

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Monday, December 16, 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, Murphy, January

Absent: Coleman

4-1 Public Hearing to Approve a Proposed Tax Levy in the Amount of **\$12,487,229**

Mayor Rockingham called the Public Hearing to Order at 6:02 p.m. and Roll Call was taken.

Present: Jackson, Evans, Allen, Smith, Murphy, January

Absent: Coleman

Comptroller Tawanda Joyner gave an overview of the Tax Levy and noted that there was a decrease in the rate from **4.795% to 4.06151%**. She clarified that the Tax Levy was only for the City of North Chicago. Alderman January questioned the City owed the Library \$1 mil; \$300,000 was being taken from their budget; there should be more funding to the library because there were more supplies needed such as books and computers.

Ms. Joyner explained that there had been discussion if the library was due monies. There were some municipalities that are required to pay a certain percent of a PPRT (Personal Property Replacement Tax). Upon receiving the notification, there was discussion with legal. During discussion it was concluded the willingness to pay a total of 6 years. The City was not aware of this cost. State statute allowed for \$0.15/\$1, the City has gone beyond the requirement for the library since at least 2016 and the decision was that the City would pay the PPRT money by making it up in the tax levy. There would be no loss in income, they would still receive the same amount as previous year. Instead of collection of all monies from property taxes it would be a combination of PPRT and Tax Levy.

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR PUBLIC HEARING:

Charles January stated that North Chicago children were educationally behind. He also suggested that the library be open until 9 p.m. Mr. January continued that there is no STEM Program for the children, North Chicago is a different community.

Alderman Coleman entered the Council Chambers at 6:09 p.m.

Rayon Edwards clarified the reduced precent, Ms. Joyner explained 4.061% which was less than previous year. Mr. Edwards asked if there were any other strategic plans to reduce more taxes. He noted that North Chicago was without a grocery store and pharmacy, there was nothing available for the residents. The Aldermen did not provide meetings to inform constituents about the tax levy. There were excess dollars approved in Omnibus Vote Agenda and asked where the tax dollars were being spent.

Carmecia Hawthorn explained that there was no funding being cut from the library. In actuality, the City was providing more funding than the \$0.15 PPRT previously.

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Smith that the Public Hearing stand adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **December 02, 2024**

5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **December 02, 2024**

5-3 Approval of (7) Additional Axon Cameras in Amount **Not to Exceed \$68,099.85**

5-4 Approval of Authorizing Mayor to Sign Letter of Intent with IGSA (Intergovernmental Service Agreement) with Navy regarding Demolition Services

5-5 Approval of **2024** Property Tax Levy Ordinance; **\$12,487,229**

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

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Deborah Richards

Questioned why her request for a street sign was being denied. She felt humiliated and felt it was harassing behavior. She said that the Mayor relayed to her there was never any previous denials. No one would speak up as to why; it was undue stress, an insult, injustice and demanded an explanation.

Rayon Edwards

There was a lack of understanding, Pastor Richards had been present at every Council meeting and still had not received any response. By not responding sets a precedence. He expressed concern that another overdose happened at Kukla Towers. There were 2 young ladies in bathroom at the high school unconscious from drugs. The citizens needed more than what was being given. Mayor Rockingham stated that the City was diligently working on issues at Kukla Towers. Mr. Edwards said to be fair suggested speaking offline.

Charles January

Received 4 phone calls the previous week about Kukla Towers and someone was thrown out. The Director at Kukla Towers was doing a great job but did not have help. He was told the police discarded someone's personal property at Kukla Towers that was thrown out.

Tim Coleman

Apologized for medical incident at the previous Council meeting. Stated that he worked for the City Water Department. The Water employees were willing to work with the new Water Superintendent Robert Freeman. He was not trying to cause any trouble.

Barb A. Thomas

Concerned with vehicles speeding in the block of 1500 Elizabeth. She walks to church through that alley and was afraid. She asked if there could be speed bump placed; children also play in the alley.

Commissioner Carmecia Hawthorn

She announced various City holiday events. Equipment at Boak Park had been replaced from arson. Meals for seniors 60+ was being provided January 7th and 21st.

Elaine Collins

Invited everyone to attend a prayer meeting at her home.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF VIRGINIA GIBBS TO THE PLANNING/ZONING BOARD, REPLACING HAL DAVIS (3-YEAR TERM UNTIL JANUARY 2026)

Alderman Evan moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve Virginia Gibbs to the Planning/Zoning Board, replacing Hal Davis (3-year term until January 2026).

