

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Monday, October 7, 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, Evans, Allen, Smith, January

Absent: Coleman, Murphy

Mayor Rockingham, Jr., announced Alderman Murphy was ill and wanted to participate via Zoom; he asked for motion.

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

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Evans, Allen, Smith, January

Nays: None

No Vote: Murphy

Absent: Coleman

Mayor Rockingham said that Alderman Coleman notified him that he would be running late.

MOTION CARRIED

4-1 Promotion of Michael Mueller to Police Sergeant

Mayor Rockingham administered the Oath to Police Sergeant Michael Mueller.

Mayor Rockingham congratulated Sergeant Mueller for his dedication to the City of North Chicago.

Assistant Police Chief Gary Lunn thanked Sergeant Mueller for his service and noted that he worked 12 years in investigations. He extended gratitude to Sergeant Mueller's family for their sacrifice supporting his service. More promotions were to come.

4-2 Proclamation Declaring October Domestic Violence Awareness Month

City Clerk Lori L. Collins read the Proclamation.

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman January to approve Proclamation Declaring October Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Coleman

MOTION CARRIED

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

- 5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **September 16, 2024**
- 5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **September 16, 2024**
- 5-3 Approval – Ordinance Terminating Downtown Sheridan Rd. TIF (effective December 31, 2024)
- 5-4 Approval – Bill of Sale for Public Water Main at **2301** Green Bay Rd. (Dollar Tree/Jimmy John's)
- 5-5 Approval – Contract with Revize for Website Design and Development **Not to Exceed Amount of \$28,900**
- 5-6 Approval of Annual Treasurer's Report
- 5-7 Approval of Monthly Treasurer's Report – **August 2024**

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve items 5-1 thru 5-7 as presented.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: Coleman

MOTION CARRIED

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dana Sabree

Ms. Sabree stated her concern of weekly shootings in Brookstone at Coles Park housing complex. She was a resident of Waukegan (within walking distance of the complex) and her car had gunshot holes because of a shooting at Brookstone. She was in fear of living in her home. Children were also present in the area. She attempted to discuss situation with the property manager, and she wanted compensation for her vehicle.

Mayor Rockingham said he was unsure of compensation for her vehicle. He was in discussions with the management of Brookstone who was based in Atlanta. There were barricades placed (for one way access) and surveillance cameras were soon to be installed for that area. He expressed strongly that there needed to be support of the management and it had been difficult to get results. Brookstone was currently in adjudication.

Alderman Allen emphasized that everyone should feel safe in North Chicago. He said that he attended adjudication court proceedings against Brookstone; the judge did nothing. He asked what could be done and expressed great frustration with the lack of results addressing the problems in that complex. Something needed to be done immediately.

Alderman Coleman entered the Council Chambers at 6:23 p.m.

Alderman Evans said that the City could not build in that area as previously discussed. There needed to be security (fences and people); hold Brookstone accountable. It was time for the City to say "NO." the City needed to start denying Brookstone licenses and permits. Not a way for people to live.

Alderman January added that being a home health care nurse she witnessed other nurses that did not want to come to North Chicago and the fear was throughout the city. As a City elected officials needed to be involved and step up now. If there was influx of crime there would not be any prosperity. The City lawyers also needed to step up; terminate the current adjudication attorney she waives the fines.

Deborah Richards

Agreed with the many troubles at Brookstone. She stated that she was disturbed that the honorary street sign for her had not been approved. Mrs. Richards was not against anyone; she noted her individual experiences with the several elected officials. She would be most appreciative of the honorary sign.

Alderman Smith left Council Chambers at 6:35 p.m.

Gladys Kneeland

She spoke in support of Debbie Richards honorary street sign. She was not aware of rules that a living person not being able to have an honorary sign.

Alderman Smith returned to Council Chambers at 6:37 p.m.

Robert Richards

Noted that he was asked to do the Invocation. He came “humbly” in support of the honorary street sign for Deborah “Debbie” Richards.

Sherina Windom

She gave praise and gratitude to the Street Department for assisting her with wasp nest. They additionally cut a tree that she had been asking to be removed for several years.

Rayon Edwards

Stated his concerns of Brookstone. Tired of no results in North Chicago; sees other communities making progress. The criminals were not listening to the prayer vigils; they are listening to bullets. He said that Paris Banquet displayed racism and the City needed to investigate. Feel like strangers in our community.

Mayor Rockingham stated that the City was trying to remove the bad tenants. Trying to encourage Brookstone to hire a live in liaison. Mr. Edwards suggested the City consider a “Live on Liaison” and Ring cameras be installed at every tenant’s door.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF THE PETER BAKER & SON CO. PROPOSAL IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$1,097,900.59 FOR THE 2024 MFT ROAD PROGRAM

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the Peter Baker & Son Co. proposal in the amount not to exceed \$1,097,900.59 for the 2024 MFT Road Program.

