

City of Columbus
Regular City Council Meeting
December 13, 2023

ATTENDANCE SHEET

PLEASE PRINT

Name:

Address:

BARB BOBICK

8414 146TH AVE

John Waldock

6755 Pine St

John Waldock

6755 Pine St

Lynn Carver-Quinn

7540 152ND LANE

City of Columbus
Regular City Council Meeting
Alternative Meeting Format
MN Statute, Section 13D.021
12.13.2023

The 12.13.23 meeting of the City of Columbus City Council was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Jesse Preiner at City Hall. Present were Councilmembers Rob Busch (via teleconference), Ron Hanegraaf, Janet Hegland and Sue Wagamon; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, City Attorney Bill Griffith, City Engineer Kevin Bittner, Deputy Clerk Lorie Spangler, Public Communication Coordinator Connor Keith and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

Also in attendance: Planning Commission Vice Chair Barb Bobick, Planning Commission Chairperson Lynn Carver-Quinn, Jack Davis, *iPad* (via teleconference), Kendall (via teleconference), Natalie Ryder (via teleconference), Tina (via teleconference), Barb Waldoch and John Waldoch

A. CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

1. Call to Order Regular Meeting – 6:01 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance

B. CONSENT AGENDA

3. Agenda Approval with Additions
4. Approval of the 09-21-2023 City Council Meeting Minutes
5. Approval of the 09-27-2023 City Council Meeting Minutes
6. Approval of the 10-11-2023 City Council Meeting Minutes
7. Approval of the 10-11-2023 Closed City Council Meeting Minutes
8. Approval of the 10-25-2023 City Council Meeting Minutes
9. Approval of the 11-07-2023 Special City Council Meeting Minutes
10. Pay Bills as Posted

Motion by Hanegraaf to approve Consent Agenda items Nos. 3-10. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

C. PRESENTATION

11. Public Open Forum

No participation.

12. Waldoch Drainage & Utility Easement Vacation Petition Request

Preiner informed the Council of the Planning Commission's unanimous decision to recommend the easement vacation on Lots 4 and 5, Block 1 in Waldoch Addition after a public hearing with only one comment from Roger Nase, the northerly neighboring property owner.

Wagamon repeated a request from Roger Nase, the property owner north of the Waldoch Addition, to honor Preliminary Plat Recommendation No. 3 in the Planner's Report on October 18, 2021, concerning the original subdivision to include a 50-foot buffer in the form of a conservation easement between his

property and Lot 5, Block 1 Waldoch Addition, including fencing. Both Wagamon and Hegland voiced support for memorializing the request, and Griffith recommended it ultimately being added to the eventual developer's CUP to become a binding condition.

Preiner opened the public hearing at 6:11 p.m., closing it at 6:12 p.m. after no participation.

Motion by Preiner to approve Resolution 23-18 vacating a portion of the drainage and utility easements on Lot 4 and Lot 5, Block 1, of the Waldoch Addition subject to the recording of the Waldoch Second Addition Plat. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

13. Planning Commission Report

Mursko informed the Council about the application to re-plat Lots 4 and 5 of Block 1 in Waldoch Second Addition. The Planning Commission and City Staff are recommending the re-platting or approval subject to conditions in the Planner's Memo dated December 8, 2023. The City Attorney will write the first amendment to the standing developer's agreement pertaining to the properties. Mursko confirmed that the conservation easement prescribed in the original Findings of Fact and Conditions would be carried forward.

Motion by Preiner to approve Waldoch Second Addition Preliminary & Final Plat subject to Preliminary Plat Conditions 1-7 and Final Plat Conditions 1-8 in Planner Memo dated December 8, 2023. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Waldoch Second Addition Preliminary Plat Findings of Fact:

1. The City received a preliminary plat/final plat application from John Waldoch ("Applicant") for Waldoch Second Addition on October 20, 2023. The application was found complete.
2. The 120-day review deadline is February 17, 2024.
3. Waldoch Addition was approved by the City on October 27, 2021.
4. The proposed plat is located in the Light Commercial/Industrial Zoning District.
5. The 34.42-acre property currently consists of two parcels legally described as Lots 4 and 5, Waldoch Addition, Anoka County ("Property").
6. The proposed plat will reconfigure the Property into two new lots. Lot 1, Block 1 will be approximately 18.544 acres and Lot 2, Block 1 will be approximately 15.882 acres in area. Both parcels have access to the cul-de-sac on 137th Avenue NE. These are consistent with standards outlined in Section 7A-801 of the City Code.
7. Wetland delineations have previously been approved on the Property.
8. The Property is located in the Rice Creek Watershed District.
9. A Watershed permit for Waldoch Addition was granted by the Rice Creek Watershed District on April 19, 2022, and will not be affected by this subdivision.
10. The City received an application and petition to vacate an existing 20-foot drainage and utility easement across the center of proposed Lot 1, Block 1 on November 13, 2023.

