

**City of West St. Paul
City Council Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2020**

1. Call to Order

Mayor Napier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Dave Napier
Councilmembers Wendy Berry, Lisa Eng-Sarne,
Anthony Fernandez, John Justen (arrived at 6:33 p.m.),
Bob Pace and Dick Vitelli

Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Ryan Schroeder
City Attorney Amanda Johnson
Police Chief Brian Sturgeon
Finance Director Char Stark
Parks & Public Works Director/City Engineer Ross Beckwith
Community Development Director Jim Hartshorn
Marketing & Communications Manager Dan Nowicki
City Clerk Shirley Bueckslar

Mayor Napier stated that tonight's meeting will be conducted virtually and described the process for citizens to view the meeting and call in with questions and comments.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Adopt the Agenda

Motion was made by Councilmember Eng-Sarne and seconded by Councilmember Vitelli to adopt the agenda, as presented.

Vote: 6 ayes / 0 nays. Motion carried.

5. Citizen Comments

Mayor Napier opened the access line (651-259-2674) for citizens to call in with comments. The Marketing & Communications Manager tested it from an outside line during the meeting to be sure it was working.

After an extended period, no calls were received. Mayor Napier closed Citizen Comments and the access line was also closed.

6. Council Comments

Councilmember Vitelli said he will be glad when the pandemic is over and wishes that everyone will stay safe and healthy.

Councilmember Pace echoed Councilmember Vitelli's comments. He said the State of Minnesota has just released today two really important programs that are available to veterans and surviving spouses who have been impacted by the COVID-19 virus. For more information on these programs, contact the Dakota County Veterans Services Office at (651) 554-5601 or the Northern Dakota County Beyond the Yellow Ribbon hotline at (651) 259-2614 for more information.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne thanked everyone for tuning in to tonight's meeting. She feels that some residents may be calling in late with their questions and comments.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne thanked all of our City employees, the West St. Paul Police Department, and South Metro Fire Department for their service during this time.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said she is inspired by those spreading cheer, be it through sidewalk chalk, signs in the windows, and the many yell from the end of the driveway to the front steps conversations she has had on her evening walks.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said she feels an obligation to remind folks to continue practicing social distancing and follow the stay at home orders. You are potentially placing an extra burden on our emergency response teams every time you make the irresponsible decision to disregard the guidelines. She believes Chief Sturgeon and Chief Juelfs would appreciate everyone following the guidelines and doing what they are supposed to do to make their jobs easier.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said tonight's agenda is brief but know that your City is still humming along. Maybe there will be enough snow for us to show our civic pride through cheering on the best snow plowing in Minnesota, just yet. Wishing everyone a safe Spring, and we are all in this together.

At the request of Mayor Napier, the access call-in line (651-259-2674) was reopened for the duration of the Council meeting for citizens to call in with comments and questions.

Councilmember Berry welcomed everyone tuning in and said it has been great to see so much community support the past few weeks, all while observing social distancing guidelines. Lots of chalk drawings and signs in windows. Yard signs have been great to drive or walk by and see. The staff at Moreland Elementary have a great message that they left on their fence for their students. People providing food for hospital staff, businesses providing services at different hours and ways to make it safer for folks, we need to keep that up to flatten the curve and continue to be reminded about how great our community is.

As a small business owner who is shut down for an extended period of time, Councilmember Justen wanted to reach out to other small business owners and their employees to let them know that he could not be more attentive to this situation and said that he understands what you're going through. My sympathy is with you.

For the good of everyone, Councilmember Justen said there are two ways to support local businesses:

- 1) Observe social distancing. The better we do at this, the sooner we flatten this thing, and the sooner we will be able to open. There is no guarantee that we will open on May 4. Every small business lives by how much they have in the bank and their day-to-day business activities. We are closed because we are trying to keep people safe. But the longer we are closed because of people's behavior, the more small businesses you're going to see coming out of this in worse and worse shape. Please observe social distancing not only for yourselves, your relatives, the elderly, the immuno-compromised, but also because this is the only way you will see our bars, restaurants and small businesses back.
- 2) If you are a small business and you are still open, I ask you to take a serious look if you are essential. I see the need to keep things going but, at the same time, if you are not essential and you stay out there, it may just make this longer for us and make these rules more strict. If you are questioning if you should be open, then you should be closed, he said.

Mayor Napier said COVID-19 is in our community. It is imperative that we continue social distancing to minimize the spread and help flatten the curve. Thanks to all that continue to help those in need. We need to be sure that we are helping others that are in need. I had a phone call from someone who really wanted to go to Cub but has severe asthma and is worried about that. I am putting her in contact with people who will go grocery shopping for her. Please reach out to us at the City or one of your Councilmembers and we will try to find people who can go grocery shopping for you. West St. Paul has stepped up. We have seen so much going on in our community that shows the strength of who we are, from the School District senior parents doing a Go Fund Me so that they can recognize their seniors, everyone is home with a yard sign, showing some recognition for seniors who are graduating this year but not able to partake in all the senior celebrations and fun things we get to do as graduating seniors. I appreciate that and everyone has stepped up. They have had huge support and, with that, you will see signs popping up in yards of seniors. When you drive by, honk and recognize those seniors. It's a tough year for them.

A great majority of our community is social distancing. Donations of PPE supplies, I know people who are sewing masks, the food drives, and other donations going on are incredible. At Oxendale's, a group of community members put together a fundraiser to raise money to support the workers at Oxendale's. They ended up with a surplus of funds and donated it to Neighbors, Inc. There are so many good things happening. Go Fund Me campaigns to purchase food from West St. Paul residences. There is also a restaurant Facebook page that is generating donations to buy gift cards for each one of those restaurants and then giving them out as prizes. It's a great way to keep the ball rolling. It's important to know that employees continue to serve in essential roles and they are out doing the job while we are quarantined in our homes, which puts them at a greater risk.

City operations – the City takes any violations of Governor Walz's stay at home order very seriously and will continue to follow up on reports of violations. All public meetings are virtual until further notice. Staff continue to operate the City to ensure services remain available to the community. Even though City Hall is closed to the public, City services remain available. Information and essential forms are available in the front lobby. There is a phone there to

reach the appropriate Staff so they can assist you with things that may not be available in the lobby.

Individuals and shared household members are encouraged to go outside and walk and exercise. I saw a great Facebook post today about ‘What Does Social Distancing Looks Like Out on Our Trails,’ which was a great demonstration. Continue to bike and hike with family members that you’re locked down with, but social distancing is critical. The City, as you may have noticed, has put up signs and closed our playgrounds. West St. Paul’s emergency management department is in daily contact with Federal, State and local health officials during this unprecedented time.

We thank all West St. Paul businesses for their sacrifices during this difficult time. Once the stay at home order is done, we encourage all residents to make their purchases in West St. Paul to support the businesses that had to shut their doors and those that had greatly reduced revenue during this pandemic. Businesses can go to the City’s website at www.wspmn.gov for resources, as well as www.sba.gov/disaster for information on Federal and State grants, loans, unemployment and more. Some of these loans have been set up so you can retain your employees.

Residents can keep up-to-date on guidelines and recommendations by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s website at www.cdc.gov and the Minnesota Department of Health’s website at www.health.state.mn.us. Information is available on COVID-19 cases in the state of Minnesota.

We are a strong city. We can do this. The community and so many restaurants really stepped up on Easter Sunday. It was a difficult time to be away from my family but we did a virtual dinner and purchased food from a local restaurant, which was incredible. We had fun and made the most of it, but it is an Easter we will never forget.

As a community, I don’t think we will ever forget this moment in time. I want everyone to think to themselves: How do you want to be remembered? When someone asks you 20 years from now, “How did you live through this? How did you do it?” Think about how you want to be remembered and how you had a positive impact on our community.

7. Proclamations, Presentations and Recognitions

A. Donations to the City from Dakota Electric and Marge Vanderhoff

Police Chief Sturgeon presented two donations to the City:

- \$500 from Dakota Electric Association to the West St. Paul Parks & Recreation Department for its annual kid’s safety camp.
- \$500 in gift cards to Fireside Restaurant from Marge Vanderhoff to be used by our First Responders in the Fire and Police Departments. A weekly drawing for gift cards will be held within their departments.

Mayor Napier thanked both Dakota Electric Association and Marge Vanderhoff for their generous donations.

Motion was made by Councilmember Vitelli and seconded by Councilmember Justen to adopt Resolution No. 020-042 Accepting Donations to the City.

Vote: 6 ayes / 0 nays. Motion carried.

8. Consent Agenda

Councilmember Justen requested that Item 8E, Minutes of March 23, 2020, be pulled for editing.

Motion was made by Councilmember Vitelli and seconded by Councilmember Eng-Sarne to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda, as amended:

- A.** Minutes of February 10, 2020 for:
 - Open Council Work Session
 - Regular City Council Meeting
- B.** Minutes of February 24, 2020 for:
 - Open Council Work Session
 - Regular City Council Meeting
- C.** Minutes of March 9, 2020 for:
 - Open Council Work Session
 - Regular City Council Meeting
- D.** Minutes of March 11, 2020 for:
 - Town Hall Meeting
- E.** Minutes of March 23, 2020 for:
 - Regular City Council Meeting – **Item Pulled**
- F.** List of Claims for April 13, 2020 in the Amount of \$1,655,989.94
- G.** February 2020 Financial Report
- H.** Business Licensing:
 - Denial of a Personal Massage License Application from Krongthong Clapping, 1891 Robert Street South
- I.** Rental Licensing in the Amount of \$2,061.00 for:
 - 188 Butler Avenue East (Triplex – Renewal)
 - 816 Dodd Road (Triplex – Renewal)
 - 885 Oakdale Avenue (Duplex – New Owner)
 - 90/92 Arion Street West (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 200/202 Haskell Street East (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 435/437 Stanley Street East (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 420/422 Arion Street East (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 113/115 Emerson Avenue West (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 93/95 Logan Avenue West (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 92/94 Logan Avenue (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 1223/1225 Charlton Street (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 879 Oakdale Avenue (Duplex – Renewal)
 - 487 Mendota Road West (Townhome – Renewal)
 - 85 Orme Street East #3 (Townhome – Renewal)
 - 976 Robert Street #101 (Condo – Renewal)

- 200 Arion Street East (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 991 Stryker Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1056 Hall Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 126 Arion Street West (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 325 Bernard Street East (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1156 Charlton Street (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1064 Robert Street (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1088 Robert Street (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1015 Gorman Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 141 Stanley Street East (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 203 Moreland Avenue East (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 285 Thompson Avenue West (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1283 Hall Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 985 Livingston Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 179 Conver Street (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1565 Christensen Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1411 Bidwell Street (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1475 Smith Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1021 Christensen Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1345 Cherokee Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 441 Roeller Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 1233 Hall Avenue (Single Family – Renewal)
 - 294 Hurley Street East (Single Family – Renewal)
- J.** Award Contract for Materials Testing Contract for CP 20-1 to Braun Intertec in the Amount of \$9,837.00

Vote: 6 ayes / 0 nays. Motion carried.

9. Public Hearings

There were no Public Hearings.

10. New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

11. Old Business

A. Final Reading of Ordinance No. 20-006 Rezoning 895 Robert Street from B5 to PRD, Planned Residential Development, with B5 – North Gateway Mixed Use Underlying Zoning

Community Development Director Hartshorn provided an overview of the ordinance amendment and answered questions from the Council. The first reading was held during a Public Hearing at the March 23, 2020 City Council meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Justen and seconded by Councilmember Berry to approve Ordinance No. 20-006 An Ordinance Rezoning 895 Robert Street from B5 –

Gateway North Mixed Use, to PRD, Planned Residential Development with B5 – Gateway North Mixed Use Underlying Zoning.

Vote: 6 ayes / 0 nays. Motion carried.

12. Adjourn

Out of respect for the process and anyone wishing to phone in tonight, Mayor Napier provided a few more minutes for anyone to phone in with their comments tonight. After this extended period and receiving no calls, Mayor Napier closed the access line.

Mayor Napier ended the meeting with a special thank you to Ryan Schroeder, Jim Hartshorn, Dan Nowicki, Brian Sturgeon, Shirley Buecksler, Staff and everyone who has adapted to this situation. On behalf of all the residents of our city, thank you for what you are doing, keeping it accessible, keeping things going, and planning and adapting as you go. Mayor Napier said it is critical for people to know that you're doing a great job. Keep it up, thank you.

Motion was made by Councilmember Eng-Sarne and seconded by Councilmember Justen to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Mayor Napier said thank you, everyone. Be safe.

David J. Napier
Mayor
City of West St. Paul