Meeting of the City Council
Held at the Elk River City Hall
Monday, October 7, 2024

Members Present:	Mayor John Dietz, Councilmember Jennifer Wagner, Councilmember Mike Beyer, Councilmember Matt Westgaard, Councilmember Cory Grupa
Members Absent:	None
Staff Present:	City Administrator Cal Portner, Fire Chief Mark Dickinson, Public Works Director Justin Femrite, Community Development Director Zack Carlton, City Clerk Tina Allard

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA
The Council removed Item 4.4 from the Consent Agenda.

Moved by Councilmember Wagner and seconded by Councilmember Beyer to approve the agenda as amended. Motion Carried 5-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA
Moved by Councilmember Grupa and seconded by Councilmember Westgaard to approve the following consent items as outlined in their respective staff reports. Motion Carried 5-0.

4.1 September 16, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes

4.2 September 30, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

4.3 Check Register

4.5 Temporary Liquor License: Aegir Brewing Company

4.6 Resolution 24-58 Authorizing Execution of a Grant Agreement for the Toward Zero Death Program

4.7 2025 Flexible Benefits Plan

4.8 Hire Street Maintenance Operator

4.9 Hire Community Service Officer 2/Evidence Technician

4.10 Resolution 24-59: Convey City Property to Elk River Municipal Utilities for an Electrical Substation

4.11 Accept Bids for Property Clean-up and Demolition at 19176 Kent Street

4.12 Resolution 24-60 Authorizing OLID Assessment

4.4 Agreement 24-26: CNH Architects for Professional Design Services and Construction Support for Fire Station 1 Replacement Project

Mayor Dietz questioned if a bidding process was completed. He also questioned funding. Chief Dickinson stated CNH Architect was not the lowest bidder. He discussed the committee members and how they selected four final firms from all the bidders who then came in to interview. He noted the contract would be valid for 36 months. Mr. Portner stated past practice has been to use the Building Reserve Fund.

Moved by Councilmember Beyer and seconded by Councilmember Grupa to approve Agreement 24-26 with CNH Architect group to move forward with Professional Architectural Design services and Construction Support for Fire Station No. 1 Replacement Project. Motion Carried 5-0.

5. OPEN FORUM

No one appeared for Open Forum.

6. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION

6.1 Introduce Community Event Center Manager - Katie Harstad

Mr. Stremcha introduced Ms. Harstad. Ms. Harstad discussed her background. The Council noted they were happy to have her on board.

6.2 Safe Streets for All Presentation

Chief Dickinson introduced Molly Stewart of SRF Consulting Group. Ms. Steward discussed the following items of the Safety Action Plan.

- What a Safety Action Plan is and its eight core elements
- The timeline for adoption of the plan is scheduled for January 2025 with a grant application in the spring of 2025.
- Public engagement
- Safety analysis and the current issues with speeding, sight lines, queuing, lack of lighting, and no sidewalks/crosswalks/small shoulders for biking

Ms. Steward noted the goal is to have zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2035 for the City of Elk River.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Call Special Meeting of the Canvassing Board

Moved by Councilmember Wagner and seconded by Councilmember Grupa to set a special meeting for Tuesday, November 12, at 8:00 a.m. of the Canvassing Board. Motion Carried 5-0.

8.2 Discuss Work Session Items

There were no changes.

9. COUNCIL LIAISON UPDATES

9.1 Council Liaison Updates

The Councilmembers provided updates as outlined in the respective advisory board's minutes. Mayor Dietz noted Steve Hickman was okay with having a smaller plan for the youth athletic complex plaza. It was noted that commercial electric/water user fees for home occupations should be evaluated.

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Councilmember Westgaard and seconded by Councilmember Beyer to adjourn the regular meeting of City Council. Motion Carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

11. WORK SESSION – UPPER TOWN CONFERENCE ROOM

Mayor Dietz called the work session to order at 7:07 p.m.

11.1 Discuss TH10 Access Options

The staff report was presented. Mr. Femrite noted MnDOT staff was unable to attend the meeting. He discussed the future permanent interchange and the interim access for Capstone's development. For the permanent interchange, he noted there are many options for the style of interchange that could be installed. He stated we need to be cognizant of saving pieces of land for a future interchange and how much land would be needed is unknown, but Capstone needs direction to move forward with development design.

Steve Bono, Capstone Homes, handed out a sample interchange design with a smaller footprint that would work for this location. They haven't received a clear direction from MnDOT that would either support or deny any specific intersection, which makes it difficult for them to move forward with spending money to engineer the project. He stated MnDOT told him they don't have any approval rights and can't reserve any future property, but the city could work with the developer on their project.

Mr. Femrite stated he is comfortable with the interchange concepts proposed by Capstone.

Councilmember Westgaard stated he would like to be cognizant of mixed-use traffic and make sure the turns are large enough for some of the wide and long trucking loads. Matt Barker, Capstone Homes, stated their concepts are based on MnDOT's measurements and standards used on other interchanges on MnDOT's system.

Councilmember Westgaard noted we are proposing to straighten the highway in this area in the future and if the main highway moves east it would create more space for the interchange. He stated he is comfortable with their proposal and we would not need more land.

Mr. Femrite asked for feedback about the interim highway access intersection styles.

Councilmember Wagner said she does not understand how the J-Turn intersection is safer. She stated it would be difficult to cross two lanes of high-speed traffic to get into a turn lane. She cited an example of a semi-truck with slow acceleration, then having to make a hairpin turn back onto the high-speed highway. She stated stop lights seem safer, noting taking out lights creates a higher speed highway. She stated a signalized intersection may help with the queue of traffic spacing from Highway 10 to Highway 101. She stated she wants to support this development project.

Councilmember Westgaard concurred. He further stated a J-Turn will not improve the access points, especially now with all the traffic from Anoka County that no longer has signalized intersections.

Matt Barker stated there are three-quarter access options that sometimes have signals.

Councilmember Wagner noted MnDOT's goal is to move traffic, which can kill cities. She is more concerned with moving local traffic across the community. She doesn't think there is a good solution here yet.

Mr. Femrite stated there is more work needed to convince this community the J-Turns are the right fit. He suggested re-engaging the community. He noted Capstone Homes will need an access permit from MnDOT with municipal consent from the city.

Mr. Bono stated the sooner, the better for their project. He stated knowing the interchange options are acceptable is helpful, but the interim access needs to be determined. He noted MnDOT did say they would come to a meeting.

11.2 Temporary Donation Bins

The staff report was presented.

The Council concurred an ordinance amendment is needed, noting they can become dump sites and there are other resources available in the community.

11.3 Energy City Commission

The staff report was presented.

The Council noted a lot of the work by the commission is already being done by Elk River Municipal Utilities and suggested making it a subcommittee of the municipal utilities.

Commission Chair Vern Iverson agreed with the city's assessment, noting the Commission has served a good purpose. He stated he would prefer not to abandon the Commission but to change its objectives. He further noted he wants to serve the community and suggested advocating having one or two people serve in a subcommittee function.

11.4 Environmental Services

The staff report was presented.

The Council consensus was to change the job description.

12. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Moved by Councilmember Wagner and seconded by Councilmember Grupa to adjourn the meeting of City Council. Motion Carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 08:32 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Tina Allard.

John J. Dietz

John J. Dietz, Mayor

Tina Allard, City Clerk