11. The Preliminary Plat includes standard 10-foot drainage and utility easements along property lines and 20 feet adjacent to 137th Avenue NE. Drainage and utility easements remain in place for the wetlands and standard buffers.
12. No review by the Anoka County Highway Division or Minnesota Department of Transportation needed for this subdivision.
13. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Preliminary Plat on December 6, 2023.

Waldoch Second Addition Preliminary Plat Conditions:

1. Detailed recommendations of the Public Works Director.
2. Detailed recommendations of the City Engineer.
3. Title review and recommendations of the City Attorney.
4. Requirements of Anoka County Surveyor.
5. Requirements of the Rice Creek Watershed District.
6. Reimbursement of all City expenses associated with plat approval.
7. Future development within the plat is subject to all laws and permitting requirements.

Waldoch Second Addition Final Plat Findings of Fact:

1. The City received a Final Plat application from John Waldoch (“Applicant”) for Waldoch Second Addition on October 20, 2023. The application was found complete.
2. The Final Plat was submitted concurrent with the Preliminary Plat and the review period for the final plat is coterminous with the preliminary plat.
3. The 34.42-acre property currently consists of two parcels legally described as Lots 4 and 5, Waldoch Addition, Anoka County (“Property”).
4. The proposed Final Plat will change the legal description of the Property to Lot 1, Block 1, Waldoch Second Addition, and Lot 2, Block 1, Waldoch Second Addition.
5. The Final Plat is consistent with the proposed Preliminary Plat.
6. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed preliminary plat on December 6, 2023, and recommended approval of the Preliminary Plat on December 6, 2023.

Waldoch Second Addition Final Plat Conditions:

1. Approval of the preliminary plat.
2. Detailed recommendations of the Public Works Director.
3. Detailed recommendations of the City Engineer.
4. Title review and recommendations of the City Attorney.
5. Requirements of the Anoka County Surveyor.
6. Requirements of the Rice Creek Watershed District.
7. Reimbursement of all City expenses associated with plat approval.
8. Future development within the plat is subject to all laws and permitting requirements.

~~14. 2024 Columbus Fee Schedule~~

15. 2024 Columbus Meeting Schedule

Spangler presented the proposed City meeting schedule for 2024. Generally, City Council meeting were scheduled for the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month (with the exception of the second meeting in November being moved to the preceding Monday to account for Thanksgiving), City Council workshops were scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month, Economic Development Authority (EDA) meetings were scheduled for the second Wednesday of one month per quarter, EDA workshops were scheduled for the second Tuesday of one month per quarter, Planning Commission meetings were scheduled for the first and third Wednesdays of each month (with the exception of the first meeting of July being skipped to account for Independence Day), Park Board meetings were scheduled for six Tuesdays throughout the year and Public Works Advisory Board meetings were scheduled to be held as needed quarterly.

The City Council scheduled the August City Council workshop meeting for Tuesday, August 6, 2024, to avoid being held the same day as the State Primary Election. To avoid conflicting with Juneteenth, the second Planning Commission meeting in June was scheduled for Tuesday, June 18, 2024.

Motion by Hegland to approve 2024 Meeting Schedule as presented with the following two changes: moving the Council workshop to August 6 from August 13 and moving the Planning Commission meeting from June 19 to June 18. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

16. 2024 Final Levy & Budget

Mursko presented the 2024 tax levy and City budget, explaining that despite the Council reducing its budget and City tax rate, fiscal disparities results in the City's levy increasing 0.5 percent.

Preiner opened the Public Open Forum at 6:29 p.m., closing it at 6:30 p.m. after no participation.

Motion by Preiner to approve Resolution 23-19 approving the 2023 Preliminary Tax Levy for Property Taxes collectable in 2024 in the amount of \$4,232,386. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Mursko informed the Council that the Personnel Committee has recommended a 3.5 percent cost of living increase for employee wages. That increase is reflected in the proposed budget.

Motion by Preiner to approve Resolution 23-20 approving the 2024 City of Columbus budget in the amount of \$5,157,455. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

D. STAFF & CONSULTANT REPORTS

17. Engineer Report

Bittner informed the Council of a request by St. Clair Lakes to close its letter of credit in the amount of \$54,180. Bittner recommended its approval.

Motion by Hanegraaf to approve St. Clair Lakes escrow reduction request in the amount of \$54,180 to \$0 based on the City Engineer's memo dated December 5, 2023. Seconded by Wagamon.

Busch inquired if a resolution has been reached regarding trees that could fall on homes from City property. Windingstad explained that a plan is in place to remove the trees after the ground freezes and eagles have nested.

Wagamon asked if the development was completely built. Mursko said the last update she received from Mark Olson, the project developer, was that he'd sold half of the lots.

Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

18. Attorney Report

Griffith informed the Council of a three-pronged planned legislative program in attempts to combat fiscal disparities' negative impact on the City, including efforts to alter the formula, creating opportunities for transportation funding and monitoring the state's legislative activities in sports gambling. Both of the City's state legislators, Senator Michael Kreun and Representative Nolan West, have proactively offered to support these City initiatives. Kreun has indicated that he is willing to lead a bipartisan delegation to further the City's efforts in changing the fiscal disparities inequity that Columbus continues to endure as a result of continued commercial/industrial development and fiscal the fiscal disparities formula.

19. Mayor & City Councilmembers' Report

Park Board Report

Hegland appraised the Council of the recent Park Board meeting on November 30, 2023. In addition to having a discussion with the City's landscaping contractor RVS, the Park Board assessed its fee schedule and recommended increasing its ballfield reservation fee from \$27 to \$28.

Motion by Hegland to approve the recommendation of the Park Board to increase the ballfield reservation from \$27 to \$28 with no other increase to the other reservations for the 2024 season. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Hegland talked about a proposed removal of dead trees in the north end of the park, as well as trees in close proximity to trees suffering from oak wilt on neighboring properties. The Park Board has budgeted for an arborist to advise which trees in the park should be removed, as well as tree removal funds.

Motion by Hegland to approve the change in the budget, adding \$15,000 for tree maintenance to counteract the oak wilt problem. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

City Administrator Search RFP

The City received three responses to the City's RFP for search firms for the City Administrator position. Hegland asked the Council what it felt was its maximum price and whether it felt a guarantee a hire stays for one or two

years is important. Hegland suggested a “not-to, guarantee” cost of \$21,000. Hanegraaf agreed to the \$21,000 limit but wanted a two-year guarantee with the understanding that each company valued its guarantee at approximately \$3,500. Busch felt \$21,000 is a lot of money and did not agree to that price as the maximum cost, but preferred the City get the guarantee. Preiner also felt \$21,000 is high, but wanted to make sure the right person was hired for the job. Busch voiced support for reconvening after the Personnel Committee haggled with the candidates, but no other Council members joined him.

Motion by Wagamon to give the Personnel Committee the authority to negotiate up to \$21,000 for the search firm for our Administrator with a two-year guarantee. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – nay; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

20. Code Enforcement Report

No report.

21. Public Works Report

No report.

22. Public Communications Coordinator Report

Keith encouraged the Council to begin thinking about the 2024 schedule for Council’s Corner and if they wanted to make any changes to the program in anticipation of the City Council workshop meeting on January 9, 2024. Hegland voiced that writing one piece to summarize a month’s meetings has proven difficult and suggested the Council consider Paul Peterson of LATV’s offer for a podcast.

Keith asked the Council if it wanted to make any changes to the Planning Commission liaison role before the 2024 schedule was drafted. Both Bobick and Carver-Quinn expressed interest in the Council continuing the program. Busch volunteered to serve as Planning Commission liaison.

Keith said he will incorporate the Council’s feedback and will send an email to councilmembers to make a first draft of the Planning Commission liaison schedule to report back to them at the December 27, 2023, City Council meeting.

23. City Administrator’s Report

Voting Operations ...County Municipal Agreement

Mursko informed the Council that the state legislature allocated money to the Cities to help administer elections. Columbus will receive \$439.06, which Mursko advised would likely be utilized for equipment maintenance. Mursko estimated the three 2024 elections will likely cost the City approximately \$20,000.

Motion by Hegland to approve the State of Minnesota voting operations technology and election resources voter account county/municipality agreement. Seconded by Preiner. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Extension Agreement for ACRED MOU

The City is in an agreement with the Anoka County Regional Economic Development through January 10, 2024, and the County is asking to extend the agreement and memorandum of understanding through January 10, 2025. Mursko recommended approving the extension.

Motion by Preiner approving the agreement extending and amending the memorandum of understanding for Anoka County Economic Development to January 10, 2025. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Change Holiday Office Closing Schedule from 12/26 to 12/22

Mursko submitted a request by City Staff to reschedule the City’s observation of Christmas Eve from December 26 to December 22, 2023, in order to add working hours to the week of the final City Council meeting of the year. Staff will still be provided only four hours of holiday pay, requiring them to take PTO, add hours earlier in the week or take the remaining four hours unpaid.

Motion by Hegland to approve changing the holiday office closing schedule from December 26 to December 22. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- Holiday Luncheon December 20, 2023, from noon-2 p.m.
- Planning Commission Meeting December 20, 2023, at 6 p.m.
- City Council Meeting December 27, 2023, at 6 p.m.
- Calendar of Meetings

F. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Preiner to adjourn. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectively submitted:

Connor Keith

Connor Keith, Public Communications Coordinator