

# EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

May 29, 2024

The East Bethel City Council met on May 29, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. for the regular City Council meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Lewis Brian Mundle Bob DeRoche  
Tim Miller Jim Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Matt Look, City Administrator  
Eric Larson, City Attorney  
Rodney Sanow, Fire Chief  
Aaron Berg, Community Development Director  
Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager  
Carrie Frost, Administrative Coordinator

## 1.0 Call to Order

The May 29, 2024, City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Lewis at 7:00 p.m.

## 2.0 Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

## 3.0 Adopt Agenda

**Mundle stated I'll make a motion to adopt tonight's agenda. Miller stated I'll second.** Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

## 4.0 Presentations and Public Hearings

### 4.0 A Anoka County Sheriff's Report

Lieutenant Derek Peters presented the April 2024, Sheriff's Report, stating the Sheriff's Department responded to 409 calls for service including 2 thefts, 4 assaults, 3 damage to property, 7 PI accidents, 11 PD accidents, 55 medicals, 33 animal complaints, 13 alarms, 2 felony arrests, 6 gross misdemeanor arrests, 8 misdemeanor arrests, 2 DUI arrests, 1 drug arrest, 1 domestic arrests, 8 warrant arrests, 128 traffic stops, and 29 traffic arrests. He noted they had seen an increase in activity due to the warmer weather. He reminded everyone to buckle up and to drive safely as they are entering the 100 deadliest days on Minnesota roadways between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

DeRoche asked if the animal calls were dogs running loose. Lieutenant Peters responded it could be a combination of dogs, bears, cats, etc. He noted they were all lumped together.

DeRoche noted domestic assaults were up. Lieutenant Peters noted that with the warmer weather, people were outside which created some issues. He indicated this was typical for this time of year and not unexpected.

Lewis asked if the construction on Highway 65 was having an impact with accidents. Lieutenant Peters indicated a lot of people were staying away from that area, so they have not seen an increase in accidents. However, he indicated the data had not shown that one way or the other.

Miller noted going back six years, the City had more than doubled the year-to-date assaults. He noted this was concerning and asked if something was happening in different areas of the City, or

what was happening. Lieutenant Peters responded this was cyclical and they were used to seeing these types of numbers when it got warmer outside. He acknowledged it had doubled, but he did not have any trend data to suggest the reason(s) why, but it was something they could keep an eye on throughout the summer.

**Informational; no action required.**

#### **4.0 B Fire Department Monthly Report**

Fire Chief Sanow presented the April 2024 report and noted that they responded to 75 calls, of which 55 were medicals, 7 crashes, 1 alarms, 4 burning/smoke, 4 other, 3 fires, 1 mutual aid. He stated they were looking for people to join the Fire Department. He reminded everyone about the size of recreational fires (3-foot x 3-foot x 3-foot high) with anything bigger needing a burning permit which they could get from the City Hall. He stated burning could occur between 6 pm and 8 am, but he requested they let their neighbors know if they were going to be burning, so they do not call 911.

Mundle asked if the Fire Department was going to hold a recruitment event again like last year. Sanow responded they were discussing this as well as discussing other ideas such as the East Bethel Bulletin and the City's reader board for letting people know they needed firefighters.

Smith noted the Council had approved a probationary period for firefighter Rachel Miller earlier in the year and indicated the previous Fire Chief used to bring a firefighter to the Council meeting after their probationary period ended so the Council could thank them for their service. He asked if this would be done again. Sanow responded he would like to do that, but that would pull them out of their training because both the Council meeting and firefighter's training was on Monday night.

Smith suggested an email be sent to the firefighter to let them know the Council was appreciative of what they were doing. Sanow responded he did send emails to them and it also gets put in the newsletter.

Smith stated it was important to him that the firefighters get recognized for their service as it was a big commitment for the firefighters.

Mundle inquired about the fire danger now that they have had rain. Sanow believed the DNR had said it was not an issue right now, but he was not positive. He noted just because they got a lot of rain, the grass still would dry out and it could burn.

**Informational; no action required.**

#### **4.0 C ACEIT Election Presentation**

Channing Stowell, East Bethel resident, presented the ACEIT Election presentation noting this was a return of self-governance. He indicated people did not trust the voting system. He believed the State registration system was out of control. He summarized their thoughts on what needed to be done about their concerns and noted they were willing to do a feasibility study on the cost. He stated they had done one for Oak Grove.

Lewis requested a copy of the Oak Grove study. He stated he had no doubt that there was corruption in the election system.

**Informational; no action required.**

#### **5.0 Public Forum**

No comments were made.

## 6.0 Consent Agenda

Item A: Approve Bills

Item B: Approve Meeting Minutes May 13, 2024 City Council Meeting

Item C: 2024-2025 Liquor License Renewals

Item D: Playground Equipment and Site Improvements for Maynard Peterson and Coon Lake Beach Parks

Item E: Bataan St Trail Paving Quote

Item F: Shade Structures for Booster West

Item G: Approve Hire of Seasonal Maintenance Public Works Employee

**Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve Consent Agenda as amended. DeRoche stated I'll second.** Lewis asked any discussion?

Lewis asked on the digital it said work meeting minutes, but it was just a regular meeting and he knew they were corrected on the printed version. He asked if steps had been taken to ensure that Mundle would receive notification of the Anoka County Blaine Area Advisory Commission in the future. Mundle responded Look had corrected that and he had been given the correct information.

To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

The Council reordered the agenda to next consider Item 8.0.G.1.

## 8.0 Department Reports

### 8.0 G City Administrator Report

#### 8.0 G.1 Consider Approval of Assessor Contract

Look stated the current City Assessor's contract expired on December 31, 2024. The City sent notices for request for proposals for this service to Mary Wells and the Anoka County Assessor's Office. The City also advertised for request for proposals on the League of MN Cities website and in the Union Herald. Ms. Wells thanked the City for extending her an invitation to submit a proposal but chose not to submit one for this contract term.

Look indicated the only proposal the City received was from the Anoka County Assessor's Office Alex Guggenberger with the Anoka County Assessor's Office. Mr. Guggenberger attended the 5/13/24 Council Meeting in order to provide an overview of the County proposal and answer any questions the Council had.

Look stated the Anoka County Assessor's Office provided the City a cost proposal for a modified 3-year term that would run through May 15, 2028.

Look indicated staff recommends Council consider the approval of the Joint Powers Agreement between the City of East Bethel and the Anoka County Assessor's Office with a term commencing January 1, 2025 and ending May 15, 2028.

**DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to approve the Joint Powers Agreement between the City of East Bethel and Anoka County for the assessment of property. Miller stated I'll second.** Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

## 7.0 New Business. Commission, Association, and Task Force Reports

No reports given.

## 8.0 Department Reports

### 8.0 A Community Development

#### 8.0A.1 Architectural Standards for Businesses

Berg stated at the April 3, 2023 City Council meeting, Councilmembers Smith and Miller recommended amendments to various City Codes which are contained in the Zoning Code. Council directed staff to route the amendments to the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing and recommendation. At the April 25, 2023 meeting the Planning Commission discussed these after holding a public hearing.

Berg noted due to the mixed levels of support and limited amount of time for discussion of the proposed revisions staff thought it was in the best interest to bring two of the Zoning Codes amendments back for further discussion and formal recommendation at the May 23, 2023 Planning Commission meeting. A formal recommendation on Section 24. Exterior Storage was presented and passed at the June 26th, 2023 City Council meeting. Section 28. Architectural Standards had numerous revisions. City staff has compiled the recommendations and created a third draft revision for review on December 27, 2023. At that time it was the Council's request to allow Council Member Miller review the revisions.

Council Member Miller's revisions were discussed at the May 13, 2024 meeting and were to be brought back for further discussion, consideration, or adoption.

Berg stated staff recommends the City Council conduct further review and discussion of the proposed amendments and make a formal recommendation or adoption.

**DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to approve the changes. Smith stated I'll second.**

Berg noted the motion should also include a summary publication to be in the newspaper for 10 days in order to make it official at the end of the 10-day period. He indicated it would then become an Ordinance.

**DeRoche stated I'll make an amended motion to approve the changes to the architectural standards and authorize a summary publication for 10 days. Smith stated I'll second.**

Lewis asked any discussion?

Mundle asked would the concrete block be some sort of finished concrete block. Berg responded that was correct and the concrete block would be finished.

To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

#### 8.0 B Engineer Report

None.

#### 8.0 C City Attorney

None.

#### 8.0 D Finance

None.

#### 8.0 E Public Works

##### 8.0 E.1 2025 Street Capital Improvement Plan

Ayshford stated staff prepares an annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which updates needs and costs of proposed projects, evaluates priorities and establishes funding for these works for the coming year and for each of the subsequent years for a five-year period. This plan is presented to City Council for their approval and used in the preparation of the 2025 budget. He reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan for the Council.

Ayshford noted approval of the plans only commits the City for the projects identified for 2025. Projects beyond 2025 are for planning purposes and will be reevaluated annually for funding prioritization during the capital improvement needs assessment and planning process.

Ayshford indicated the budget included a proposed general fund transfer increase of \$50,000 for road improvement projects for 2025 subject to City Council approval

Ayshford stated staff recommends the 2025-2029 Roads Capital Improvement Plan to the City Council for their consideration and approval.

DeRoche asked what shape was the gravel portion of Klondike in. Ayshford responded they put chloride on it once a year and they got approximately six weeks out of the chloride. He indicated they usually put chloride down at the end of June or early July which would last until mid-August.

DeRoche noted the road going to the Gun Club was not very attractive. He asked if it was ever graded. Ayshford responded they did grade it and if people would drive slower it would last a lot longer. He indicated the faster the traffic drove on gravel roads, the quicker washboards occurred and the quicker the road would get dusty.

Look commented on Viking Boulevard/Sand Hill Parkway left turn lane agreement with the County and noted the one change that may happen over time was if Viking changed to a full grade separated interchange. He indicated he wanted to talk to the County and ask if any improvements such as this get torn up in the event of a separated interchange. He noted if that were the case, why would they spend the money on a pork chop. He believed they might want to spend some time on this and try to find a solution.

Look stated they should keep a close eye on inflation and the cost of doing these projects. He noted getting behind on roads was a huge problem for cities. He indicated they were trying to address this a little bit at a time, but if they continued to see spiking costs they might have to look at options such as bonding for projects, but he acknowledged that was not a favorable option.

Lewis stated neither one was palatable – debt or inflation.

**DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to approve the 2025 Capital Street Improvement Plan with the \$50,000 addition. Mundle stated I'll second.** Lewis asked any discussion?

Smith asked if Look checked whether Sandhill Crane was something that would affect this. Look responded currently as a part of the plan, they would uphold the agreement. He stated they might be able to come up with a plan that didn't need to spend that money and the funds would just be left in reserve at that point.

Ayshford noted the City also received State aid funds that most cities put toward the road capital, so those funds could be earmarked for this maintenance. He noted currently East Bethel put those funds into the general fund. Look noted the general funds essentially paid for maintenance, so it was an offset.

To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

### 8.0 E.2 2025 Park Capital Improvement Plan

Ayshford stated the Parks Commission prepares an annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which updates needs and costs of proposed projects, evaluates priorities and establishes funding for these works for the coming year and for each of the subsequent years for a five-year period. This plan is presented to City Council for their approval and used in the preparation of the 2025 budget. He reviewed the plan for the Council.

Ayshford indicated approval of the plans only commits the City for the projects identified for 2025. Projects beyond 2025 are for planning purposes and will be reevaluated annually for funding prioritization during the capital improvement needs assessment and planning process.

Ayshford stated the budget includes a general fund transfer of \$110,000 for Parks Capital Improvement Projects for 2025 and is a \$10,000 increase over the 2024 budget to adjust for inflation and is subject to City Council approval. It is anticipated that Park Dedication Fees from developers will provide an additional \$363,000 to the Parks Acquisition and Development Fund for 2025 mainly from the proposed Viking Meadows development.

Ayshford indicated the Park Commission voted unanimously to recommend the 2025-2029 Parks Capital Improvement Plan for approval by City Council.

Mundle asked if they should consider using the Ice Arena for pickleball in the summertime as this was becoming a popular sport. Ayshford responded staff could look into this, but noted they would not be able to put anything into the floor itself due to the cooling lines and it would also require some kind of a freestanding net.

**Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve the 2025-2029 Parks Capital Improvement Plan with \$110,000 for park capital improvement. Smith stated I'll second.** Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

### 8.0 E.3 Ice Arena Management Contract Proposals

Ayshford stated the current Ice Arena Management Contract with Gibson Management Corporation (GMC) is set to expire on July 31, 2024. The City has utilized Gibson Management since 2008 for the management and operation of the City Ice Arena.

Ayshford indicated the City was responsible for the operation of this facility from its opening in 1994 until 2006. The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (Super Rink) managed the Arena from 2006 to 2008 but declined to renew their contract with the City beyond 2008. Gibson Management was hired for the 2008-2009 year as the Arena Manager and then received approval for a three-year contract extension in 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018 and 2021.

Ayshford noted the City published notice for and invited "Request for Proposals" for this service this year and received two proposals with the annual costs summarized below.

Gibson Management Company LLC

- 8/1/24 to 7/31/25.....\$115,000
- 8/1/25 to 7/31/26.....\$120,000
- 8/1/26 to 7/31/27..... \$125,000

The Sports Facilities Companies

- \$204,000 plus 10% of Ice Rental Revenue, 20% of Sponsorship Revenue, and reimbursed travel expenses.

Ayshford stated the East Bethel Ice Arena is a City-owned building that is operated as an Enterprise Fund with the costs of operation directly funded by the users without the need for funds from the general fund tax levy if operated as designed. The Ice Arena Enterprise Fund began operating in the black in 2013 and has been able to grow a positive balance to pay for facility repairs and upgrades since that time.

Ayshford noted both of the submitted proposals would require securing additional funding to keep the ice arena operating at a break-even point with the low proposal from Gibson Management representing a 32% increase over the 2024 costs. Possible sources of additional funding could come from raising ice rental rates, greatly increasing advertising, or subsidizing costs with general fund tax revenue.

Ayshford stated another possible option is to reduce operational costs by performing the management of the Ice Arena in-house with City staff. Staff has put together an estimate of the operational costs for the City to perform this service and are shown in attachment 3. The estimated annual cost would be approximately \$102,000 with a \$13,300 contingency built into the estimate. City Staff would be responsible for hiring and managing part-time ice arena attendants, coordinating and scheduling ice rental times, installing and removing the ice sheet, and the administrative and HR responsibilities associated with the part-time employees.

Ayshford indicated these responsibilities would be in addition to all of the employee's workload so every effort would be made to minimize the use of existing City Staff and maximize the use of part time help and vendors along with leveraging any options that the St Francis Youth Hockey Association can offer.

**DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to approve the City self-manage the Ice Arena with the understanding that it was a trial and if someone wants to buy it, it would be sold. Miller stated I'll second.** Lewis asked any discussion?

Mundle asked if the motion included selling the building. Look believed the past discussions were that if someone wanted to buy the business, the City would lease the building to the new owner of the business.

Lewis asked if the City could sell the building if they wanted. Ayshford responded the City had a tower lease on the property and there was an agreement with MnDOT for parking on the property.

Lewis asked if those could be transferred to a new owner. Look responded the City could lease the building to someone for one dollar or any other amount they wanted.

Mundle stated he did not want the City approving any open bidding sale and that this was strictly for operational management of the ice arena.

To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes.  
**Motion passes unanimously.**

## **8.0 F Fire Department**

None.

## **8.0 G City Administrator Report**

### **8.0 G.1 Consider Approval of Assessor Contract**

This item was considered prior to Item 7.0 New Business.

## **9.0 – Other Items**

### **9.0 A Staff Report**

Look stated Ekberg and Lammers was going through a Legislative update tomorrow if Council wanted to listen in.

Look stated there would be an Open House at City Hall on June 6 that the County was putting on for the ditch abandonment for Capstone. He indicated this would meet the public requirement to go through the process.

#### **9.0 B Council Reports**

DeRoche stated he had stopped by the ball field at Coon Beach and Midwest Speed was putting their new signage was up, which looked good.

#### **10.0 Adjourn**

**DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to adjourn. Mundle stated I'll second.** To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Submitted by:

Kathy Altman

*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*