

MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Monday, January 21, 2025, 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, Murphy

Absent: Allen, Smith, January

4-1 Proclamation Presentation for **211** Day

Alderman January requested remote participation via Zoom.

Alderman Coleman moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to allow Alderman January remote participation via Zoom.

MOTION CARRIED

The City Clerk read the Proclamation for **211** Day.

Alderman Murphy moved, seconded by Alderman Jackson to Approve the Proclamation for **211 Day.**

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Alderman Allen and Smith were absent.

The Mayor presented the proclamation to a **211** representative. He gave a briefing on their services and resources; he also expressed his appreciation.

Gale Graves, a **211** representative, explained that the City of North Chicago was one of the top **(5)** cities in Lake County serving their community residents. Nina Chalmers Executive Director for the North Chicago Housing Authority said that **211** programs had been a great benefit to the citizens of North Chicago. Since she became a member of the Board, she had learned about many programs; **211** has been a fine tool for North Chicago and surrounding communities. The Mayor reiterated he was appreciative of their services.

Public Works Director Bob Miller announced had received awards from the American Public Works Association (APWA) on behalf of the City. Superintendent Clarence (Tommy) Johnson was present. Public Works was the recipients of **(2)** awards:

- Water Treatment Plant Renovations Project of the Year
- **16th** Street Water Main Project

He was very honored, and the plaques were provided to the Mayor.

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

V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **January 6, 2024**

5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **January 6, 2024**

5-3 Resolution Approval of Trotter and Assoc. Inc. Work Order **Not to Exceed Amount of \$204,870** for Lead Service Line Replacement Project – Design Engineering & Bidding Services Phase I

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy to approve items 5-1 thru 5-3 as presented.

Alderman Coleman questioned item 5-3 if the grant funds would continue. Steve Cieslica Trotter and Associates Inc. explained the grants were issued from IEPA (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency) it was administered by the State not the Federal government. The incoming federal administration had no bearing on the project. He also applied for the competitive grant that was ready to bid. The City of North Chicago received a **10%** discount for Trotter services.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Smith, Murphy

Nays: January (RP)

Absent: Allen

MOTION CARRIED

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Deborah Richards

Mrs. Richards received much harassment due to supporting a particular candidate. Nimrod Warda, former Senior Planner, sent her letters concerning the signs on Audrey Nixon Blvd. Mr. Drobnick, (Realtor) had told him to cease and desist. Dr. Fields opened a practice/pharmacy and there were only **(2)** home purchases etc.

Tonette Mackins

Ms. Mackins continued the discussion regarding Mrs. Richards; unnecessary stress, matter of principal, council was a shame and unethical. A Federal case was possible.

Robert Richards

Removed Mrs. Richards from the committee agenda which failed due process, the clause of **14th** Amendment due process was also denied, and he demanded fair and just treatment.

Nina Chalmers

Ms. Chalmers introduced herself. She noted that the North Chicago Housing Authority wasn't designated for seniors, it was for ages **18** and older. There were quarterly mandatory resident meetings. Any questions could be addressed to her.

Alderman Coleman asked if the Housing Authority could be eligible for similar grant offered to Brookstone at Coles Park. Mayor Rockingham explained it would have to be addressed with State Legislators. Assistant Police Chief Gary Lunn said that grant possibilities were being reviewed. There was going to be a proposal to the Public Safety Committee; possibly a CSO full-time at both Kukla Towers and Thompson Manor.

Mayor Rockingham thanked the Public Works Department and congratulated them on the 2 awards they received. He informed of possible permanent casino at Fountain Square; it would generate more money to the City of North Chicago. Sheridan Crossing clean up soon to come. Solar project at Casmir Pulaski and Compass (Rte. 41) update also coming for permitting. Staff would be meeting with Lake County Administration for additional Wi-Fi in North Chicago with use of county funds.

Carmecia Hawthorne

Ms. Hawthorne announced the Father/Daughter Dance, **February 6, 2025**. She said to call Foss Park for more information if interested. The Easter Egg Hunt for adults was scheduled for **April 12, 2025**.

Keone Carter – Summer Up Program

Mrs. Carter provide a preview of the program. Ther were **158** students, **39** overnight college and **62**. She had served **(600)** students and was currently a non-for-profit organization **501 (c)(3)**. She also thanked everyone. Gilbert Torres was previously working as an intern with Treasurer Wyatt, the following year had participated in the Summer-Up Program as Director Assistant and employed recently full-time status with the Economic Development Department. He thanked North Chicago for the program, countless experiences and memories with the youth and their growth. Cyetta Marshall, Naval Officer; – mother of son, Deshaun (student). She thanked North Chicago and Mrs. Keone Carter for her passion in the program. Wendy Flores explained that she was a participant since **2020** through Senior year in high school. The Summer Up program created many experiences. She encouraged the residents with high importance of the census. Her family members have joined; brother was attending College of Lake she was attending college to attain a nursing degree, currently a patient care technician pursuing a Pediatric Nursing career. She also thanked Ms. Carter for the program opening to new experiences. Also, several aldermen including Alderman Evans and January. Mrs. Carter was very appreciative for the City of North Chicago.

The Mayor also thanked Mrs. Carter for her program with the youth, they were able to assist in various departments. Would also continue to support her accordingly. Alderman Smith acknowledged Alexandria Garcia was the 1st young lady interested in the Public Works Department. Alderman Evans who highly commended the youth attendees, excellent job, a tool for the young people and appreciated of Ms. Carter continuing to move forward.

Gerald Coleman

Mr. Coleman acknowledged Mrs. Carter, as her father had mentored him in sports and she, the daughter, was very involved with the youth interest. He was a resident of **(70)** years thus far. He asked the aldermen to cease the bickering with one another. There have been illegalities occurring and encouraged the council members becoming more unified as a team in public.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA

7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING ANNUAL MEETING 2025 CALENDAR:

Alderman Evans moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to approve the Resolution Establishing Annual Meeting 2025 Calendar as presented.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Smith, Murphy

Nays: January (RP)

Absent: Allen

MOTION CARRIED

7-2 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS

General Fund	\$ 522,557.44
General Grants Fund	\$ 9,419.89
Motor Fuel Tax Fund	\$ 358,171.22
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 314,919.53
Water, Sewer & Refuse Fund	\$ 125,595.01
Vision Fund	\$ 678.30
Retiree Premium Fund	\$ 12,358.87
Library Fund	\$ 7,123.80
Total	\$ 1,350,824.06

MOTION:

Alderman Murphy moved, seconded by Alderman Smith to pay the bills of Council Run 1/21/25 the amount of **\$1,350,824.06 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 answered that there were sufficient funds available, checks to be processed tomorrow. She explained the balance in the Water Fund's liquid amount of **\$4,985,392.89** and Treasurer Vance Wyatt explained the non-liquid assets amount was **\$1,511,285.55** at market closing.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Smith, Murphy

Nays: January (RP)

Absent: Allen

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

- Alderman Coleman said he reached out to Ms. Chalmers concerning the Housing Authority and stated that she was there to address any questions. Alderman Smith asked if the Housing Authority oversaw matters of both Kukla Towers? Ms. Chalmers explained the Housing Authority was overseen by HUD; the only matter of the City is that the Mayor appoints the Board.

Alderman Jackson asked if the Housing Authority oversaw the operations; asked if HUD was assisting with issues at that location. Ms. Chalmers said that she notifies HUD of all matters that pertain to Kukla Towers. She has telephone meeting with HUD every first Monday of the month to discuss issues. She said that police could police the buildings more, drugs were a universal issue and not sure of what more could be done. She noted that she was on a "skeleton" budget and short staffed; there is no Deputy Director any longer. There may be more cuts to the budget in future months.

Alderman January clarified resident meeting times. Ms. Chalmers again stated that there were quarterly meetings and would forward the next meeting time to the Mayor. Alderman January asked how often the Housing Authority met; Ms. Chalmers said every Thursday of the month.

Alderman Coleman asked if more police presence would help. Ms. Chalmers explained that most crime happens within individual units and there is nothing that can be done about that. They nor the police could control that; could not enter someone's apartment. Alderman Smith suggested that if an assistant was needed that advertising could be done at the City also.

- The Mayor acknowledged Trotter & Assoc., the Public Works Department and Chair, Alderman Evans. The City of North Chicago had received (2) awards. There was currently a ruling and hopefully can move forward with the American Casino in expanding development at Fountain Square. He clarified the City also received a portion of revenue. Once IEPA approved the Sheridan Crossing site, removing contaminants, it would allow city development. Economic & Community Development Director Taylor Wegrzyn will provide update of the solar project at Casmir Polaski Dr., the Compass Project on Rt. 41 for additional WIFI installed in the City and he was hopeful with Lake County ARPA funding.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 9-1 EXECUTIVE SESSION 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(5) – PURCHASE OR LEASE OF REAL PROPERTY**
- 9-2 EXECUTIVE SESSION 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(1) – THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES**

Alderman Smith moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to suspend the Regular Order of Business at 7:23 p.m. to Executive Session 5 ILCS 120 2 (c)(5) – Purchase or Lease of Real Property /2 (c)(1) – Personnel Matters (The Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance or Dismissal of Specific Employees.)

ROLL CALL:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Allen

MOTION CARRIED

Alderman Jackson moved, seconded by Alderman Evans, to resume the Regular Order of Business at 8:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Jackson, Coleman, Evans, Smith, Murphy

Nays: None

Absent: Allen, January (RP)

MOTION CARRIED

- 9-3 POSSIBLE ACTION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

NO ACTION TAKEN

X. 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

Alderman Allen and January were absent.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lori L. Collins, City Clerk