

**OAK GROVE COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes Monday,**  
**October 30, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Oak Grove City Council was called to order by Mayor Rolf at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, October 30, 2023. Pledge of Allegiance was said, and roll call taken.

Present: Weston Rolf, Mayor  
Angie Bray Johnson, Council Member  
Paul Tradewell, Council Member –  
Remote location  
John West, Council Member  
Mike Wylie, Council Member

Also Present: Loren Wickham, City Administrator  
Billi Larson, City Clerk  
Chuck Schwartz, MSA  
Karri Thorsten, Abdo Financial Solutions  
Rob Engler, Fire Chief  
Nathan Johnson, Assistant Fire Chief

**1. PUBLIC FORUM**

- a. Pam Johnson, 20012 Poppy St. NW  
Mrs. Johnson addressed the Council regarding the process for approval for subdivisions. She asked the Council about opportunities to address concerns, what the purpose of public hearings is, what the process for the next two developments will be, and if there is a Comprehensive Parks Plan. She also commented that the approval process could be improved.
- b. Rick Mengelkoch, 3751 201<sup>st</sup> Ln NW  
Mr. Mengelkoch addressed the Council about the Timbers Hideaway Public Hearing noting that he felt like he wasn't heard. He commented that he feels the City left hard feelings regarding last year's pavement project and that he plans to get involved with the Parks.
- c. Kenna Pretts, 3315 199<sup>th</sup> Ave NW  
Ms. Pretts addressed the Council regarding the Timbers Hideaway development project saying that she is not happy with the development and that a park in the neighborhood is needed. She also commented that utilizing 197<sup>th</sup> as the main inlet/outlet for the development is what she hopes to see. She commented that she feels the contract with the Anoka County Sheriff's Office should be reduced to 20 hours per day.
- d. Derek Lynn, ACEIT, Ramsey, MN  
Mr. Lynn representing Anoka County Election Integrity Team (ACEIT) is a group looking to change the tabulation of votes back to a manual hand count. He offered information regarding upcoming informational session on the topic.
- e. Richard Klabecek, 19519 Lake George Blvd  
Mr. Klabecek offered the Council and audience the information regarding training session on manually counting votes.
- f. Brian Jude, 22204 Zion Pkwy  
Mr. Jude revisited his comments regarding using funds to purchase grinders for new homes coming into the Ponds development.

**2. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Rolf read a statement regarding Veteran's Day.

The Christmas Tree Lighting will be held on December 1, 2023 at 5:30pm with lighting happening at 6:30pm.

The Preliminary budget was voted on at the last meeting totaling \$3,843,220. He mentioned that items can be reduced but not increased until finalized.

**3. SETTING OF REGULAR AGENDA**

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE TO APPROVE THE REGULAR AGENDA AS PRESENTED. All in favor.**

**4. APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 9, 2023**

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRAY JOHNSON TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES WITH THE CORRECTION MADE TO ITEM #11. All in favor.**

**5. ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- a. Parks Commission – October 18, 2023

**The Council acknowledged receipt of commission minutes.**

**6. PETITIONS, INDIVIDUALS, PRESENTATIONS, AND INQUIRIES**

There were no presentations or petitions presented.

**7. PUBLIC HEARING**

- a. Delinquent Utilities
  - 1. Resolution 23-134 – Certifying Delinquent Utilities

Mayor Rolf opened the public hearing at 6:41pm.

There were no persons present for the public hearing.

Mayor Rolf closed the public hearing at 6:42pm

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE TO APPROVE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE LISTED DELINQUENT UTILITES WITH RESOLUTION 23-134. All in favor.**

**8. CONSENT AGENDA**

*The Consent Agenda contains several items, which are acted upon by the Council in one motion. Upon request by any one Councilmember, City staff, or the public a consent agenda item may be removed and put on the regular agenda for discussion and consideration.*

- a. Claims and Accounts
- b. Anoka County – Municipality Agreement, Voting Operations, Technology & Election Resources
- c. Resolution 23-132 – Closing out project escrow accounts
- d. Ordinance 23-07 – Amending Chapter 105 by Amending Section 105-22
- e. Resolution 23-135 – Hiring of Administrative Assistant
- f. Resolution 23-128 – Approving Site Plan Review – Star Installation, Inc.

