



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## Regular Council Meeting Virtual Meeting held via WebEx

**May 12, 2020**

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Maria Regan Gonzalez at 7:01 p.m. via WebEx.

*Council Members Present:* Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor; Mary Supple; Ben Whalen; Edwina Garcia; and Simon Trautmann

*Staff Present:* Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Pam Dmytrenko, Assistant City Manager; Mary Tietjen, City Attorney; John Stark, Community Development Director; Melissa Poehlman, Assistant Community Development Director; Julie Urban, Housing Manager; Jane Skov, IT Manager; Blanca Martinez Gavina, Executive Analyst; and Kelly Wynn, Senior Office Assistant

*Others Present:* Paul Lynch Jr., Managing Member with PLH and Associates LLC.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Regan Gonzalez led the Pledge of Allegiance

### OPEN FORUM

No speakers. No constituents reached out prior to the meeting with any comments.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/Supple, S/Trautmann to approve the minutes of the (1) City Council Work Session of April 28, 2020; and (2) City Council Meeting of April 28, 2020..

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

Regan Gonzalez: AYE  
Supple: AYE  
Trautmann: AYE  
Garcia: AYE  
Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

<b>Item #1</b>	<b>PRESENTATION OF THE EQUITY IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCLAMATION</b>
----------------	---

Mayor Regan Gonzalez read the proclamation and provided examples of staff efforts, a city staff team (CARES Team), staff equity training, communication options and work of the police department. There has been extra effort in putting out multiple types of communications, public safety reaching out to vulnerable community and Community Development Department offering resources to those in need.

Council Member Whalen spoke of how this pandemic is making it very apparent as to where the system is lacking in terms of inequality in serving people of color and low income residents. He mentioned VEAP and encouraged residents to reach out if in need as well as the Richfield Foundation.

Council Member Garcia expressed her pride in the City for declaring this proclamation and listing the action steps. She thanked Analyst Martinez Gavina for putting the item together.

Council Member Trautmann echoed his colleague’s remarks and added that when the City is helping those defined in the margins, it is also helping the community as a whole. It shows how the City is committed as a whole to help in these efforts.

Council Member Supple thanked Analyst Martinez Gavina for her work in putting the proclamation together. She also commented on how this is very important work and will continue to be a work in progress.

Analyst Martinez Gavina shared a brief background on the proclamation. She has been in touch weekly with surrounding cities and working together to pass similar proclamations in those areas as well. Bloomington, Edina and Richfield will continue to work together and pool resources.

<b>Item #2</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA</b>
----------------	-------------------------------

M/Whalen, S/Trautmann to approve the agenda

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Garcia: AYE
- Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

<b>Item #3</b>	<b>CONSENT CALENDAR</b>
----------------	-------------------------

City Manager Rodriguez presented the consent calendar.

- A. Consider the adoption of a resolution authorizing the City to affirm the monetary limits on statutory municipality tort liability (Staff Report No. 58).

**RESOLUTION NO. 11738  
RESOLUTION AFFIRMING MUNICIPAL TORT LIABILITY LIMITS ESTABLISHED BY  
MINNESOTA STATUTES 466.04**

M/Garcia, S/Supple to approve the consent calendar.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Garcia: AYE
- Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

<b>Item #4</b>	<b>CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS, IF ANY, REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR</b>
----------------	--

None

<b>Item #5</b>	<b>PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE CREATING AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND (STAFF REPORT NO. 59)</b>
----------------	---

Council Member Supple presented staff report 59.

Director Stark explained how this is a conduit for funding and is a place to deposit housing funds for affordable housing.

M/Supple, S/Trautmann to approve first reading of an ordinance establishing an Affordable Housing Trust Fund and set second reading and a public hearing for May 26, 2020.

Council Member Whalen expressed appreciation of the quick turn around on this item and is excited to see what is able to be done with the funding. He voiced concern of who this funding will serve and how it could be used in the future in different leadership. He proposed an amendment to the ordinance regarding who would be included in the funding.

M/Whalen, S/Trautmann to adopt an amendment.

City Attorney Tietjen explained how the Council has the ability to lower the percentage but the ordinance was drafted to allow the most flexibility.

Director Stark recommended Council to adopt the ordinance as written tonight and allow staff time to look more into the item. He also spoke of how this could negatively impact affordable housing programs in the future.

Council Member Whalen expressed appreciation of the reminders of how this could impact affordable housing programs. He commented on how developers may not be inclined to produce affordable housing for renters. He also stated he will do more research himself before the second hearing.

Council Member Supple mentioned the work session discussion around the impact COVID-19 is having on residents and how a major stressor on people in the ability to pay their rent and mortgages. She believed it is important to pass this item to provide some stability for residents. She then explained how she would like some more information on the amendment before making a decision.

Council Member Trautmann agreed with Council Member Supple to provide rental assistance is a priority. He mentioned how one in three residents in Richfield is a renter and the difficulty it can be to find a new place to live. He recommended Council Member Whalen hold off on his amendment.

Council Member Whalen withdrew his amendment until the second reading and appreciates everyone’s thoughtfulness around this program.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez thanked Council and staff for the robust discussion. She expressed excitement on the flexibility and finding vehicles to provide support services for residents.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Garcia: AYE
- Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

M/Whalen, S/Supple to adopt a resolution approving a final plat of the RF64 Townhomes Addition.

<b>Item #6</b>	<b>CONSIDER ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION GRANTING AN EXTENSION OF LAND USE APPROVALS FOR A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AT 101 66<sup>TH</sup> STREET EAST (THE EMI) (STAFF REPORT NO. 60)</b>
----------------	--

Council Member Garcia presented staff report 60 and asked Director Stark what will happen if the developer is unable to comply with the new deadline.

Director Stark commented on how it is rare for developers to request a second extension but these are unusual times regarding the pandemic. However, if the developer is unable to comply with the new deadline the developer would have to start over with the 60-90 day process of Council and neighborhood meetings.

Council Member Garcia commented the developer could sell this project to another developer if desired. Director Stark confirmed a sale of the project could be made as long as no changes were made to the existing plans.

M/Garcia, S/Supple to adopt a resolution granting an extension of (up to) 180 days for a conditional use permit and final development plan for a planned unit development at 101 66th Street East.

**RESOLUTION NO. 11739  
RESOLUTION GRANTING AN EXTENSION OF  
A FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT  
FOR A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AT 101 66TH STREET EAST**

Mayor Regan Gonzalez asked for clarification on possibility of a third extension. Director Stark confirmed a developer could come back in perpetuity for extensions but he didn't recall staff allowing more than a couple extensions for any projects.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez commented how there can be concerns from residents in the future but does support the extension at this time.

Council Member Whalen introduced himself and asked the developer for an update on the project and if it can be completed if the extension is granted.

Paul Lynch with PLH and Associates explained how they have been attempting to get the project going but the availability of labor and increase in construction costs. He is hopeful to get this completed.

Council Member Garcia asked if there had been communication with residents in the area of the needed extensions. Director Stark stated there has not been resident reach-out for about four months but it is not required to communicate extensions. Council Member Garcia believes residents should be aware.

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Garcia: AYE
- Whalen: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

<b>Item #7</b>	<b>CITY MANAGER'S REPORT</b>
----------------	------------------------------

City Manager Rodriguez reminded Council and residents there will be a live call in option to participate in the public hearing at the May 26, 2020 meeting along with live streaming on Channel 16 and the Richfield website. She then discussed the \$7 million put into the House Bonding Bill for the 77<sup>th</sup> Underpass project and she appreciates the advocacy done. She also spoke of reopening the Richfield Liquor Store at 64<sup>th</sup> and Lyndale so the City will have 3 stores open all still with limited hours. She commended the Community Development Department for their work regarding the small business loan program.

Director Stark confirmed there were 36 applicants and the requests will be extremely close to the allotted \$150,000.

City Manager Rodriguez went on to encourage residents to come in the mornings to utilize the motor vehicle services that are available. The area gets very crowded as the day goes on. She also spoke of the hard decisions being made within the Parks and Recreation Department.

Council Member Supple asked about the ability to allow programs to use parks to provide food for children. City Manager Rodriguez commented that staff is coordinating with schools to help out where possible.

<b>Item #8</b>	<b>CLAIMS AND PAYROLL</b>
----------------	---------------------------

M/Garcia, S/Trautmann that the following claims and payrolls be approved:

<u><b>U.S. Bank</b></u>	<u><b>05/12/2020</b></u>
A/P Checks 287049 - 287273	\$ 1,913,408.13
Payroll: 153747 - 154064	<u>655,723.23</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,569,131.36</b>

Executive Analyst Martinez Gavina took roll call vote:

- Regan Gonzalez: AYE
- Supple: AYE
- Trautmann: AYE
- Whalen: AYE
- Garcia: AYE

Motion carried 5-0

<b>Item #9</b>	<b>HATS OFF TO HOMETOWN HITS</b>
----------------	----------------------------------

Council Member Trautmann thanked Director Stark and staff for supporting small businesses during this pandemic. He also commended the Red, White and Blue Committee in their discussions and making the hard decision to cancel events.

Council Member Whalen expressed support for the Red, White and Blue Committee along with the Parks and Recreation Department for having to make difficult decisions. He also spoke of a local food drive with the help of VEAP, Richfield Rotary and local realtors. He then commended Neil Ruhland and Kate Aitchison for all their work regarding the community resource letter and impact survey. Lastly, he reminded residents to pick up trash in parks to help keep them looking wonderful as they are being used more now than ever.

Council Member Garcia commented on what a wonderful job everyone is doing.

Council Member Supple gave a proud shout out to the 2020 graduation class and wanted students to know the community supports them. She also reminded residents to fill out their Census and expressed how important it is for Richfield as a whole. She then commended the volunteers working with the Red, White and Blue Committee, Richfield Rotary, Veteran’s Park and everyone who is offering time to help others. Council Member Supple also mentioned the progress on the sidewalk poetry contest. The committee is still narrowing down the candidates and she is looking forward to

seeing the winners. Lastly, she gave praise to staff involved in putting together the resource letter that went out to residents.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez commented on all the hard decisions being made especially around City events and cancelling them but is happy to see some going virtual like a Memorial Day program and 5k. She mentioned the Richfield Farmer's Market will open on May 16<sup>th</sup> and the Recreation Department is focusing on safety for residents. She encouraged residents to take necessary precautions to protect themselves as well as their neighbors, social distance and wear masks. Lastly, she thanked Fire, Police and Public Works Departments for participating in the birthday patrols and was excited to see they celebrated 100 patrols.

<b>Item #10</b>	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>
-----------------	--------------------

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:16 p.m.

Date Approved: May 26, 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria Regan Gonzalez  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Wynn  
Senior Office Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Katie Rodriguez  
City Manager