

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Monday, November 4, 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: Coleman, Evans, Allen, Smith, Murphy, January

Absent: Jackson

Mayor Rockingham, Jr., announced Alderman Jackson wanted to participate via Zoom due to a medical issue; he asked for a motion.

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

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

No Vote: Jackson

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **October 21, 2024**

5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **October 21, 2024**

5-3 Approval of Treasurer's Report – **September 2024**

5-4 Approval- Addition of Water Plant Superintendent Position to the CSO (City Salary Ordinance) – **Grade A20**

5-5 Approval of addition of the TAI Work order for Construction Engineer Services **Not to Exceed Amount of \$82,544** for the Foss Park Underpass and Retaining Wall Improvement Project

5-6 Approval – Declaration of Surplus/Sale by Auction Method with a Minimum Bid not less than **\$2,100 at 1737 Lincoln St.**

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to approve items 5-1 thru 5-6 as presented.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Deborah Richards

Was “begging” for the street sign and came in hopes of getting approved for the sign. She noted that no one that asked had ever been denied for an honorary sign. She was in shock as to why a dead standstill. She asked each council member why. The Mayor suggested that she speak to each alderman individually, not at Council.

Mrs. Stallworth

She read a description of E’zyrah Inc. which highlighted that over **90%** of recipients were from North Chicago. She came to request financial sponsorship to help with the holiday gifting and other year-round activities for children/families in need. Alderman Coleman thanked her for the dedication and work. He asked if he could donate from the 2nd Ward budget; Mayor Rockingham said that he could within reason. Attorney Silverman said that it was appropriate

Rayon Edwards

Addressed Alderman Coleman concerning Hervey Avenue and expressed the hurt of the people in that area. Stated that there was not always a financial remedy, time was necessary. The City was not making him proud to be from North Chicago.

Mayor Rockingham informed Mr. Edwards that he drove on Hervey that day and landscaping was being done outside. He said Alderman Coleman was also present with visiting Kukla Towers; aldermen were getting involved. Mr. Edwards said he did not want it to be the end of progression. Mr. Edwards strongly suggested the attorneys get involved. Alderman Coleman thanked the Mayor for the work initiated on Hervey Avenue.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$	228,640.16
General Grants Fund	\$	10,500.00
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$	44,022.68
Capital Projects Fund	\$	37,653.38
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$	643,503.66
TOTAL TO BE PAID	\$	964,319.88

MOTION:

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to pay the bills of Council Run 11/04/24 in the amount of \$964,319.88 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 **\$5,490,155.17** liquid. Treasurer Vance Wyatt gave the non-liquid amount of **\$1,511,555.13** at close of business that day.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

*Alderman Evans made a statement of “silly season” during election time. If anyone had questions concerning him, address him directly. There were aldermen making untrue comments and rumors about him. If aldermen were spreading rumors, they were not an asset to the Council or City and needed to “move on.” The Council was obligated to attend the meetings.

*Alderman Coleman asked when it was appropriate to discuss Kukla Towers and Thompson Manor matters. Mayor Rockingham explained that the City was still addressing legal issues of Brookstone at Coles Park; if he would like to discuss it could be in Miscellaneous.

*Alderman Smith announced a 5th Ward meeting, November 23rd with Department Heads and Treasurer available for questions. The location was 2300 Martin Luther King Dr., 11 am – 3 pm.

*Alderman January stated that there was a letter received concerning Kukla Towers. Mayor Rockingham stated that a mandatory meeting for residents of Kukla Towers was had. He assured there would be more police presence and an uptick of patrol inside and outside. There was also a demonstration for the use of Narcan (used for overdoses). There were people selling drugs in the buildings but was looking to rid of them, possibly losing their housing voucher.

Alderman January said that it was a facility for seniors, but the rules had become more relaxed. Mayor Rockingham said that it was no longer just seniors. North Chicago Housing Authority Executive Director Nina Chalmers explained Kula Towers nor Thompson Manor were never designated for seniors per HUD. Alderman January was concerned with the number of overdose deaths at Kukla Towers. Ms. Chalmers was not aware of the number of overdoses there.