Alderman January asked if the project was bid and if this was the lowest bid; Engineer Steve Cieslica confirmed.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$ 1,043,995.14
General Grants Fund	\$ 9,000.00
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$ 59,264.57
Federal Forfeiture Fund	\$ 700.00
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 92,220.77
Debt Service 2007C Fund	\$ 865,517.25
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 1,372,330.37
Vision Fund	\$ 847.15
Retiree Premium Fund	\$ 15,978.31
Library Fund	\$ 7,123.80
TOTAL TO BE PAID	\$ 3,466,977.36

SPECIAL RUNS PAID

Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	
WTP Water Intake Valve Vault No. 7	\$ 91,891.00

General Fund	\$ 145,734.75
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 18,566.27
Retiree Premium Fund	\$ 15,272.00
Library Fund	\$ 7,004.80
	\$ 186,577.82

General Fund	\$ 52,834.35
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 2,043.22
Retiree Premium Fund	\$ 819.20
Library Fund	\$ 119.00
	\$ 55,815.77

MOTION:

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to pay the bills of Council Run 10/07/24 in the amount of \$3,466,977.36 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 \$5,335,504.51. The Treasurer was not available to state the non-liquid amount.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

*Alderman Evans announced Annual 3rd Ward Meeting and Fashion Show, October 19 at Foss Park Community Center at 2 p.m.

*Alderman January noted that the honorary street sign for Debbie Richards was asked to be put back on Committee for discussion. She asked why it was on Committee. Mayor Rockingham said that it was not determined when it would be back in Committee. He decided that he did not want to put back in Committee at the time.

*Mayor Rockingham announced that the City received the Daniel Burnham award on September 25th for its Comprehensive Plan. He thanked the Dakota Group and Economic & Community Development Director Taylor Wegrzyn for there dedication to completing the Comprehensive Plan.

Alderman Smith left Council Chambers at 6:55 p.m.

*Alderman Allen asked the Attorney David Silverman what the plan for Brookstone at Coles Park was. Mr. Silverman stated there were many issues that were being addressed. There was limited ability to do things but was working with the State's Attorney to find a solution. There are some possible civil matters that the City could use against the complex.

Alderman Allen asked why the matter had not been addressed before now. Attorney Silverman said that it was being worked. There should be something evidence of it being worked on before now. Mayor Rockingham said that problem was being worked in conjunction with Brookstone, Lake County Housing and Lake County Board. The City attempted to give money for security and Brookstone rejected it. There needed to be better screening for tenants and hold Lake County Housing with some accountability. Alderman Allen would like to see evidence that the attorneys are working on the situation within the next 2 weeks.

Alderman January asked if there was a way to assure better background checks; criminal history should be a part of denial. She liked the idea of Ring cameras on the doors and suggested that Judge Torres (Adjudicating Judge) be removed she has let people off from the responsibility. Alderman Smith stated that Brookstone needed to be gated. Although, the background checks may be clean, the other occupants that person moves in may not be and it was a collective issue.

Mayor Rockingham explained Rolling Greens (currently Prairie View) received a grant for their fence. Also, there needed to be enough finances to keep security. Must make sure that area is safe before development can happen in the proximity. It should be addressed to State and Federal officials.

Alderman Smith said that it needed to be monitored now; Mayor Rockingham assured cameras were soon to be installed. Mayor Rockingham said they should also pay for their own cameras. Alderman Coleman said there were 2 options: gated or very strong police presence; he asked how much it would cost for dedicated police in the area. Assistant Police Chief Gary Lunn emphasized that Brookstone refused the grant for security. There were 5 officers per shift; cut thin. Trying to find creative ways to best use the resources. He also noted that people were hiding in car trunks to get past security, also, walking from the street.

Alderman Coleman asked what % of our resources was being used at Brookstone; Chief Lunn said at least 1 person, about 20% in highest crime areas. Alderman Coleman stated that the City was already the spending money for police which was better than what was currently being done. The Council needed to decide how much the City was willing to spend.

Alderman January thanked Assistant Police Chief Gary Lunn for his dedication and going beyond the call of duty. Taking our City back and putting your life on the line was much appreciated. Alderman January asked how the far the City could go with policing on private property. Attorney Silverman explained there are 4th Amendment and Civil Rights issues with policing private property. He noted that they could declare bankruptcy to shield themselves from liability. Brookstone was bad landlord and there is question if they are landlord or just the management company.

Mayor Rockingham clarified bankruptcy and asked if Lake County Housing was owner of the property. Attorney Silverman stated that had not been verified but knew they were the taxpayer. There have been many excuses from Brookstone as to why they can't do things the City has required. Does not want the City Council to think that extensive fines will get results; must be strategic.

Alderman Coleman asked if there were another way to offer the \$250,000 grant. It was clarified by Attorney Silver the grant did not exist anymore but if the City decided on monetary assistance it would have to come from City funds. Alderman Coleman asked if it could be mandatory to have someone man guard shack. Attorney Silverman said it could be required but can't force them to hire.

Alderman January suggested that it remain on Committee for all upcoming meetings.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

9-1 **5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(5)** – Purchase or Lease of Real Estate

9-2 **5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(12)** – Establishment of Reserves or Settlement of Claims

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to suspend the Regular Order of Business at 7:34 p.m. to Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(5) – Purchase or Lease of Real Estate and 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(12) – Establishment of Reserves or Settlement of Claims.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to reconvene the Regular Order of Business at 8:37 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

9-3 Consideration/Approval of Purchase of Real Property for the Water System

NO ACTION TAKEN

9-4 Consideration of Possible Settlement of a Property Damage Claim

NO ACTION TAKEN

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

The Council Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk