the Council donate from their budgets to pay the permit fees opposed to the fee relief. It would be up to each alderman to decide how much from their budget, Veterans Closet could use the donation to pay for the fees. Offer a deferment for any balance as they are continually fundraising. There were other non-profit organizations that also do great work for North Chicago. Want to help them in the best way without hurting the City. She was prepared to donate from her budget.

Alderman January asked if the City could legally donate and in return make them pay. Attorney Adam Simon explained that it would be donating to a mission.

Alderman Allen said that he had no problem with donating from his budget. Alderman Jackson suggested that they pay at least half; make sure they had “skin in the game”, at least the City would get something.

Economic & Community Development Director Taylor Wegrzyn explained that majority of the cost was for the City’s review team (Trotter & Associates). The permit fee was approximately \$600. Alderman Murphy stated the fees.

Alderman Smith asked if other permits were needed for the project. Mr. Wegrzyn said more permits were needed. Alderman Smith clarified that there were more permits; Mayor Rockingham said there were two more buildings to be built. Mr. Wegrzyn explained that there were 4 buildings in total, and this would cover the first building. These fees cover the driveway and parking lot also.

Mayor Rockingham clarified that if this was approved, the city was paying approximately a quarter of the fees. Alderman Smith asked if there was going to be a limit based on the amount that can be donated; questioned aldermen being allowed to donate. Attorney Simon explained. Mayor Rockingham elaborated that the amount would be on bill run for approval. Attorney Simon stated that the decision was ad hoc and may want to think about it based on a long-term policy.

Alderman Smith asked if donating could be viewed as campaigning. Attorney Simon thought there was a difference because it was a decision by the Council not unilaterally to make policy. No. 1 alderman has the right to set a policy.

Alderman Coleman suggested using the Mayor’s budget because he has a line item for donations. His 2nd Ward money was for his ward. Need to attract business and include incentives. He said it was an easy decision for him; he noted that the City gave **\$300k** for a grocery store.

Alderman Evans was surprised at not wanting to waive the fees and said Midwest Veterans Closet helped everyone. He suggested looking at some salaries and stop cutting growth in the City.

Alderman Murphy moved, seconded by Alderman Jackson to table to Finance Committee Meeting.

Alderman Smith asked for date of table. Mayor Rockingham explained options. Alderman Coleman asked if it could be voted the date and time. Attorney Simon explained that all specifics could be stated in the motion.

Chief of Staff Jackson stated that there was a financial impact to the City and that is why it was brought through Finance/Audit Committee. Attorney Simon gave detail of the motion. Alderman Coleman asked if the Council could decide what agenda to discuss items since there were no descriptions. Attorney Simon explained it should go back to the Committee it started in.

ROLL CALL TO TABLE:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Allen (RP), Smith, Murphy, January

Nays: Evans

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman January said that it should have been discussed in Building/License Committee to understand what was happening and then to Finance/Audit Committee. She has always asked for 2 readings of everything. There needed to be time for proper discussion.

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$ 266,912.05
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$ 2,268.68
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 96,735.00
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 70,732.75
TOTAL TO BE PAID	\$ 436,648.48

Aldermanic Expenses - Ward 3 \$ 87.50

MOTION:

Alderman Murphy moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to pay the bills of Council Run 10/21/24 in the amount of \$436,735.98 (including Special Run) when funds become available.

Alderman January asked if there were sufficient funds, when checks would be cut and sent, also amount in Water Fund. Comptroller Tawanda Joyner said there were sufficient funds available, checks to be processed and mailed the following day. The liquid amount in the Water Fund as of Thursday was \$4,039,222.27.

Treasurer Vance Wyatt stated the non-liquid amount was \$1,410,935.69.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen (RP), Smith, Murphy

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

*Alderman Evans thanked everyone that attended the 3rd Ward meeting and fashion show. He also thanked the city staff. Stated his frustration with all the criticism of North Chicago and suggested asking questions prior to the Council Meeting. The information was given to the Aldermen to review prior to the meeting; they need to stay at the meetings for the entire meeting. Present at the meeting was the obligation. He was open for the public to talk to him.

*Alderman Coleman thanked the Mayor for the flowers and everyone for the well wishes. His health issue was more serious than he knew.

*Alderman Smith announced the 5th Ward meeting **November 23rd, 11am-1pm** and following would be a free fish fry.

*Alderman Allen stated concern of absent stop sign at 15th and Kemble, he asked if it was permanently removed. Public Works Director Clarence Johnson said that it was removed and there was an issue of people not obeying the sign. Mayor Rockingham explained that the ordinance had a list of signs that were supposed to be placed and said that the sign needed to be reinstalled.

*Alderman Smith gave accolades for the 16th Street Road repairs. He recognized the sidewalks and handicap accessibility.

*Mayor Rockingham announced the Harvest Food Truck Festival, **Thursday, October 24, 2024; 4-8:00 p.m.** in the City Hall parking lot. It would be a test market for future food truck events. Also, a possible brick and mortar build if interest in the community. He echoed Alderman Smith's sentiments and commented the new look. Scheduled, was the **16th Street Ribbon Cutting**,

Wednesday, 10/23/24; 2:00 at Lindberg former school location. He encouraged others to attend. Matthew Homes ribbon cutting the past few weeks at **1610** Jackson St. There was a ribbon cutting for the Veterans Midwest Closet new location on Green Bay Rd. It was unfortunate he couldn't attend and heard there were many who attended. He commented on the current development of the building. There was a food give away from the Midwest Veterans, **October 17, 2024**. He was thankful that Alderman Coleman had returned from his illness. He also announced that Halloween, **Sunday, October 27; 2-5:00 p.m.**

Alderman Smith also informed others of the Halloween Parade Sunday.

Alderman Evans announced the 3rd ward Halloween Parade; **2- 5 p.m.** This would start from Argonne Dr. to Kemble Ave. to Youthbuild and named the various events. He encouraged attendance of the festivities.

Alderman Allen asked the next Brookstone meeting. The Mayor stated the following day. He also Announced **October 24, 2024; 2-5:00 p.m.** of retirees (Micah Cress and Juan Laracuente). The celebration would be in the Police Training room.

Alderman Coleman announced the 2nd Ward Meeting, **November 6, 2024**

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 9-1 **Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(1) – Personnel Matters**
- 9-2 **Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(5) – Purchase or Lease of Real Property**

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman January to suspend the Regular Order of Business at 7:28 p.m. to Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(1) – Personnel Matters and 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(5) – Purchase or Lease of Real Property.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Allen, Smith, Murphy (RP), January

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman January moved, seconded by Alderman Jackson to reconvene the Regular Order of Business at 8:16 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

- 9-3 Possible Action of Executive Session Personnel Matter

NO ACTION TAKEN

- 9-4 Possible Action of Executive Session Purchase or Lease of Real Property

NO ACTION TAKEN

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Alderman Allen, Smith and Murphy was absent at time of Adjournment

The Council Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk