

EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

January 13, 2025

The East Bethel City Council met on January 13, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. for the regular City Council meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Arden Anderson Suzanne Erkel Brian Mundle
Tim Miller Jim Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Matt Look, City Administrator
Eric Larson, City Attorney
Rodney Sanow, Fire Chief
Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager
Mike Jeziorski, Deputy City Administrator/Finance Director

Oath of Office

Oath of Office administered to Mayor-Elect Arden Anderson, and Councilmembers-Elect Suzanne Erkel and Brian Mundle.

1.0 Call to Order

The January 13, 2025, City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Anderson 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. Erkel stated I'll second.

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

4.0 Presentations and Public Hearings

None.

5.0 Public Forum

Tammy Gimpl stated that she recommends leaving Jim Smith as the Liaison for the Fire Department rather than Brian Mundle because Smith already has an idea of what is going on/what work has happened at the Fire Department. Ms. Gimpl also discussed the job description for the Fire Chief and the report done by Jerry Streich.

Dean Ehling discussed comments made at prior City Council meetings regarding the Tax Increment Financing at the East Bethel Village Apartments and shared that according to the developer's agreement at least 20% of the units must be occupied/available for occupancy by people whose income does not exceed 50% of the County's median income which is not the current case. Mr. Ehling also stated that two of the designated low-income units are occupied by the management agent's employees and discussed their salaries. Mr. Ehling also asked

questions regarding the rent paid by these employees, whether the compliance report has been reviewed by the IRS, and questions to the owner of the East Bethel Village Apartments regarding excess rent received.

6.0 Consent Agenda

Item A: Approve Bill List

~~Item B: Approve Meeting Minutes, December 23, 2024, City Council Meeting~~

~~Item C: Resolution 2025-01, Designate Official Newspaper~~

Item D: Resolution 2025-02, Designate Official Depositories for City Funds

Item E: Resolution 2025-03, Designate Check Signatories

~~Item F: Resolution 2025-04, Appreciation of Service – Mayor Kevin Lewis~~

~~Item G: Resolution 2025-05, Appreciation of Service – Council Member Bob DeRoche~~

~~Item H: Approve Contract with Landform for Planning and Zoning Services~~

~~Item I: Approve Postponed Meeting Minutes, December 9, 2024, City Council Meeting~~

Item J: Resolution 2025-06, Setting LBAE Meeting Dates

Anderson requested to pull Item H. Erkel requested to pull Items F, G, and I. Smith requested to pull Items C, F, and G. Larson requested to pull Item B.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve Consent Agenda as amended. Smith stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 B Approve Meeting Minutes, December 23, 2024, City Council City Council Meeting

Larson stated that on page 7, line 31 should be deleted.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve Item B of the Consent Agenda, as revised.

Miller stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye.

Anderson, Mundle, Miller, Smith – Aye; Erkel – Abstain. Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes.**

6.0 C Resolution 2025-01, Designate Official Newspaper

Smith suggested that they choose the *Isanti-Chisago County Star* over the *Anoka County Union Herald* due to the price per column inch of \$3.35 with the *Isanti-Chisago County Star* compared to the \$11 per column inch with the *Anoka County Herald*.

Mundle asked how many East Bethel residents receive the *Isanti-Chisago County Star*. Look stated that they do not have a number for that. Look stated that the *Anoka County Union Herald* is not free, but the *Isanti-Chisago County Star* is free. Look also stated that there is a minimum threshold that they must meet, and they both meet that requirement.

Mundle asked where the papers were distributed. Anderson stated that they are not available at local gas stations, and the closest place to find the *Anoka Union Herald* is at Kings County Market. Erkel stated that they can both be found online.

Smith stated I'll make a motion to approve Item C of the Consent Agenda. Erkel stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **Anderson, Erkel, Miller, Smith – Aye.** Anderson asked any opposed? **Mundle – Nay.** That motion passes. **Motion passes.**

6.0 F,G Resolution 2025-04, Appreciation of Service – Mayor Kevin Lewis, and Resolution 2025-05, Appreciation of Service – Council Member Bob DeRoche

Erkel thanked Mayor Kevin Lewis and Council Member Bob DeRoche for all their hard work and how they looked out for the residents over the past 4 years.

Smith expressed his appreciation for them both and all their knowledge and care for the City and its residents.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve Item F and G of the Consent Agenda. Smith stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 H Approve Contract with Landform for Planning and Zoning Services

Anderson asked if this should be brought forward as a proposal before a contract is voted upon. Look stated that they were surprised by Mr. Berg's departure from the City and there is some unsettled business that is time sensitive.

Look stated that this is a contract service based on what comes up, paid on an hourly basis, similar to the contracts for legal services in the City. Look noted that they have been looking for a City Planner since August and they have not received any applications that have met the qualifications needed for the role.

Look stated this will buy them some time and allow them to catch up on some back log. Look noted that they would also be able to review City Code to ensure it is meeting their needs, and the pay is similar to Mr. Berg's pay and what a City Planner would be hired for.

Anderson asked if they will be advertising for a new Community Development Director. Look stated that the City Council can make that decision, and it can be brought up at a Work Session to gain some consensus for that. Look stated that they have advertised in many locations and approached colleges and they have not found any interest yet.

Anderson asked if the contract was for 20 hours/week. Look stated that the initial thought was 20 hours/week based on reviewing prior Planning Commissions and zoning requests, but it will depend on what they find.

Look stated that they would be in the office one day a week to meet with people who need it and would work remotely the rest of the week. Look added that they would handle all zoning questions, prepare packets for the Planning Commission, present to the Planning Commission, and present to the City Council.

Anderson asked how Code enforcement would be handled. Look stated they do not provide Code enforcement, but there are two individuals in the office who are somewhat handling Code enforcement now. Look stated that right now is not a busy time for Code enforcement, but as they get to springtime, they generally see an uptake for those calls, so they can discuss if that is something they will contract out as well.

Erkel asked why a request for proposal (RFP) was not put out right when Mr. Berg resigned for this type of contract. Look stated that if they put out an RFP they still would not have any information back. Look noted that he contacted 3 individuals, 1 did not have the capacity in

their schedule to take on 20 hours/week, 1 never returned the phone call, and the 3rd was Landform.

Look stated that as of this evening, they have until Wednesday to meet the current 60 days on a project, which makes this time-sensitive. Erkel asked if the 60 days could be extended to another 60 days. Look stated that it is a voluntary extension, so it is not an extension if they do not grant it. Look noted that this particular individual is moving animals for grazing purposes, which need to be separated before spring time.

Erkel asked if there is anyone currently on staff that can handle this issue, or if Look can handle it. Look stated that he is not a planner and does not have the qualifications to do the planning work with everything that is involved.

Erkel stated that for 20 hours/week, it comes out to be about \$200,000/year, which was more than what Mr. Berg was making. Erkel stated that she does not see it as a savings if they are paying more for less time.

Kendra Lindahl, Landform Professional Services, stated that they are working for a number of cities that are in the same situation as East Bethel. Ms. Lindahl noted that they are efficient with their time; she would be the person in City Hall, and her other colleagues would be used for day-to-day planning issues at a lower rate. Ms. Lindahl stated that, on average, it would be \$12,000-14,000/month, depending on who is working on the projects.

Anderson asked what the intent for length of time is. Look stated that will depend on when they are able to hire someone full-time.

Look stated that it is an hourly-based contract and there is a cancellation notice of 7 days whenever they are able to hire somebody.

Erkel asked that if they do not have a full 20 hours of work per week, would they still be paying them for a full 20 hours of work. Look stated that it is not a fixed hourly amount, but they are estimating 20 hours per week. 8 hours of that in the office and the other 12 hours for all the emails they receive, packets they need to make, etc.

Erkel asked where they post the Community Director jobs to advertise the positions and if they use sites like Indeed and LinkedIn. Look stated that they use the City website, League of Minnesota Cities website, East Bethel Chamber job website, social media, and they have contacted colleges that produce students with interest in this field.

Erkel stated that she thinks they could expand their advertising for these positions on LinkedIn and Indeed.

Miller asked the City Attorney about the language regarding hiring for the position and if that would mean they would have to pay double for the position and if a termination of contract would need to be written.

Larson stated that there are 2 aspects to this contract that need to have an attorney review, so if this contract is approved, it would be subject to the City Attorney's approval as to form. Larson stated that regardless of failure or non-failure to perform, either party has the right to terminate for any cause within 30 days at minimum. Larson also stated that if there is any

dispute, the venue would be Ramsey County while you are contracting with a city located in Anoka County.

Larson stated that under Minnesota State Statute 15.99, any particular land use application has to be denied within 10 days if it is incomplete. Larson stated that he sees this for the City's needs, as a placeholder until they hire for the position.

Erkel asked if they must give 7 days or 30 days of termination notice. Larson stated that he will make sure the City has protection and that it can be terminated in the best interest of the City.

Miller asked if there has to be 3 bids. Larson stated that it is not required.

Smith asked Ms. Lindahl if Landform would be okay with a 30-day termination. Ms. Lindahl stated that she has used this contract with dozens of cities, and she is comfortable with it. Ms. Lindahl stated that she has no problem working with the City Attorney to make adjustments as needed.

Look stated that if the approval of the contract was contingent on the City Attorney's review and agreement, that would be sufficient.

((This item will be brought back to the consent agenda to get a motion and second.)) Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 I Approve Postponed Meeting Minutes, December 9, 2024, City Council Meeting

Erkel stated that she pulled the minutes because she was not present at the meeting, so she will be abstaining.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve Item I of the Consent Agenda. Smith stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **Mundle, Miller, Smith – Aye; Erkel and Anderson – Abstain.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 A,J Larson stated that there may have been some confusion on whether Items A and J were pulled off the Consent Agenda. Larson recommended that they make a motion to approve those items just to be clear that they have been approved.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve Items A and J of the Consent Agenda. Mundle stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

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

7.0 A Planning Commission

None.

7.0 B Economic Development Authority

None.

7.0 C Park Commission

None.

8.0 Department Reports

8.0 A Community Development

None.

8.0 B Engineer Report

None.

8.0 C City Attorney

None.

8.0 D Finance

None.

8.0 E Public Works

None.

8.0 F Fire Department

None.

8.0 G City Administrator Report**8.0 G.1 Commission Liaison and Committee Appointments**

Look stated there are assignments of City Councilpersons to Commissions, Committees, Authorities, WMO's and other public advisory boards as liaisons or members are recommended by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

Erkel stated that she thinks they need consistency for these positions. Erkel asked that it be considered to add a commission with the senior's group and put her as the liaison since she goes to every meeting.

Anderson stated that he put his recommendations out there, and that is what he was hoping to get. Anderson stated that typically, they have rotated all the Council members through the commissions so that through their 4-year period, they get a look at all the different commissions.

Anderson stated that it is sort of toxic at the Fire Station with Smith there and it was noted in the Jerry Streich report that Smith had not been showing up and supporting them, so he does not believe it is a good fit for the Fire Station.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve the alternate Commissions Report and add the Senior's Group. Miller stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **Erkel, Miller, Smith.** Anderson asked any opposed? **Anderson and Mundle – Nay.** That motion passes. **Motion passes.**

9.0 – Other Items**9.0 A Staff Report**

Look stated that at least 1 member gets the Board of Appeals training, but it is open to anyone and is free of charge. Look stated that once the training is completed, you go on a roster, and it meets the qualifications.

Look stated that the prior Council decided that they wanted to conduct the Board of Appeals in East Bethel rather than the County conducting it which triggers the need to have at least 1 individual take the training.

Anderson and Smith stated that they will take the training. Mundle stated that it is an online training, so the link can be emailed out and the training can be completed.

9.0 B Council Reports

Mundle gave an update on the Sunrise River WMO that the ACD secured a grant for \$221,375, which will be used to restore wetlands along ditch 20 and will benefit Typo Lake and Martin Lake water qualities.

Mundle stated that they discussed the 2026 budget, and they will be presented with the final version at their next meeting and should come in at or below this year's budget. Mundle stated that the budgets for 2027-2029 may increase to \$60,000 due to the 10-year plan.

Erkel asked if the Council could be sent a copy of what they are going to be doing with the grant money.

9.0 C Other

None.

10.0 Adjourn

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lilian Rokosz

TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.