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. All in favor.**

**9. CITY ENGINEER**

- a. Resolution 23-125 – Approving Oak Grove Sims Trail Crossing Financial Security Reduction #1

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRAY JOHNSON TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-125. All in favor.**

- b. Resolution 23-129 – Approving Smith Grove 3<sup>rd</sup> Addition Financial Security Reduction #1

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-129. All in Favor.**

- c. Engineer Updates

**10. FIRE**

- a. Fire Chief Updates

Chief Rob Engler requested to do “Santa on the truck” as a community outreach event for the holidays. He also discussed the Heartsafe Program will be through January – March so every student in the High School will be certified in CPR. He reviewed the call statistics that revealed that there are about 40-50 calls per month.

- b. Resolution 23-130 – Approving a Pension Benefit Increase for Firefighters

The Oak Grove Fire Relief Association joined the voluntary statewide Lump-Sum Volunteer Firefighter Plan administered by Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) in 2013. Just prior to joining the PERA plan the City Council increased the benefit level to \$2,500 per year of service. PERA didn’t allow any changes to the plan for the first 5 years of membership. The City Council authorized an increase to \$4,500 effective January 1, 2021. Attached from PERA is a cost analysis of various scenarios if the benefit level is increased to \$5,000 – \$8,000/years of service. Chief Engler and Assistant Chief Johnson were present at the meeting to discuss this item. The Relief Association asked Council for an increase from \$4,500 to \$6,000.

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRAY JOHNSON TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-130 INCREASING BENEFIT LEVEL TO \$5,000 PER YEAR OF SERVICE. All in favor.**

- c. Resolution 23-127 – Accepting Donation for Fire

Ron and Suzanne Herman donated \$126 to the Fire Department.

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRAY JOHNSON TO ACCEPT THE DONATION TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. All in favor.**

**11. PARKS**

- a. Resolution 23-126 – Approval of Lighting Installation at Dunlop Park

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF LIGHTING AT DUNLOP PARK. All in favor**

- b. Resolution 23-136 – Approval of Light Pole Donation for Dunlop

Parks Commissioner Diane Pederson donated a 30-foot light pole for use in Dunlop Park.

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE TO APPROVE THE DONATION FROM DIANE PEDERSON OF A LIGHT POLE FOR DUNLOP PARK. All in favor**

**12. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES & DISCUSSION**

- a. Resolution 23-131 – Approving Position Classification and Compensation Plan

Abdo Solutions completed the 2023 Classification and Compensation Study and presented it to the City Council on September 18, 2023. This will replace the Merit Pay System. The project goals were:

- The City is motivated to attract and retain qualified talent to facilitate successful City operations
- The City wishes to return to a step and grade compensation program after adopting a merit pay and open range plan in 2017.

The study conducted a market survey of comparable cities in Minnesota and established a Market Minimum and Market Maximum for each position. The study classified all positions and assigned points for positions to be placed on the corresponding step and grade plan closest to their current rate of pay without decreasing. The position classification and point assignment was tested for compliance with Minnesota Pay Equity. Most employees will be placed on the step and grade plan at step 7 due to longevity and will only be eligible for COLA increases in 2024 and beyond. The step and grade plan will replace the Merit Pay System adopted in 2017.

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRAY JOHNSON TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-131 TO ADOPT THE POSITION CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN. All in favor**

- b. Resolution 23-133 – Approving Cost of Living Adjustment

In 2024, employees will receive a 3% Cost of Living Increase (COLA). and only employees eligible for a step increase will receive a step on their anniversary date. The 3% COLA will also be applied to fire fighters. The cost for Phase 2 is budgeted in the 2024 Preliminary Levy adopted on September 25, 2023. In 2024, increases will range from 3% (COLA)- 6.5% (If eligible for a step increase). Employees placed at a step less than 7 will be eligible for a step increase (3.5%) on their anniversary date in 2024. Employees placed at Step 7 will only be eligible for COLA increases in 2024 and going forward. The cost for Phase 3 is budgeted in the 2024 Preliminary Levy adopted on September 25, 2023.

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER WYLIE, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-133 THE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR JANUARY 2024. All in favor**

c. Administrator Updates

Administrator Wickham updated Council that the Fall Newsletter was sent out. He discussed the upcoming Truth & Taxation hearing in December. He commented on the ongoing discussion around the population sign signs letting Council know that the cost will be less than anticipated.

**13. MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS/UPDATES**

The Council discussed the letter received from Anoka County Sheriff's Office regarding the increase in Sheriff's contract. No decision was made at this time.

Mayor Rolf brought up a concern from the public that he heard regarding the Council not allowing people to speak at meetings.

***The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.***

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRAY JOHNSON, SECOND BY COUNCIL MEMBER WEST TO ADJOURN. Mayor Rolf, Council Members Tradewell, West and Bray Johnson voted aye. Council Member Wylie voted nay. The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Billi Larson  
City Clerk