Alderman January asked how Ms. Gibbs was recommended. Mayor Rockingham explained that Alderman Evans recommended her. Ms. Gibbs thanked the Council for the opportunity.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$ 350,489.99
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$ 38,301.89
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 1,290,132.85
TOTAL APPROVED	\$ 1,678,924.73

MOTION:

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to pay the bills of Council Run 12/16/24 and Special Bill Run in the total amount of **\$1,678,924.73 when funds become available.**

Alderman January questioned bill (page 5, Illinois Architectural, \$1,425).

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 Wednesday. The liquid amount in the Water Fund as of Thursday was **\$5,162,696.21** liquid. Treasurer Vance Wyatt gave the non-liquid amount of **\$1,411,307.21** at close of business that day.

Comptroller Joyner explained the invoice referenced replacement of glass. Public Works Director Bob Miller clarified that it was Illinois Architectural Glass and there was a glass that was broken in the Pump Room and replaced.

Alderman January asked about the electrical repairs (Pieper Electrical). Mr. Miller said it was various electrical issues and work that needed to be addressed in the pumps. Alderman January asked if there was installation or replacement of cameras and if it was on the bill run. She wanted to be clear that there was no violation of union contract with the placement of cameras. Mayor Rockingham said there were no cameras placed illegally.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Evans, Allen, Smith, Murphy

Nays: Coleman (wanted to review bills thoroughly), January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED**VIII. MISCELLANEOUS****VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS**

*Alderman Evans stated that matters of the Library, Park and School needed to be addressed to the respective Boards; there was a board for each of those. Inform people where they needed to address their concerns. He also suggested everyone to review their tax bill. He asked for aldermen attendance list of all the meetings; if they were present there wouldn't be a need to rediscuss items. He congratulated Donna Kalinowski for being continually being involved and stated that she deserved a street sign. He also congratulated Dante Brooks for his work in North Chicago; he was a teacher and helped within the community.

Alderman Coleman called for a Point of Order. It was disrespectful.

*Alderman Allen said that the Water Plant was running great and so was the water. He noted that Abbott (Fortune 500 company) that uses North Chicago water to make medication. He also stated that there was grocery store, but no one supported it. He said no one discusses the positive things in North Chicago.

*Alderman Coleman asked who the parliamentarian of the meeting was. He said that Council needed to follow Robert Rules of Order. Is there a parliamentarian, he needed a question answered. Mayor Rockingham said that he was the Chair and oversaw the meeting. Alderman Coleman said according to Roberts Rules of Order a Councilman could not be ignored.

Alderman Coleman made a motion of legislative action to remove the cameras at the Water Plant above the desk of the Operator at the next Council Meeting, January 6, 2025.

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.

Alderman Coleman called for Point of Order and Question of Privilege.

Alderman January stated her Point of Order because she wanted to speak. Attorney Simon said her Point of Order was not proper. Alderman Evans said that it was already explained and did not agree with the argument.

ROLL CALL TO ADJOURN:

Ayes: Evans, Allen, Murphy

Nays: Jackson, Coleman, Smith, January

Absent: None

MOTION FAILED

Alderman Coleman asked for a motion to Appeal the Chair and recognize Alderman January.

Attorney Simon said there was no proper Point of Order. Alderman Coleman called for a Question of Privilege. Alderman Smith asked for the attorney to explain if Robert Rules of Order was being followed. Attorney Simon explained there needed to be citation of the rule of order that is being violated; simply announcing does not justify the rule.

Alderman Smith stated that Alderman Coleman was asking to speak. Mayor Rockingham explained that he had the floor and then he asked for Point of Order but did not state what procedure was out of order. Alderman January said her Point of Order was that the Mayor violated her right to speak as an elected official.

Alderman January was given the floor. She said that her this was the most chaotic in her 3 terms. When an alderman is not allowed to speak, the voices of the constituents of that ward is not heard. Would like to know more about Kukla Towers; someone was kicked out and there were laws that prevent eviction during certain months of the year. The City is not a housing authority, Kukla Towers is privately owned. The number of overdoses is outrageous. She was calling for the resignation of the Housing Director at Kukla Towers.

Alderman Coleman asked from Attorney to explain Question of Privilege; Attorney Simon said that it is the right to address the Council. Alderman Coleman asked if it required to have a second; Attorney Silverman said it was not debatable. The person who has the floor has the right to finish, one person at a time. Under Council rules there is procedure to vote on items, Committee first.

Alderman Coleman with legislative action moved to remove cameras at Water Plant. Alderman Evans said the cameras were there for safety.

Alderman January left the Council Chambers at 7:27 p.m.

Alderman Coleman asked to waive the first reading (committee) and put on the Council floor. He reiterates that it was legislative action.

Alderman January returned at 7:30 p.m.

Alderman Coleman moved, seconded by Alderman January to discuss the removal of cameras at Water Plant in Safety Committee, January 6, 2025.

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to table the motion for removal of cameras until documentation and proper committee is realized.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk