May 4, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting

MINOT CITY COUNCIL – SCHEDULED MEETING – MAY 4, 2020 AT 5:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:
Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky

Members Absent:
None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Sipma presiding and led the City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Sipma described some of his meetings and activities over the past month.

April 7th – Joint Information Press Briefing
April 8th – CTE NDR Program Meeting
April 8th – NDR Update Meeting
April 8th – Governor Burgum Conference Call
April 8th – COVID-19 Task Force Meeting
April 9th – MADC Board Meeting
April 9th – Western Dakota Energy Association Conference Call
April 9th – IEDC Steering Committee Meeting
April 13th – City Hall Technical Team Meeting
April 13th – MAFB Conference Call
April 14th – Joint Information Press Briefing
April 14th – Board of Equalization Meeting
April 15th – Governor Burgum Conference Call
April 15th – COVID-19 Task Force Meeting
April 20th – Conference Call with Attorney Patricia Monson
April 20th – Special City Council Meeting
April 20th – Regular City Council Meeting
April 21st – Joint Information Press Briefing
April 22nd – HESS Joint Conference Call City/County/Schools
April 22nd – COVID-19 Task Force Meeting
April 27th – MAFB COVID-19 Update
April 28th – Governor Burgum Conference Call
April 28th – Joint Information Press Briefing
April 30th – COVID-19 Task Force meeting
April 30th – SVAS EOP Zoom Meeting
April 30th – Special City Council Meeting
May 1st – Governor Burgum Budgets
May 1st – Minot Sabre Dogs Update
May 4th – Regular City Council Meeting

He also said, there were numerous phone calls, e-mails, and individual contact concerning City business.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Acting City Manager, David Lakefield, began his report by listing upcoming meeting dates. Planning Commission May 5th, COVID-19 Press Briefing May 12th, MAGIC Fund May 15th, City Council May 18th, Chamber Board Virtual Meeting May 19th, and City Offices are closed for Memorial Day, May 25th.
Mr. Lakefield continued by discussing the City’s Enterprise Resource Planning software, nicknamed JARVIS through an employee competition. The budget module will be the first implemented and will be used in the upcoming budget cycle. Staff is participating in training May 5th & 6th and the system should provide swift projections to reflect budget changes.

He then listed the budget priorities that were submitted by department heads but said, there is a later agenda item to discuss budget priorities and offer additional guidance and recommendations.

- Maintain compliance with all regulatory and safety requirements.
- Responsive, transparent, and responsible City government.
- Invest in Human Capital by retaining current workforce and attracting committed long-term employees.
- Well-planned and well-maintained City infrastructure.
  - Prioritize the maintenance of existing assets before investing in additional assets.
- Leverage the investment in technology to improve the availability of information and improve transparency.
- Reward the conservation of resources and effective budget management.
- Continue to advance long term projects critical to our community – NAWS, Flood Control, Landfill.
- Continue to expand long term planning efforts.

Mr. Lakefield provided an update on 2020 projects that are taking place including Broadway Panel Replacement, 31st Avenue SE Reconstruction, 10th Street SW Storm Sewer District, and Flood Control. He also briefly mentioned the work being done on 30th Avenue NE Sanitary Sewer, Water Main Replacements on 23rd Street NE from 7th Avenue to Crescent Drive, Street Improvements throughout the city and the HSIP Project.

He then mentioned cleanup week, which was postponed and relabeled as “Free Dump” week. Residents who receive City garbage collection were able to utilize the free dumping service from April 27-May 1. The amount of waste brought to the landfill during that time amounted to about 80% of typical collections during cleanup weeks, so the fee service has been extended.

The Acting City Manager then addressed City staff’s gradual return to work. Public buildings will remain closed for now but the City will follow State guidance when it comes to protocols regarding COVID-19. The Library is also working on a plan to reopen but is not ready yet. Once policies are in place, there will be limited capacity, additional sanitizing procedures, and programs and services will be limited.

Mr. Lakefield distributed an update from the Souris Basin Planning Council on the Business Accelerator Fund. He said, the total leveraged private investment is $7,365,502.21 which equal $35 for every $1 in BAF funds. They have helped create 77 jobs and five of the six projects are located in Minot.

He continued with a revenue update but said it may be months before an accurate projection is available. The Hub City models look less drastic that first anticipated. Airport revenue loss is covered by the CARES Act. He said, staff is actively monitoring the workload and remaining projects are continuing as planned. He explained that moving forward, the current structure, with some modifications to improve communication, is most logical at this time.

He concluded his report by announcing some upcoming items to look for in the future. He mentioned the election, which will be conducted entirely through mailed ballots. He also brought up the second penny sales tax ordinance, which is being drafted for a future agenda. A portion of the second penny funds flood control and is essential to the financing of the project so the appropriate bond language will be included in the proposed ordinance.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

The City Attorney submitted a written report.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – APPROVED

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the minutes of the April 20, 2020 special City Council meeting and the April 20, 2020 regular City Council meeting.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.
Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve bills and transfers for April in the amount of $2,756,590.95 and payroll for the period of March 15, 2020 through April 11, 2020 in the amount of $2,076,618.46.
Second Reading

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

ORDINANCE NO. 5491- AMEND THE 2020 ANNUAL BUDGET – DIRECT LINK CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM (PD0150) – SECOND READING – APPROVED

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5491 on second reading amending the 2020 annual budget to increase Police capital equipment purchases expenditures and revenues and decrease the general fund supplies expenditures
and revenues for the purchase of a Crisis Response System funded by the 2018 JAG Grant. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5491 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**ORDINANCE NO. 5492 - MODIFYING STOP CONTROL AT THE INTERSECTION OF MULBERRY LOOP AND 34TH AVENUE NE (WEST INTERSECTION) – SECOND READING – APPROVED**

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5492 on second reading adding to the list of City Council created traffic restrictions provided for in Section 20-2 (a) (2-a) Stop Signs, the Mulberry Loop (West Intersection) at the intersection with 34th Avenue NE (West Intersection). Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5492 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**ORDINANCE NO. 5493 – AMEND THE 2020 ANNUAL BUDGET- STORM SEWER DISTRICT 123 – SECOND READING – APPROVED**

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5493 on second reading amending the 2020 annual budget to increase the Water Distribution and Sewage Collection watermain replacement expenditure and decrease the Storm Sewer capital purchases expenditure for the award of the Storm Sewer District #123 watermain replacement portion. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5493 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**ORDINANCE NO. 5494- AMEND THE 2020 ANNUAL BUDGET- CHANGE ORDER TO INSTALL HEAT TAPES TO PREVENT FREEZING IN ROOF DRAINS ON PARKING RAMPS – SECOND READING – APPROVED**

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5494 on second reading amending the 2020 annual budget to increase the Parking Ramps Capital Project expenditures for the parking ramps pipe insulation and heat trace. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5494 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**ORDINANCE NO. 5495- AMEND THE 2020 ANNUAL BUDGET- EXTENSION OF DAYCARE SERVICES – SECOND READING – APPROVED**

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5495 on second reading amending the 2020 annual budget to increase the Emergency Fund Professional Service Contracts expenditures for the Emergency Personnel Childcare Services and approve the use of Emergency Fund cash reserves. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5495 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**ORDINANCE NO. 5496 - CITY HALL TECHNICAL TEAM RECOMMENDATION (4466) – SECOND READING – APPROVED**

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5496 on second reading amending the 2020 annual budget to increase the engineer professional service contracts expenditure and revenue for the City Hall building analysis which will be funded with budgeted Capital Purchases for the new City Hall. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5496 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Sipma; nays: Podrygula, Straight, Wolsky.
ORDINANCE NO. 5497- AMEND THE 2020 ANNUAL BUDGET- MATCHING FUNDS FOR FEDERAL CRISI
GRANT – SECOND READING – APPROVED

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council place ordinance no. 5497 on second reading amending the 2020 annual budget to move $400,000 from Sales Tax Economic Development to Contract Services line item in Engineering’s budget to be used as matching funds to conduct an engineering study for the Minot Intermodal Facility. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously.

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council pass ordinance no. 5497 on second reading. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight; nays: Wolsky.

BURDICK EXPRESSWAY RECONSTRUCTION 9TH TO 15TH ST FINAL PAYMENT (4179)

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the final payment to the NDDOT in the amount of $15,473.35 for the reconstruction of Burdick Expressway from 9th Street to 15th Street.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SRTS - FINAL PAYMENT (4367)

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the final payment to the NDDOT in the amount of $429.45 for the Washington Elementary School Safe Routes to School project.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

42ND ST INTERSECTION FINAL PAYMENT (4181)

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the final payment to the NDDOT in the amount of $10,225.22 for the 42nd Street Intersection project.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

GAMING SITE AUTHORIZATION RENEWALS

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the gaming site authorizations for the license year of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

BID AWARD P# 3529.3 MREFPP PHASE BU-1B – BURLINGTON LEVEES PHASE B

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the lowest qualified bid for, Phase BU-1B of the MREFPP and recommend award of this phase by the SRJB to Wagner Construction.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

FAA 2020 AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (AIP) GRANT OFFER

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council accept the 2020 AIP Grant Offer from the FAA, once received; and authorize the Mayor and the City Attorney to sign any necessary documentation.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.
MINOT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CARES FUNDING GRANT ACCEPTANCE

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council accept the CARES Act grant as described in the Application for Federal Assistance SF-424; and authorize the Mayor to sign any applicable documentation.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

LANDRUM & BROWN CARES ACT FUNDING BUSINESS SERVICES

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the proposed Landrum & Brown CARES Act Funding Business Services project; and authorize the Airport Director to sign any applicable documentation.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

CONCLUDE RELATIONSHIP WITH LESSEE FRED ANDERSEN MAY 31, 2020

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council authorize City Staff to proceed with marketing of property vacated by Aviation Services and direct City Staff to publish Request for Proposals (RFP) and new lease terms.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

CONFIRMATION OF INITIAL CDBG-NDR 2015/16 BINDING COMMITMENTS

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve NDRC Phase 1 and 2 Applications with SF 424 Federal Form and Certifications, CDBG-NDR 2016 Action Plan, and 2016 CDBG-NDR Grant Agreement affirming Mayor and Finance Director signing the commitments.

Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

AWARD OF BID- ELECTRONIC DOOR LOCKS IN CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDINGS

Alderman Olson moved the City Council approve awarding the bid to The Computer Store in the amount of $64,815.00.

Motion seconded by Alderman Straight and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none; abstain: Jantzer

NEW LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SCOTT AVIATION/WILSON SCOTT

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council approve the proposed Ground Lease and Hangar Development Agreement between the City of Minot and Scott Aviation, and authorize the Mayor to enter into the agreement. Motion seconded by Alderman Jantzer.

Alderman Wolsky mentioned the issues that require improvements and asked the Airport Director to explain the assurances for making the improvements.

Mr. Feltner said, the agreement was entered 20 years ago with the option to renew when offered new terms by the City. The City proposed new terms and conditions which ensure the building is structurally sound and ensure an aeronautical purpose. The new lease is now very specific in what that entails. They have expectations that the lessee will live up to their obligations and if that does not happen, it can be remedied rather quickly by terminating the lease.

Alderman Jantzer asked if the 20-year term was mandatory to which Mr. Feltner responded by saying, yes. The building requires so much structural refurbishment that it would be difficult to ask someone to make the investment to fix the building and then only offer a one-year lease. Under this agreement they know the building will be used for its intended purpose for the next 20 years.
Alderman Pitner said, he attended a walkthrough and believes the improvements will result in a win-win for the leaseholder as well as for the City. He commended staff for the collaborative effort that took place to come to a solution.

Alderman Wolsky then asked if the rate per square foot was addressed and if it would work on an escalating scale over time. Mr. Feltner responded by saying, the rate is up to date with the current land lease rate and will be reviewed regularly.

Whereupon a vote was taken on the above motion by Alderman Pitner, seconded by Alderman Jantzer and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT APPROVAL**

Alderman Jantzer moved the City Council approve the Settlement agreement, release, and covenant not to sue between the City and J & C Rentals and authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement.

Motion seconded by Alderman Wolsky and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**DEVELOPERS AGREEMENT - ESSENTIAL TOWNHOMES (4532)**

Alderman Olson moved the City Council approve the Essential Townhomes Developers Agreement with Essential Living, Inc. and authorize the Mayor to sign.

Motion seconded by Alderman Straight and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.

**INCLUSION OF DISCLAIMER TO 2019 EVALUATIONS COMPLETED BY THE FORMER CITY MANAGER**

Alderman Pitner moved the City Council include a disclaimer to the 2019 evaluations of all subordinates of former City Manager, Tom Barry due to the reliability and objectivity of the evaluations. Included with the disclaimer will be a copy of the full final investigation report by independent counsel, Patricia Monson, and meeting minutes from the April 20, 2020 Special City Council meeting which terminated Mr. Barry’s employment. Motion seconded by Alderman Jantzer.

Alderman Olson asked if the disclaimer would be included in all files or if it would be at the request of the employee.

The HR Director stated, their intention is to place it in all of the affected employee’s files to maintain consistency.

Alderman Olson recommended employees be given the option whether to include the disclaimer in their file.

Alderman Olson moved to amend the motion to include the disclaimer at the request of the employee. Motion seconded by Alderman Pitner.

Upon clarification, Alderman Pitner amended his motion to reflect Alderman Olson’s recommendation to allow employees the option to include the disclaimer in their personnel file. Alderman Jantzer, as the second, agreed.

Alderman Olson withdrew her motion to amend. Alderman Pitner withdrew his second.

Alderman Pitner then asked if a 360 review from the subordinates of a department head would be appropriate, to which Ms. Jundt replied by saying, some already have a review in place. She added, it would not be a problem going forward and that it would be a good idea.

Alderman Podrygula said he does not believe employees should have to request the disclaimer and prefers consistency among all employee files.

Alderman Olson explained that her recommendation was to avoid having a good evaluation blemished by the disclaimer.

The Mayor assured the Council, the HR department would be capable of addressing the situation appropriately.

Whereupon a vote was taken on the above motion by Alderman Pitner seconded by Alderman Jantzer and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight, Wolsky; nays: none.
PUBLIC HEARING: RESOLUTION NO. 3663 TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT #2020-1 (BLU ON BROADWAY)

The City Council held a public hearing to consider the development or renewal plan submitted by Blu on Broadway, LLC and to consider the development agreement between the City of Minot and Blu on Broadway, LLC.

Blu on Broadway, LLC is requesting approval of a TIF District that will partially finance the construction of 1st Street SW between 16th Avenue and 17th Avenue. Blu on Broadway, LLC is the developer of the Blu on Broadway mixed use project that is located on a vacant parcel of land located at 1629 S. Broadway. The Planning Commission and City Council approved this project as a planned unit development in the Fall of 2019. Blu on Broadway, LLC will build a five-story building, with commercial units on the first floor and LMI housing on the upper floors.

Mayor Sipma reminded that since meetings are closed to the public, an online submission portal is being used to collect comments for the public hearing. He directed the City Clerk to read the comments that were received.

“We, at EPIC Companies, take great pride in what we have accomplished in my home town of Minot. EPIC and our sister food and beverage companies, employ approximately 50 people on a year round basis in the Magic City. We ask for your support in what is the final piece of rounding out three affordable housing projects: Park South phase I, Park South phase II, and the nicest affordable housing complex in the state, Blu On Broadway. The final piece is really how leveraged money works. Blu On Broadway is using over $5 million of private money, $4 million of NDR funds, and an interest buy down from the Bank of North Dakota.

From the beginning of planning for this project, it was discussed among City of Minot staff and ourselves, how can we use this project to leverage finishing 1st Street SW between 16th and 17th Ave. We collectively came up with a solution that will put the burden on the project and not any other adjacent land owners or taxpayers, even though dozens of area land owners adjacent to it and otherwise will benefit from the new road. We are basically building a public road with city specifications at no cost to any other taxpayer other than Blu On Broadway. A win win for the community of Minot.

We ask for your support on the TIF process that will make the construction of what used to be referred to as “the alley behind the Pepsi plant” to a normal community paved street to be enjoyed by all.

Sincerely on behalf of the EPIC Companies team,

Todd Berning
President”

“Thank you for hearing this matter of the proposed property tax abatement in conjunction with the Blu on Broadway affordable housing mixed-use development. As a condition of the approval this project has already received, a requirement was placed on us to reconstruct 1st Street from 16th to 17th Ave. Approving this abatement will allow us to amortize a portion of the cost associated with these Public Right-of-Way improvements over the 5-year abatement period. This means that Blu on Broadway will pay for the entire cost of the 1st Street project up front, at no cost to any adjacent property owner, and there will be no special assessments levied.

The City will not be responsible for any of the costs, but the improvements are being designed to city specifications and it will be constructed following city standards.

The current property taxes will continue to be paid during the abatement period, and upon the expiration, taxes collected on this property are expected to increase by a multiple of 4-5 times.

This abatement is absolutely critical for our affordable housing development to support the reconstruction of 1st Street. Without it, the economics don’t work and we will be looking for other possible solutions, which could impact the adjacent properties, and delay the project, which we don’t want to happen.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to the next step of making this project a reality.

Sincerely,

Blake Nybakken
Alderman Jantzer moved the City Council close the public hearing and approve the TIF District 2020-1, adopt resolution no. 3663; and authorize the Mayor to sign the development agreement with Blu on Broadway, LLC. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson.

Alderman Straight asked if the City would maintain the road after it is reconstructed, to which Mayor Sipma stated, yes, the City maintains the road now. It would just be an improved road from what is currently in place.

Alderman Jantzer said he was involved in establishing the possibility of a TIF and is glad to see the vehicle finally being utilized. The road will be upgraded at no immediate cost to the City.

Alderman Pitner asked what happens to the difference of what would have been paid in taxes after the abatement.

Finance Director Lakefield said, the five-year abatement means the County will not collect taxes on the improvements until the abatement period is over. The money would be used to finance the cost of the improvements up front. He explained that the developer is taking a risk because if property values don’t appreciate as much as they anticipate, they may not recover as much as they thought. He said, it is unlikely that the increment in the tax, with the value, would ever exceed the public improvement costs.

Alderman Wolsky asked if there is a cap in which the valuation cannot exceed the valuation of the public improvements, to which Mr. Lakefield said, yes, there is language in the agreement to that effect.

Alderman Wolsky then shared his favorable opinion on the overall project but his lack of support for the TIF. He said, he believed the increase in property value would benefit the taxpayers but he does not like the process in which it was handled. He said he would still describe this as the public paying for the improvements rather than the developer.

Alderman Pitner said, he cannot get on board with subsidizing this investment and he believes this is a band-aid on an existing problem. He said, the LMI housing requirements are only in place for 20 years. He does not agree with the development’s location among Broadway traffic and disagrees with the lack of parking for the property.

Alderman Straight said he is curious to see how the property develops. He understands the benefits of having amenities in a close proximity.

Whereupon a vote was taken on the above motion by Alderman Jantzer, seconded by Alderman Olson and carried by the following roll call vote: ayes: Jantzer, Olson, Podrygula, Sipma, Straight; nays: Pitner, Wolsky.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Mayor Sipma mentioned the online portal for public comments. He stated, there was a submission for personal appearances regarding property acquisitions and it was taken care of earlier that day by Mr. Zakian.

OUTLINE 2021 BUDGET PRIORITIES

Mr. Lakefield mentioned the following Budget priorities during the City Manager’s report:

- Maintain compliance with all regulatory and safety requirements.
- Responsive, transparent, and responsible City government.
- Invest in Human Capital by retaining current workforce and attracting committed long-term employees.
- Well-planned and well-maintained City infrastructure.
  - Prioritize the maintenance of existing assets before investing in additional assets.
- Leverage the investment in technology to improve the availability of information and improve transparency.
- Reward the conservation of resources and effective budget management.
- Continue to advance long term projects critical to our community – NAWS, Flood Control, Landfill.
- Continue to expand long term planning efforts.

He mentioned that they are similar to the past year or two. He assured staff is aware of the existing environment and the general consensus is to provide a lean budget while being efficient and effective.
Mayor Sipma mentioned the potential cuts and cost-savings efforts taking place at the State level. He said, this may be an opportunity to see streamlining of certain processes. He also suggested there are positions that may not be filled, such as the Economic Resilience Director, who declined the offer of employment.

Mr. Lakefield said, the City is well-positioned for the next few years and he does not want to give the impression of a dire situation. He assured, staff is already looking at ways to be leaner. He also mentioned some savings due to the fact that trainings and conferences have been cancelled as well as the travel associated.

Alderman Podrygula emphasized the need for conservative spending and the need for the Council as a whole to set the priorities. He said, the economic climate changes day by day and they need to focus on maintaining City staff and deferring any new expenditures. He is not as optimistic as the Finance Director and said, some experts are predicting 18 months before the economy recovers.

Alderman Wolsky commented that during his time on the Council, they have encountered three very difficult budget cycles. He stated, everyone should be prepared for a more conservative Council going forward. They need to define the terms of a lowest cost government. They have seen the repercussions of deferred maintenance and the result of increased employee turnover. They need to control costs and save cash because there is too much uncertainty for the future.

Alderman Pitner said, he is of the more optimistic perspective and suggested we get the most bang for our buck. He also encouraged staff to take advantage of the availability of leveraged funds through grants and Federal programs. He also emphasized the need to maintain current assets because deterioration increases costs.

Alderman Straight said that he is likely to lose his entire summer business and in comparison, believes the City should hold the line on employee step increases. He also mentioned the recycling discussion and said that if the transfer facility does not move forward, the money allocated from the Community Facilities fund should go toward other facilities.

Alderman Jantzer stated, the most critical priority is that essential City services continue without disruption.

Alderman Olson stated, she works best when provided with data. She is comfortable with their five-year plan as projected, and it has enabled them to make smart decisions. She requested staff provide data regarding what it would cost the average homeowner to continue the pay plan.

Mayor Sipma then clarified for those in the community that although the current budget is about $274 million, only $25.3 million of the budget is leveraged by property tax. He said, he understands it is tough to grasp but most of the budget is generated through funds leveraged by NDR, as well as other Federal and State grants.

**INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS**

Alderman Jantzer provided the following recommendations for consideration through an email distributed earlier in the day:

1. Extend Acting City Manager designation of David Lakefield to September 30, or until a new City manager is in place if sooner. To be reviewed by the Council and extended as needed.
2. Begin the search for a new City Manager.
3. Change the organizational structure to have the Finance Director, City Attorney, and Human Resources Director all report directly to the City Council, as does the City Manager.
4. Adopt a “360 degree” review process for the City Manager and all department heads.
5. Define the role of the Executive Committee of the Council to be strictly one of continuity of government, so that if the Mayor is gone or unable to perform the duties of his office, the Council President takes over temporarily, and if the Mayor and Council President are gone or unable to perform the mayoral duties, the Council Vice President takes over temporarily. (Advice and counsel, as well as any decision or action require the action of the entire City Council.)
6. The regular supervision of the City Manager through regular weekly meetings shall be the job of the Mayor, plus one additional alderman on a two month rotating schedule for the year, with random order to be determined by drawing names at the beginning of the calendar year. Newly elected Council Members will take the place of those they replace by the same method. Note: The City Manager will continue to report to the full council no less than monthly on the operations of all departments of the City.
May 4, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting

7. Two aldermen will be appointed by the City Council for each direct report Department Head (Attorney, HR, Finance) to meet monthly to discuss current work in progress and challenges, future plans, opportunities, and needs, or help that might be required from the City Council.

8. Require the City Manager to submit his/her monthly report to the Council with the agenda for the meeting during which it will be presented.

9. Institute an annual employee satisfaction survey of all employees.

10. Pass the HR Director recommended action to annotate the 2019 Department Head performance reviews identified in the investigation.

He then elaborated on some of the suggestions. He said, #5 is an attempt to get rid of the “Executive Committee” name. He stated, if the Mayor is unavailable, the Council President would fill in, followed by the Council Vice-President. He mentioned that appointing two Council members to each direct report department, as described in #7, is defined as a committee and would be subject to open meeting requirements.

Mayor Sipma agreed that they need to begin the search for a new City Manager. He said, he cannot support appointing former City Manager Staab because of misunderstandings with HUD compliance. Staab had some great momentum but moving forward, they should find a permanent replacement.

Alderman Jantzer said, it is important to consider input from staff. He agreed, there needs to be someone in charge and they can maintain the current structure while improving communication.

Alderman Pitner stated, he would reach out to department heads and that he appreciated the communication from Acting City Manager Lakefield from their department head meeting. He said they don’t need to reinvent the wheel but they can make some improvements.

The Mayor said he had been reviewing an ICMA guide on Council Management relations. Former Alderman Seymour also provided a helpful email.

Upon questioning by Mayor Sipma, the HR Director said she could reach out to recruitment firms for proposals and compile them for a committee to review at no cost.

Alderman Wolsky said, he does not want to diminish the role of the Council. He cautioned against rushing into decisions and said it might not be the best time to recruit considering the current reputation. He also recommended they take time to develop a job description for the City Manager position.

Mayor Sipma asked the HR Director how long it has typically taken to fill a City Manager vacancy, to which Ms. Jundt responded by saying, there is an approximate 16-week recruitment process.

Alderman Olson brought up a recent letter to the editor recommending a local candidate for the position. She asked if the City could recruit locally.

Ms. Jundt said, it is the Council’s prerogative and they can begin the process simultaneously. They can look locally until signing a contract with a recruitment firm at which time, they would take over the process.

The Council agreed that they need time to draft a City Manager job description and list of priorities as well as define the role of a City Manager. He also recommended a Council Retreat be planned for shortly after the reorganization meeting in June.

Mayor Sipma reminded the Council that although they have final authority to make decisions, they should not get lost in the day-to-day operations. He said, they could sacrifice efficiency the process gets too deep.

Alderman Straight asked Mr. Lakefield if he is comfortable as the Interim City Manager.

Mr. Lakefield said, the department heads had an open, candid discussion on next steps and there have been concerns about stability, which is why former City Manager Staab’s offer was appealing. Staff has been working diligently to continue operations but some direction would be preferred sooner rather than later.

The Mayor asked if Mr. Lakefield was comfortable in the role for at least another 30 days, to which he responded by saying, yes, he is agreeable. Mr. Lakefield also said, staff began discussions on workload, specifically the software project, and have discovered some untapped potential among the staff.
Alderman Pitner requested there be an item on the next agenda, potentially, a special Council meeting, to discuss the issue again.

The Council encouraged staff to share their opinions on workload.

Alderman Wolsky also mentioned the need to evaluate salary adjustments as additional duties are distributed.

**MISCELLANEOUS & DISCUSSION**

Alderman Wolsky mentioned that he does not feel an urgency to pursuing issues on the Legislative Session as a result of the pandemic. He believes the pressure is off regarding the low interest buydown loan given the circumstances. He said there are other financing options in the works including the USACE water infrastructure program. He then encouraged the Mayor to reach out to other significant partners to help shepherd the low-interest buydown program through the Legislature while they focus on the city of Minot.

Mayor Sipma responded by saying, he has spoken with the City’s special attorney, Mr. Goettl, who works on the City’s behalf at the legislature. He said, there will be a reassessment on the State’s side on what to expect for the next Legislative Session. It will be brought to the Council for evaluation as soon as possible. He has had preliminary talks with the Red River Valley but they have undergone some recent flooding. There will also be additional conversations with the League of Cities but he emphasized, it is not just about flood control, it is about infrastructure projects around the state. A lot of small communities around North Dakota that don’t have other borrowing capacities because of bond limitations. He then mentioned how much of the budget is dependent on sales tax revenues. There will be a better picture of how things will play out in the next 30 days, however he said he is hesitant to rely on the federal level.

Mr. Lakefield pointed out that Mr. Goettl’s contract is up for renewal and there will be an item on the next agenda. He has agreed to the same terms.

Alderman Pitner announced a reminder to fill out the census. He said, Mr. Billingsley had a robust plan in place but because of COVID-19, those plans have been on hold. Minot is currently trailing other large cities in participation and he encouraged everyone to take the census.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Alderman Pitner moved the City Council meeting be adjourned. Motion seconded by Alderman Olson and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm.

ATTEST: _____________________  APPROVED: _______________________
Kelly Matalka, City Clerk  Shaun Sipma, Mayor