

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA  
June 24, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Rich Murray, Councilors Rachel Christensen, Larry Baker, Jason Howland, Robert Rasmussen, Sherri Rasmussen, Brian Anderson, City Manager Ian Rigg, Public Works Director Steven Jahnke, City Attorney Joel Holstad of Lake National Law LLP, and City Clerk Daphney Maras.

**ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT:** Sergeant-at-Arms Public Safety Director JD Carlson.

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** - Mayor Murray called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. City Clerk Maras administered roll call.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Mayor Murray asked all in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CEREMONIAL ITEMS** – Mayor Murray read aloud the Proclamation Declaring a Local Emergency within the City of Albert Lea.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Bruce Manwarren – Commented it is good to see area businesses requiring their employees to clean up the grounds.

**CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- A. Approve Minutes of the June 10, 2024 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the June 10, 2024 Work Session
- C. Approve Minutes of the June 6, 2024 Council/Staff Retreat
- D. License & Permits
- E. Resolution Accepting Bid & Awarding Contract for the 2024 CIPP Rehabilitation Project – Job 2414
- F. Resolution Accepting Donations as Presented to the City of Albert Lea

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve the consent agenda as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, S. Rasmussen, R. Rasmussen, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 24-113 and 24-114  
Included with these minutes)

**PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS** – None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report**

The 2023 Financial Statements have been audited by Bergen KDV and are available for City Council review, as well as public review. Ryan Engelstad, a representative from Bergen KDV presented an overview of the 2023 reports.

Mayor Murray asked for a motion to accept the 2023 Annual Comprehensive Finance Report as presented. Motion made by Councilor Baker, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, S. Rasmussen, R. Rasmussen, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

**B. Public Hearing Related to the Proposed Adoption of a Modification to the Development Program for Development TIF District No. 5-32 – Oat Mill Project.**

Mayor Murray opened the public hearing. He called two times. No one spoke. He called a third time and Bruce ManWarren asked what development is being considered to which Mayor Murray responded it will be a processing plant. No one else spoke. Mayor Murray closed the public hearing.

**B1. Resolution 24-115 Approving the Adoption of TIF District No 5-32 – Oat Mill Project**

Attached is a Resolution establishing TIF 5-32 an Economic Development TIF District for future development of property within the South Industrial Jobs Park. In addition to establishing the TIF District, this Resolution also authorizes an Interfund Loan of up to \$194,884 for qualified costs and administrative expenses involved in establishing the district.

Rebecca Kurtz from Ehlers was present and discussed the TIF plan in more detail and responded to councils' questions.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Baker. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, S. Rasmussen, R. Rasmussen, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 24-115  
Included with these minutes)

**C. Resolution 24-116 Accepting Offer Between the City of Albert Lea and Kwik Trip to Remediate and Sell Property for the Purpose of Development, Environmental Improvements, and Job Creation.**

City Manager Rigg explained this is the purchase agreement for the corner lot where Kwik Trip wishes to locate. They are purchasing it for \$750,000 with certain expectations of clean up and

infrastructure. Overall, this adds to the district which makes item 8D successful for the community from a tax perspective. Essentially the City will clean the site and sell it. While the building is constructing, the road installation may occur or finish. This is the first phase of adding the appropriate amount of infrastructure to fully redevelop the old Wilson/Farmstead Foods site.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor S. Rasmussen. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, S. Rasmussen, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Councilor R. Rasmussen abstained. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 24-116  
Included with these minutes)

**D. Resolution 24-117 Accepting Offer Between the City of Albert Lea and Albert Lea Family Housing to Remediate and Sell Property for the Purpose of Development, Environmental Improvements, and Housing.**

Rigg said this is the purchase agreement for a \$16,000,000 low-income family housing project. Its access will be from Garfield and the extension of Eberhart or Phase 2 of the infrastructure. The housing is 60 units ranging from 1-4 bedrooms for many different family sizes and is all low income. In order for this project to score well, some significant changes had to be made. The score range is going to be between 100-150 points. The closer to 150 points, the better the chances of approval. It is estimated the score is higher than last year's denied application and far closer to 150. Of which 16 points will be earned through the incentive supplemental agreement along with the purchase agreement.

Depending on the outcome of the first approval of the tax credits, addition of market rate housing in the same soil TID, and certain grants for infrastructure and clean up this project could be the catalyst along with Kwik Trip to clean up the whole site. At worst case, which is unlikely but possible, the cost to the community could be as high as \$40,000 a year for the clean-up and infrastructure improvements necessary for this project alone.

Councilor Baker commented these two projects may be a risk however, this parcel of land has sat empty for far too long and this may be the best opportunity to take advantage of development as it may contribute to accomplishing the goals of adding more housing.

Councilor Anderson concurred with Baker's comments adding there has to be risk in order for there to be reward. The housing unit alone is a great incentive.

Councilor Christensen concurs with Baker and Anderson and commended the developer, Tapestry, for their excellent reputation in maintaining their current housing units located in other cities.

City Manager Rigg stated this particular parcel of land considered for a housing development has some extraordinary difficulties due to the extensive cleanup and costs involved. Adding there has been a significant amount of time spent by staff, council, and the public seeking various options

for this site including a grocer. A grocery store is and always will be sought out to bring to the community.

Mayor Murray said this housing unit checks off a box for the community as a much-needed project. Additionally, this is finally making use of the old Wilson/Farmstead site. Council has considered various scenarios without putting taxpayers at risk noting the importance of making investments in the community.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Baker. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, S. Rasmussen, R. Rasmussen, Anderson. Mayor Murray abstained. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 24-117  
Included with these minutes)

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:**

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Blue Zones has retained an intern for the summer. Attended the Pride event as well as the Juneteenth celebration. She commented she is appreciative of the community's support of the all-inclusive events. Encouraged residents to attend the council work session meetings to hear the in-depth discussions pertaining to items on the council meeting agenda.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – Attended the recent Pride event at the City Arena. Questioned the height of the 15-minute parking sign in front of the Unique Apartment building and requested the sign be lowered.
- Committee Update – None

Third Ward, Councilor Howland reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – None. Invited the community to attend Fiddler on the Roof now playing at the Marion Ross Theatre.

Fourth Ward, Councilor S. Rasmussen reported:

- Ward Items – None.
- Committee Update – Attended the Senior Center Board meeting and noted several events they have scheduled. Attended the Pride event and commented on the excellent entertainment and food. Serves on the Smart Transit Advisory Board and reports the services are being utilized quite well. She announced her resignation as 4<sup>th</sup> ward city councilor as she is moving out of state.

Fifth Ward, Councilor R. Rasmussen reported:

- Ward Items – Working on one ward item.

- Committee Update – Attended the airport board meeting where they reviewed several projects.

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – Working on one ward item with the City Manager.
- Committee Update – He reiterated what Public Works Director Jahnke said during the work session regarding the flooding on E. Main Street since the construction last year. The improvements decreased the number of flooding events in the summer. This recent rain event was extensive to the point of proclaiming a local emergency. The improvements also reveal flooding is now measured in days rather than weeks as in previous years.

### **MAYOR REPORT:**

- Attended the following many of the City's celebrations over the past week.
- Mentioned the upcoming events and noted the events are also listed on the City's website.

Mayor Murray thanked councilor Sherri Rasmussen for her service on the council and wished her luck in her future endeavors.

### **CITY MANAGER REPORT**

- Department budgets have been completed and turned in
- Attended the Pride Event and thanked the organizers
- He recognized all the responders including the police, fire, staff at the WWTP, Street and Utilities Dept. and the entire Public Works Dept. for their commitment and extensive hours put into all emergency and non-emergency incidents. He encourages the community to recognize their unwavering services.
- Thanked councilor Sherri Rasmussen for her service as city councilor and wishes her the best.

### **APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

#### **A. Resolution 24-118 Approving Claims**

##### **(1). Presentation of Claims Over \$25,000**

The attached resolution directs the Mayor and City Treasurer to issue the payment of claims as presented in the Detail of Claims report. In addition, Maras displayed a list of claims over \$25,000 for the public's viewing, transparency and education.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen, to approve the claims, seconded by Councilor R. Rasmussen. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, S. Rasmussen, R. Rasmussen, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 24-118  
Included with these minutes)

Councilor Anderson motioned for adjournment, Councilor Howland seconded. That there being no further business, the Council meeting adjourn until the next regular meeting of the Albert Lea City

Council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 8, 2024. On roll call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

Mayor Murray declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

**ADJOURNMENT: 8:05 P.M.**

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Mayor Rich Murray

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Daphney Maras  
Secretary of the Council