

**City Council Minutes
February 7, 2022**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the City Council of the City of Buffalo, Minnesota, held a regular meeting in the City Center on the 7th day of February 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Council Members: Nick O'Rourke, Teri Lachermeier, Steve Downer and Jameson Wakefield. Absent was Scott Enter. Staff: Administrator Lauren Bodin (remote), Assistant Administrator Taylor Gronau, Chief of Police Pat Budke, City Clerk Susan Johnson, Community Planning and Economic Development Director David Kelly (remote), Finance Director Kelly Horn, Utilities Director Jason Meusburger, Finance Officer Chrissie Estrada, Wastewater Reclamation Superintendent Ray Wurm, Student Liaison/Videographer Matthew Scherber.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lachermeier called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Lachermeier sent condolences to the Rainer Pensky family on his recent passing. He was very involved and will be missed in the community.

Kites on Ice Festival is this Saturday on Buffalo Lake from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mayor encouraged residents to venture out to enjoy the kite show and the other activities planned for the day.

Mayor Lachermeier noted the Buffalo Strong event this Wednesday, February 9 at the high school Performing Arts Center. There will be a speaker and wellness fair. Student Liaison Scherber spoke of the activities happening at the high school throughout the week. Proceeds from flower and cookie sales will be donated to the Buffalo Strong Foundation.

Mayor Lachermeier read the following proclamation.

**A WEEK FOR HEARTS:
CONGENITAL HEART DEFECT AWARENESS WEEK**

WHEREAS: A congenital heart defect occurs when the heart or blood vessels near the heart do not develop normally. The defect exists before birth and is among the most common kind of birth defects and the leading cause of defect-related deaths; and

WHEREAS: More than 40,000 infants, one out of every 125 births, are born each year with heart defects in the United States. Too many babies, children and adults with a congenital heart defect or Childhood Onset

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Heart Disease continue to die due to the severity of the defect, the heart defect not being detected in time, the lack of donor hearts, or the failure of medical intervention; and

WHEREAS: Professionals are researching congenital heart defects and Childhood Onset Heart Disease to accurately describe the origin, physical signs, symptoms, and surgical options. With familiarity of these disorders, more diagnoses are being made of what was not long ago thought to be a rare disorder and non-repairable; and

WHEREAS: Citizens of Minnesota should be encouraged to observe and to learn more about congenital heart defects and Childhood Onset Heart Disease, so that an early diagnosis and intervention will become a top priority, and to recognize the courage and strength of the children and their families who live with this on a daily basis.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TERI LACHERMEIER, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BUFFALO, do hereby proclaim that February 7 - 14, 2022, shall be observed as:

**A WEEK FOR HEARTS:
CONGENITAL HEART DEFECT AWARENESS WEEK**

MAYOR TERI LACHERMEIER

OPEN FORUM

There was no one in attendance for the open forum portion of the meeting.

AGENDA ADDITIONS

- 10E. Highway 25 South Reconstruction-Authorization for Easement Acquisition
- 10F. Water Reclamation Annual Report

COUNCIL REPORTS AND RECOGNITION

Council Member Wakefield said the Park Board met on January 24, welcoming two new members. Along with housekeeping matters, the main item on agenda was discussion of a splash pad at West Pulaski Park. This will be coming to the Council at a future meeting.

Council Member Downer attended the MMPA board meeting on January 25 at Chaska with Utilities Director Muesburger. They continue to work on long-term planning for meeting renewable energy goals. If interested in renewable energy, the City has a Clean Energy Choice Program available. Information can be found on the website.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of January 18, 2022 Minutes
- B. Approval of Claims and Payrolls
- C. Call for Hearing on Past Due Accounts on Tuesday, February 22, 2022
- D. Appointment of Council members Enter and Wakefield to the Wright County EDA’s Government Center Task Force
- E. HR Updates

Upon motion by Council Member Downer, motion seconded by Council Member Wakefield to approve of the consent agenda.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O’Rourke |
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| Aye | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nay | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Abstain | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Motion passed 3-0.

REMOVED CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS-None

PUBLIC HEARINGS-None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Sale of \$1,850,000 G.O. Refunding Bonds, Series 2022A, Resolution 2022-5

Consulting Financial Advisor Nick Anhut of Ehlers and Associates reviewed the bond sale. At the last meeting, Council authorized Ehlers to move ahead with refinancing to pay off two existing series of bonds 2012C for downtown improvements and 2013B for water and stormwater utilities.

It was noted that Standard & Poor’s upgraded the City’s existing rating to AA-. This puts the City in a good position. The report indicates stable outlook of the city’s credit: City has continued growth in economic indicators, relief within Golf Fund, and continued action to address Civic Center. Past reports identified Civic Center and Golf Fund deficits as focal points. City continues to maintain stable reserves at strong levels. City has strong financial management-positives for long-range plans. Report mentions elevated debt levels compared to medians, but rapid amortization.

Four bids were received, the winning bid is from Baird at 1.657% interest cost. Anhut noted this almost cuts the rates in half. High bid came in at 1.86%. Final bond principal amount resized to \$1,745,000 resulting debt service savings of

\$93,620 over the remainder of the payments.

Anhut recommended approval of a resolution accepting offer on the sale of \$1,745,000 GO Refunding Bonds, Series 2022A.

Council Member Downer thanked Anhut for his advice.

Upon motion by Council Member Wakefield, motion seconded by Council Member Downer to approve of Resolution 2022-5 Providing for the Issuance and Sale of \$1,850,000 General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2022A, Pledging for the Security Thereof Tax Abatements and Net Revenues.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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| Aye | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Motion passed 3-0.

B. Advisory Board Appointments

Assistant Administrator Gronau introduced himself to the Council and residents.

He reported that two applications have been received for advisory board openings. He recommended appointing Bradley Dahl to the to the Airport Advisory Board and Jami Goodrum to the Library Advisory Board.

Council Member Downer thanked outgoing advisory board members.

Upon motion by Council Member Downer, motion seconded by Council Member Wakefield to appoint Bradley Dahl to the Airport Advisory Board and Jami Goodrum to the Library Advisory Board.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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| Aye | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Motion passed 3-0.

C. Small Cities Development Program - Central Minnesota Housing Partnership

Messina Owings from Central Minnesota Housing Partnership (CMHP) reviewed the proposed documents and process of the Small Cities Development Program.

CMHP is requesting a motion for approval of submitting paperwork to DEED to start the program in March.

Council Member Downer asked about the total pool of money available. Total is \$592,454. Council Member Downer clarified that eligible homeowners could get a \$24,000 grant and eligible commercial grants are \$30,000. He feels this could be a popular program. Owings said that calls have been coming in. Council Member Downer asked about the application. Applicants must be in the target area and at or below 80% of Area Medium Income of Wright County, Owings noted there is a checklist with the application.

Upon motion by Council Member Wakefield, motion seconded by Council Member Downer to approve the DEED proposal & Small Cities Development Program and to have CMHP submit the necessary paperwork.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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Motion passed 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Airport Rescue Grant Offer #3-27-0015-018-2022

Airport Manager Chris Fredrick reported that the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSAA), signed into law on December 27, 2020, includes nearly \$2 billion in funds to be awarded as economic relief to eligible U.S. airports and eligible concessions at those airports to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Non-primary commercial service and general aviation airports will share \$45 million based on their airport categories, such as National, Regional, Local, and Basic.

Buffalo is a general aviation airport eligible for \$32,000. He recommends Council accept the grant agreement in the amount of \$32,000. This is separate from the

normal funding the airport receives.

Upon motion by Council Member Downer, motion seconded by Council Member Wakefield to approve and accept the Airport Rescue Grant Offer #3-27-0015-018-2022 in the amount of \$32,000.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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Motion passed 3-0.

B. Approval to Advertise Request for Qualification (RFQ) for Airport Planning Services

Airport Manager Chris Fredrick said this is not overall planning, but it is for Master Airport Layout Plan and is part of the 2022 Capital Improvement Plan.

The FAA requires that if any updates are to be done to the Airport Master Layout Plan, airport sponsors must advertise an RFQ for consultant selection to provide airport planning services if a consultant selection process has not been completed within the last five years. He said this was last done 12 years ago, so it is overdue. With Coronavirus funding, there is a possibility to get a reduction in city cost share.

Council Member Wakefield asked the cost of study. Fredrick said approximately \$200,000 for complete environmental study with consulting engineering. City share would be approximately \$20,000.

Upon motion by Council Member Downer, motion seconded by Council Member Wakefield to approve of advertising for Request for Qualification (RFQ) seeking proposals to provide Airport Planning Services in the development of an Airport Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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| Aye | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Motion passed 3-0.

C. Personnel Policy Committee and Administrative Policies Committee

Administrator Bodin stated there are two policy committees staff requests approval to create. The first would be a Personnel Policy Committee. This Committee would be put in place to have the authority to approve internal HR policies and procedures, and then bring recommendations to the Council for those that would need Council review or approval.

On a related matter pertaining to the Personnel Policy update, it is requested that Council consider taking formal action related to Juneteenth which has been established as a federal holiday on June 19.

She requested that two members be appointed to the Personnel committee, and she recommends Council Member Downer and Council Member O'Rourke.

The second committee would be an Administrative Policy Committee. We have several policies that are outdated and some new ones to put in place. This committee will be led by City Clerk Susan Johnson and Assistant Administrator Taylor Gronau. We ask that two members be assigned to this committee. She recommends Council Member Wakefield and Council Member Enter for this committee. When the policies are brought up to date this committee would probably be extinguished.

Council Member Downer asked if the Personnel Policy Committee would be ongoing. Administrator Bodin said this committee would be ongoing and could be an annual appointment.

Upon motion by Council Member Wakefield, motion seconded by Council Member Downer to create a Personnel Policy Committee with Members Dower and O'Rourke serving in 2022 and thereafter this would be an annual appointment; and to approve of the creation of an Administrative Policy Committee that would expire after updates are completed with Members Enter and Wakefield serving on that committee.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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| Aye | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Motion passed 3-0.

D. Acceptance of Retirement for Rick Schmitz, IT Technician

Upon motion by Council Member Downer, motion seconded by Council Member

Wakefield to accept Rick Schmitz' notice of retirement thanking him for his service and wishing him well in retirement.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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| Aye | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nay | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Motion passed 3-0.

E. Highway 25 South Reconstruction-Authorization for Easement Acquisition

Consulting Engineer Justin Kannas of Bolton and Menk requested authorization to present easement acquisition offers to property owners along Highway 25 for the upcoming reconstruction project. Temporary construction and permanent highway easements will be needed. Appraisals are nearly complete. Henning Professional Services, Inc., along with city engineer and city attorney will be working through the acquisition process. The City will be reimbursed by the State for the easement acquisition payments to property owners.

Kannas said this project begins at the Downtown Commons through Montrose Boulevard to the curve north of Settlers Parkway. Eight permanent easements are needed for less than 10 feet. 20 temporary construction easements are needed. Sidewalks & street will all be removed and replaced. He said the plan has the roadway shifting away from the lake, addition of traffic medians and wider sidewalks. Pedestrian circulation should be greatly increased connecting to Settler's Parkway.

Upon motion by Council Member Wakefield, motion seconded by Council Member Downer to authorize the City Administrator and Henning Professional Services, Inc. to submit offers to property owners for the easements necessary for the Highway 25 Reconstruction project easement acquisitions.

| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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Motion passed 3-0.

F. Water Reclamation Annual Report

Wastewater Reclamation Superintendent Ray Wurm presented the department's annual report to the Council. The department has seven staff members with 113 years of combined experience.

Collections System

- 28 lift stations
- 79 miles of sewer gravity
- 18 miles of sewer force.

Collections System Focal Points

- I & I reduction
- Lift station communications & panel replacement
- Annual jetting – 2021=17.8 miles

Inflow and infiltration-guidelines have been implemented to incorporate new manhole castings and I & I barriers during street improvement projects; televising of clay tile lines has been completed and we are strategizing ways to minimize I & I.

Lift station panels and upgrades are being done with two panels being updated per year which allows for fiber or 4RF radio communication for monitoring. Obsolete PLCs are being replaced.

Sewer jetting has improved with the new combo truck. Maintenance cycle of 3 years for cleaning is the goal. In 2021 94,000 feet of sewer lines were cleaned.

Approximately 386 million gallons of water were treated in 2021. Testing requirements continue to get more stringent, and compliance is necessary. We strive to optimize existing processes by taking a pro-active approach to maintain existing infrastructure. He thanked the residents and Council for their support.

STAFF UPDATES

Staff gave general updates to the Council.

Administrator Bodin asked for clarification on adding Juneteenth as a holiday to the Personnel Policy.

Upon motion by Council Member Downer, motion seconded by Council Member Wakefield to add Juneteenth to the Personnel Policy as a federal holiday.

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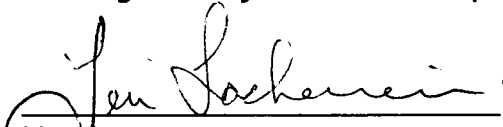
| VOTE | Wakefield | Downer | Enter | Lachermeier | O'Rourke |
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Motion passed 3-0.

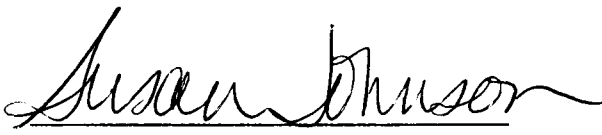
OTHER-None

ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Mayor



City Clerk