Alderman Coleman said that he would like to work in partnership with police and Kukla Towers to find a resolution. It was a citywide problem, there were difficult people with difficult addictions. Ms. Chalmers suggested more police presence would help and noted there was not enough money in the budget to staff a guard. Alderman Coleman suggested donating to fund for a guard.

*Mayor Rockingham discussed the Harvest Food Truck Festival commended those that participated, it was a success and would try to expand in the Spring. He said there was a ribbon cutting for the new water main project on 16th Street. He addressed that Brookstone at Coles Park was being discussed with legal to address the punch list.

Alderman Smith noted that the attorneys were tasked with keeping the Council informed of work to address the issues at Brookstone. Attorney David Silverman said the problems at Brookstone was initially physical, currently working on the over \$7mil bond issues. Moving against the bond on the developers’ default in building regulation compliancy. Once aware of the crime issues, there were Adjudication Hearings. The next hearing regarding nuisances on November 14 and Mark Heinle from the law firm would be present where the attorneys weren’t present before. The appointment of a Receiver would plant authority over the landlord of the property to come up with a workable plan. The charges would initiate a criminal case. There was a possibility of suspension/revocation of the landlord license. The City is working with Lake County Housing Authority making them aware of the issues.

Attorney Silverman said that IDHA (Illinois Housing Development Authority) was also informed, and they have their set of rules and regulations that they follow, which the attorneys was reviewing. Alderman Allen said that he would be present at Adjudication Hearings. Having police present raises constitutional issues and the DOJ (Department of Justice) has said that the Crime Free Housing Ordinance may be unconstitutional. There is no simple process.

Alderman Allen clarified that the attorney would be at the Adjudication Hearing. Attorney Silverman explained that the process was initiated by Detective Diez through Adjudication which

was appropriate way to streamline enforcement of the ordinances. The landlord has been uncooperative; yes, an attorney would be there. Over 20,000 documents have been submitted.

Attorney Silverman stated that documentation would give more strength in the case. Alderman Evans asked why the regular attorney, David Silverman or Adam Simon, would not be at the hearings. Attorney Silverman explained that. He was assigned the case for economic reasons and had been working on the case for over a year. Alderman Evans emphasized that the Council was not familiar with Mr. Heinle, why does he not address the Council concerning Brookstone. Attorney Silverman said that Mr. Heinle was focused on Brookstone but understood Alderman Evans concerns; previous efforts had failed but had to show good faith that the City was trying to work with Brookstone.

Alderman Smith and Coleman left the Council Chambers at 6:57 p.m.

Mayor Rockingham understood Alderman Evans concerns. Attorney Silverman stated that Mr. could be present at a Council Meeting.

Alderman Smith returned to Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Rockingham announced that 211 5th Anniversary was the previous week. 211 is a system provided by United Way used for community assistance in Lake County. The City of North Chicago is going out for an RFP to digitize documents of the City. The new signage for North Chicago would be presented to the Council in an upcoming meeting. He noted that the City was not repairing current signs to save money for the new. Lastly, the Code Enforcement staff was addressing issues in the City. Also working with the School Superintendent Dr. Price; currently concerned with old schools Novak King, Hart and part of South School. He would be submitting letter with those concerns. Mayor Rockingham encouraged everyone to Vote in the Federal Election.

Alderman Coleman returned to Council Chambers at 7:03 p.m.

Alderman Smith questioned any update on Halsey Village housing. Mayor Rockingham said the City was working with Hunt Management to correct some of the issues. Alderman January noted that her building was is disrepair also. It looked bad and was visible before visitors see the Base. Alderman Smith said the City's image/brand was important; brag on being home to the Naval Training Center but visibly unpleasant. Mayor Rockingham was in touch with agencies including the news to assure Big Navy is addressed and aware.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

9-1 Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(12) – Settlement of Claims

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

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to reconvene the Regular Order of Business at 7:42 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

9-2 Possible Action of Executive Session Settlement of Claims

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 January that the meeting stand adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk