

# MINUTES

The City Council of North Chicago met in a Regular meeting, Monday, January 6, 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, Allen, Smith, Murphy, January

Absent: None

## V. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

5-1 Approval of Minutes for Regular Council Meeting, **December 16, 2024**

5-2 Approval of Standing Committee Meeting Minutes, **December 16, 2024**

5-3 Resolution Approving Sale of Surplus Real Estate at **1737** Lincoln Street (PIN 08-33-324-011) **\$17,500**

5-4 Approval of Additional Management Analyst – Police A15 to the City Salary Ordinance (CSO)

5-5 Approval of MGT/GovHR Classification and Compensation Study Proposal in the Amount Not to Exceed **\$16,500**

**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. TO ADD PUBLIC COMMENTS

Alderman January moved, seconded by Alderman Coleman to add the Public Comment category; **Item VI.**

### **MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE**

#### Deborah Richards

Ms. Richards had reviewed the last meeting. It was the principal of the issue. The question addressed to the Mayor was “why the Honorable Roadway sign issue for Ms. Richards” was not rediscussed and he clarified that he chose not to. This was very disturbing to her and “shame on you!”

#### Terese Flowers

Ms. Flowers was appreciative of the Public Works Department posting the slow children sign on Prospect Ave. She also thanked Alderman Smith with hosting the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward meetings. She wished all a “Happy New Year.”

#### Rayon Edwards

Mr. Edwards explained had reflected on year **2024**. He was disgusted with Alderman January using obscene gestures and unprofessional, embarrassing to the residents and the children. He clarified it was a personal attack against the Housing Authority Director. He encouraged her to assist with matters at Kukla Towers and the additions in the City of North Chicago.

Charles January

Mr. January claimed his wife did not use obscene gestures; strongly stressed Kukla Towers wasn't operated properly. He clarified it was a city building. Since year of **2008**, it wasn't certified as the North Chicago Housing Authority.

**VII. REGULAR AGENDA**

**7-1 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF CITY BILLS**

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>263,161.48</b>
<b>Motor Fuel Tax Fund</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>64,139.99</b>
<b>Skoke Highway TIF Fund</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>51,231.83</b>
<b>Capital Projects Fund</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>48,424.46</b>
<b>Water, Sewer &amp; Refuse Fund</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>162,470.19</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>589,427.95</b>
<b>Special Bills</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>6,194.75</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>595,622.70</b>

**MOTION:**

**Alderman Allen moved, seconded by Alderman Evans to pay the bills of Council Run 1/6/25 the amount of **\$595,622.70** when funds become available.**

Alderman January asked if there were sufficient funds, when checks would be cut and sent, also amount in Water Fund. In the absence of the Comptroller and Treasurer, Chief of Staff Greg Jackson answered that there were sufficient funds available, checks to be processed and mailed Wednesday. He explained the balance in all accounts was **\$29,776,574.19** the Water Fund's liquid amount of **\$5,043,777.86 as of January 2nd** and the non-liquid amount was **\$1,511,497.81**.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Nays: January

Absent: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**VIII. MISCELLANEOUS**

**VARIOUS CONCERNS AND COMMENTS**

\*The Mayor announced that the Comptroller lost her brother and sending condolences to the Joyner and Hawthorne family. Flower arrangements would be sent.

\*Also, to Angela Jenkins with her loss of the grandmother. Flower arrangements would be sent.

\* Alderman Smith announced 1st Ward – 7<sup>th</sup> Ward meeting joining as one for **2025**. It would be held at **2300 MLK Dr., January 18, 2025; 11-3 p.m.** Also, he presented the Mayor with a present for his "B day."

\* Alderman January had high concerns of all the wards joining together. She directed question to the attorney concerning the Open Meetings Act. Also, if the meeting needed to be posted. Attorney

Simon explained since the ward meeting was conducting city business and majority of council that it needed to be posted. Alderman January preferred to ensure OMA was followed properly. She addressed of the police department plans to ensure safety. She didn't feel safe in the City with the shooting and deaths.

The Mayor clarified the crime rate had decreased in the last (5) years. Tools as ShotSpotter, License Plate Readers, Cameras and the police department were aggressively patrolling. He apologized that Alderman January felt unsafe in the community that she served as the Alderman. He asked that she directed the people to speak to the Mayor. She mentioned an overdose at Kukla Towers recently. The Mayor stated was collaborating with Thompson Manor and Kukla Towers and the issues at Brookstone at Coles Park.

Alderman Evans was so disappointed with the discussion. He apologized to the January family for previous statements he made.

Alderman Jackson asked the plan for Kukla Towers and Thompson Manor. He received an extensive call from a resident. They were suggesting calling outside assistance if the city police couldn't manage it.

#### **Alderman Evans left at 6:31 p.m.**

The Mayor suggested to discuss the issue in Committee Meeting. He asked if there was a Housing Authority building in the City or under HUD (Housing Urban Development.)

Attorney Simon explained that the City incorporated the Housing Authority appointing members to the board, though a separate corporation with statutory authority. Alderman Jackson asked if it was a HUD facility. Attorney Simon was unaware. Alderman Jackson was highly concerned with public safety issues. Home should be a sanctuary and unable if disaccord and disruption.

#### **Alderman Evans returned at 6:35 p.m.**

The Mayor suggested additional funding in the Police Department. He was reviewing all the issues and attempting more manpower.

Alderman Murphy suggested viewing the Housing Authority website with housing vouchers. They are obtained locally through agencies. There was some connection with HUD and possibly assistance how it was governed.

Alderman Smith asked who was contacting the Director to be invited at the next meeting. Mayor directed it to the Chief of Staff and the police department. Alderman Smith asked Police Chief Lazaro Perez the status of the crime. Chief Perez explained was decreasing 20% annually. The prior (4) years by 30%. Each month the council received the reports indicating a decrease in the crime.

Alderman Coleman questioned including Brookstone statistics. Chief Perez explained that North Chicago as a whole, there were many arrests. He asked if they were recording them accordingly. Chief Perez would be willing to share the crime statistics at Brookstone.

Alderman January suggested to ensure the information received was properly documented to receive the opioid funding needed from the Federal Government. Chief Perez stated had attempted to revive the opioid grant; Kukla Towers needed 24 hr. security. The Police Department was conducting drug investigations, and several searches. The issue was that people were selling inside the building. The residents were allowing the drug dealers entrance. Alderman January questioned Fire Chief John Umek the number of monthly calls for overdosing. Fire Chief Umek explained there was (1) confirmed and (3) possible. Alderman January would be following up with HUD. She asked how the Fire Department would manage (2) emergencies simultaneously. Fire Chief explained.

Alderman Coleman recommended suggesting a strategy following discussion with Kukla Towers and the Housing Authority Board. He would return his findings at the next Council Meeting.

The Mayor read a letter from a child for Shop with a Cop. He wished everyone a better **2025** and moving forward.

Alderman Smith asked Mayor with the update of Compass full - service truck stop with a restaurant. Economic & Community Development Director Taylor Wegrzyn provided an overview.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

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

### **MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE**

The Council Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

### **ATTEST:**

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**Lori L. Collins**, City Clerk