

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 6:04 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at 1850 Lewis Avenue with Mayor Rockingham, Jr., presiding.

I. CALL TO ORDER

City Clerk Lori L. Collins called the meeting to order and did the Roll Call in absence of Mayor Leon Rockingham, Jr.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. INVOCATION

IV. ROLL CALL:

Upon Roll Call being taken, the following members were present:

Present: Allen, Smith Murphy, January

Absent: Jackson, Coleman, Evans

Mayor Rockingham, Jr., announced that Alderman Jackson and Coleman would like to participate via Zoom.

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

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

4-1 Resolution Honoring Mother Gertrude Ladd's **100th** Birthday

Alderman January moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to approve the Resolution Honoring Mother Gertrude Ladd's 100th Birthday.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

4-2 Resolution Honoring Etta Robinson, North Chicago Library Board Retirement

City Clerk Collins read the Resolution.

Alderman Smith moved, seconded by Alderman January to approve the Resolution Honoring Etta Robinson, North Chicago Library Board Retirement.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Alderman Evans was absent.

4-3 Resolution Honoring Isaiah T. Stokes, United States Navy

City Clerk Collins read the Resolution

Mayor Rockingham recalled meeting Mr. Stokes upon starting his career, emphasizing that he currently was a commander of a US Naval ship. North Chicago was the home of the only training facility and didn't have enough words to express how happy he was for Commander Stokes.

Alderman January asked if Pastor Richards could pray for Commander Stokes during his deployment. Pastor Richards prayed for the City of North Chicago and Commander Stokes.

Alderman January moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to approve the Resolution Honoring Isaiah T. Stokes, United States Navy.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Alderman Evans was absent.

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

- 5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **August 19, 2024**
- 5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **August 19, 2024**
- 5-3 Approval – Treasurer's Report – **July 2024**
- 5-4 Approval of Resolution – Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Grant
- 5-5 Ordinance Approving Second Amendment to Redevelopment and Economic Incentive Agreement by and between the City of North Chicago and North Chicago **2023 LLC**

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

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Elder Faye Lewis

She was present for the support of Debbie Richards. Stated she has helped her acquire a home, she desires that she achieved "from the ground up including mentally and physically she deserved a street sign.

Judge John Joanem & Jackie

They both spoke on behalf of Debbie Richards. She was the most sought out realtor on the north shore.

Trina Triplett

She assisted her in selling her home and very supportive. She added was well deserving of a street sign.

Robert Richards

He explained the prior (**45**) years she had distributed "Jesus cards."

Paricia Jones

She stated prior to her Waukegan Township Supervisor position, Mrs. Debbie Richards brought people together, assisting with their necessities, and generational help to others and upliftment.

Dr. Lisa Fields

She stated had known Mrs. Debbie Richards **25+** years, a neighbor and great advocate for the City.

Willie McGhee

He explained arrived in North Chicago in year of **1974**, never felt comfortable at many churches until visited the Richard's church.

Sherie Briscoe

Emphasize that Mrs. Debbie Richards was always available and never missed a day without expressing all the love to her. She was the most deserving person

Deborah Richards

She gave thanks to God for everything and appreciative of the comments from others. She will Be 74-years of age in **November 2024**.

Anita Bull

She stated was a life-long resident of North Chicago and Debbie Richards has been a giving person "all of her life." She gives to the community.

Anita McMillen

She stated that Debbie Richards had a beautiful spirit, never changing, and assisted her family.

Gladys Kneeland

She was in support of the street sign for Deborah Richards, she has witnessed the commitment, many people were very appreciative of her, she never wavered, has assisted the community to grow and has taught classes.

Tina Albright

She thanked Debbie Richards for assisting in her transition.

Jacqueline Washington

She questioned what had Debbie Richards not done to deserve a sign, she was always available day or night.

Tina Johnson

She has known her as "Mother Richards for **25** years. She has assisted her in purchasing a home, always readily available and so much to the community.

Tracy Boyd

Mrs. Debbie Richards was an honor to God, born and raised in North Chicago.

Desiree Davis Flemister

Mrs. Richards was a mother figure and assisted with her first home.

Kayla Makins

She felt that she was giving and well deserving of having an honorary street sign. It was special to get love of a mother from someone not your mother

Kenya Mackins

Felt that Mrs. Richard was well deserving of a street sign.

Pamela Jefferies (via Zoom)

She witnessed the service of Mrs. Richards and expressed her support for a street sign.

Mayor Rockingham explained that the honorary street sign for Debbie Richards was not on Council and would not be voted on that evening. It was on the agenda for discussion in the Committee Meeting.

Alderman Smtih thanked everyone for coming in support of Mrs. Richards honorary street sign.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL – REQUEST TO WAIVE FIRST READING OF STAFFING CONTRACT FOR DAVID WESTLAKE AS THE ASSISTANT COMPTROLLER

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve the request to waive first reading of staffing contract for David Westlake as the Assistant Comptroller.

Mayor Rockingham explained that the Comptroller Tawanda Joyner had been searching for an assistant. Based on Mr. Westlake's resume he was better suited for the Assistant Comptroller position rather than the job he initially applied for.

Alderman January asked why the City needed an Assistant Comptroller. Mayor Rockingham said that Ms. Joyner worked extended hours to maintain many functions. Ms. Joyner expressed the need for the Assistant Comptroller to manage the day-to-day operations of the department. The Comptroller would be able to work on higher level functions. Currently unable to focus on the more important duties.

Alderman January asked what level on the pay scale Mr. Westlake would start; Ms. Joyner said step 1. Mr. Westlake came from a staffing agency and if he were hired as an employee there would be a percentage to be paid to the staffing agency. Alderman January asked the amount; Alderman Jackson said \$67.36/hour.

Alderman Allen noted that the contract was for 3 months.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL – REQUEST TO WAIVE FIRST READING OF STAFFING CONTRACT FOR DAVID WESTLAKE AS THE ASSISTANT COMPTROLLER

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to approve the request to waive first reading of staffing contract for David Westlake as the Assistant Comptroller.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

7-3 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL – REQUEST TO WAIVE FIRST READING OF STAFFING CONTRACT FOR DAPHNE REYES AS POLICE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/LEADS COORDINATOR

Alderman Murphy moved, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the request to waive first reading of staffing contract for Daphne Reyes as Police Department Administrative Assistant/Leads Coordinator.

Alderman January asked for clarity, if it was in the budget and currently in the position. Human Resources Director Elizabeth Black explained there were other staffing agencies reviewed and how much was being billed; was \$66.17. Attorney Simon clarified that she was currently a contractor with the City. Mrs. Black said upon review that GovHR was the cheaper rate at \$56.31/hr. Ms. Reyes was previously a City employee who retired with IMRF and had to work through a staffing agency because of retirement. She would be a permanent contractor.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: January

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

7-4 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL – STAFFING CONTRACT FOR DAPHNE REYES AS POLICE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/LEADS COORDINATOR

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to approve the staffing contract for Daphne Reyes as Police Department Administrative Assistant/Leads Coordinator.

Alderman January stated confusion of the title. Mrs. Black explained that it would be corrected like it is on the agenda, the staffing agency needed to correct it.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

7-5 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL – ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING RENEWAL OF AGGREGATION PROGRAM FOR ELECTRICAL LOAD

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve the Ordinance authorizing renewal of Aggregation Program for electrical load.

Chief of Staff Greg Jackson explained that there were options offered; 1. Not to do anything, 2. Matching of ComEd rate which includes \$20,000 to the City 3. Forgo the October contract and have a May contract. Alderman January asked the best options for the residents. Adam from NIMEC said that the letters went out prematurely. Did not know what would happen in May. He suggested the \$20,000 option to the City.

Alderman Murphy referred to the letter that she received, and her letter suggested the possibility of doing nothing. Clarified the rates would mirror ComEd. City Clerk Lori L. Collins asked what people should be looking for; Adam said the letter explained to do nothing. Attorney Adam Simon said the ComEd bill states who your supplier is.

Alderman Jackson felt it was confusing and would prefer to wait until May. Alderman Smith asked NIMEC opinion of Alderman Jackson. Adam stated that the decision was fine, but the

downside would be that it would be to notify the residents with another letter. Mayor Rockingham clarified the options; Adam stated that cost savings were not guaranteed in May. He did not think there would be savings in May.

Chief of Staff Jackson said there were various scenarios. He suggested the May option. Mayor Rockingham, it had been discussed thoroughly and there were many things that could happen. Communications and Outreach Coordinator Hombre Darby noted that previously, Dynergy was significantly higher.

Alderman Murphy moved, seconded by Alderman January to table the Ordinance authorizing renewal of Aggregation Program for electrical load.

ROLL CALL to TABLE:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

7-6 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL – APPOINTMENT OF DAPHNE BROOKS TO THE LIBRARY BOARD (REPLACING ETTA ROBINSON'S TERM UNTIL APRIL 2027)

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman January to approve appointment of Daphne Brooks to the Library Board (replacing Etta Robinson's term until April 2027).

Alderman Allen asked if Mrs. Brooks was present. Mayor Rockingham explained that Mrs. Brooks was unable to attend because she was the Human Resources Director for Waukegan and she had to be present for their Council Meeting. Alderman Jackson felt it was a sufficient reason for her to be absent.

Alderman January felt it was a special circumstance that she was unable to attend and was happy that Mrs. Brooks was getting involved, 7th Ward. Her resume was also qualifying.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Abstain: Coleman

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

7-7 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$ 1,222,658.62
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$ 47,655.00
CDBG Fund	\$ 2,488.00
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 17,270.69
Vision Fund	\$ 270,675.59
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TOTAL	\$ 1,560,747.90

MOTION:

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to pay the bills of Council Run 9/3/24 in the amount of **\$1,560,747.90 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 **\$3,912,154.80**. Mayor stated per the Treasurer that the non-liquid Water Fund cash balance was **\$1,440,087.12**.

Alderman Murphy explained that her vote was based on her opinion that there were several bills she believed were campaigning expenses.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: Murphy, January

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

*Alderman Jackson said that he met Commander Isaiah Stokes as part of the Explorer Post and it was an honor to see how he inspired the youth. He was in hope of Commander Stokes becoming an Admiral. He further commended him and his family

*Alderman Allen announced 4th Ward Meeting, September 28th, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at City Hall

*Alderman January said there was cases of the West Nile Virus in Lake County with rising numbers. She warned everyone to protect themselves with sprays and dump any standing water around the home.

*Alderman Smith announced that he would hosting an adult fishing trip September 28th 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*Alderman Jackson asked if there was a follow-up concerning the discrepancies Alderman Murphy had on the City Bills. Chief of Staff Jackson said review was on the way. Alderman January asked if there was a need for Executive Session. Attorney Simon explained that the City would not want to criminalize an elected official in the public unless there were final judgement.

*Mayor announced the activities of Fiestas Padre September 14th. The former named Ricky Rockets, Compass gas station hopeful to open in November. The City was working toward a new website for better interaction and vibrance. There were 12 RFPs presented from interested companies to do the website. Lake County Digital Equity was giving Wi-Fi hotspots; North Chicago was a Wi-Fi 33 desert and there were 5 spots going to be given

*Alderman Allen asked if Deli (Spiros (Skokie Hwy) was ready to open. Mayor Rockingham said that he was awaiting a part. Mayor offered to purchase at Jimmy John's also

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

9-1 **5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(11)** – Pending or Imminent Litigation

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

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman January to suspend the Regular Order of Business at 8:16 p.m. to Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(11) – Pending or Imminent Litigation and 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(12) – Establishment of Reserves or Settlement of Claims.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman January to reconvene the Regular Order of Business at 8:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

X. ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS

10-1 Settlement Agreement Relating to **2920 20th Place**

Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve the Settlement Agreement relating to 2920 20th Place.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Evans

MOTION CARRIED

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

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk