

**MOUND CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2020**

The City Council of the City of Mound, Hennepin County, Minnesota, met in special session on Tuesday, April 21, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. remotely using the ZOOM videoconferencing website.

Members present: Mayor Ray Salazar; Council Members Jeff Bergquist, Sherrie Pugh, Phil Velsor, and Paula Larson

Members absent: None

Others present: City Manager/Public Works Director Eric Hoversten, Community Development Director Sarah Smith, Public Works Superintendent Ray Hanson, Liquor Store Manager Ron Gust, Fire Chief Greg Pederson, Finance Director/Clerk/Treasurer Catherine Pausche.

1. Open meeting

Mayor Salazar called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Salazar read each Council Member's name and they replied 'here.'

3. Approve the agenda

Motion by Bergquist, seconded by Pugh, to approve the agenda. Roll call vote - In Favor: Larson, Velsor, Bergquist, Pugh, Salazar Opposed: None Abstain: None. Motion carried.

4. Department Head Annual Reports

Annual reports were presented by Department Heads with discussion following.

A. Orono Police Department – Police Chief Correy Farniok

Police Chief Farniok summarized the 2019 annual report that showcases the department's programs, community and school partnerships, volunteers, patrol and investigations divisions, specialty units, K-9 service dog, and activity summary for 2019.

Council member Pugh said she is impressed with the program for kids with disabilities and suggested a training for staff on working with people with Alzheimer's. Farniok agreed that would be a benefit for all involved.

Mayor Salazar thanked the police department for the exceptional level of service and for keeping our community safe.

B. Liquor Store – Manager Ron Gust

Liquor Store Manager Gust highlighted the management transition, staffing adjustments, improved profitability, and the total store remodel. Gust asked for approval for 3 more glass coolers for increasing demand for hard seltzers and microbrews, and authorization for a performance incentive pay plan for liquor store staff working during COVID-19. Gust noted increasing part-time staff pay in July has resulted in an outstanding team who have worked so hard for the remodel and now during the pandemic.

Mayor Salazar thanked Gust and the team and said he should be very proud of the financial results and how well the store remodel turned out, both aesthetically and financially. Salazar said he agreed with both proposals.

Pugh said she has witnessed the excellence in customer service and pride exhibited by the staff.

Hoversten thanked the Council for the support on the redesign and the latitude given staff to get it done.

**C. Finance & Administration/Docks Administration – Finance Director/Clerk/Treasurer
Catherine Pausche**

Pausche noted specific discussion on the audit, budget and CIP occurs at the regular meetings, and that she tries to reserve workshops for items that may require more informal discussion before formal action at a regular meeting. Pausche said potential COVID-19 impacts include: increased unemployment charges for former employees since city does not pay into trust, new temporary benefits for part-time workers, potential staffing issues if people have to self-quarantine, and most notably as of now, potential cash flow issues from delayed property tax and utility payments. Pausche noted no bond issues for new money, only refundings, have been made since 2016, while projects continued. Pausche said she suggests the council waive the 10% late penalty on utility bills for April, May and June due dates if requested by the customer. Pausche also suggested prorating on-sale liquor licenses for the time they were not able to be open for dine-in and not to invoke the opt-out option to prohibit these establishments from enacting limited off-sale as allowed by newly adopted state statute.

Mayor Salazar said he agrees with both proposals because they are fair, necessary and just the right thing to do. Bergquist agreed and asked if liquor licenses would have the option for a credit or a refund. Pausche said either way, but licenses expire July 1st and payments are due, so it will probably have the same effect.

Pausche then requested discussion on Robert's Rules of Order, noting there were 3 abstentions on a single vote at the April 14th meeting. Pausche said in consultation with the City Attorney, Staff does not believe the vote passed and that the issue (Code language on allowing chickens) will need to be brought back for discussion at a regular meeting before any more Staff time is spent on the subject. Pausche said the code does not elaborate on the use of abstentions, but Commission work rules state that a commissioner abstaining shall state the general reason for doing so and Pausche noted abstaining should be a rare exception as there are competing theories and case law on how to count an abstention. Pausche encouraged all council members to ask questions in advance of the meeting so Staff can provide any missing information for the council member to be able to cast an informed vote. Pausche said with only 5 members on the Council, every individual vote really matters.

Pugh agreed that the vote on chickens felt odd, because with Robert's Rules her understanding is abstentions are only used because of unreadiness or conflicts of interest but also noted she believes the rule is that if something needs to be brought back for another vote, only people who voted in the affirmative can raise the issue for another vote. Pugh said that should be verified before bringing it back on a future agenda.

**D. Community Development/Planning/Zoning/Building Inspections –
Community Development Director Sarah Smith**

Smith highlighted 2019 accomplishments, including submittal and approval of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan with implementation occurring in 2020. Also anticipated in 2020 is the

review and approval of the Mound Harbor final plat and continuation of conversion to electronic building permits.

E. Public Works (Parks) Operations & City Projects – Public Works Superintendent Ray Hanson and City Manager/PWD Eric Hoversten

Hanson summarized the information in the packet including highlights from 2019 including SCADA controls upgrade, key operating statistics, building and equipment improvements and the Depot refurbishment. Hanson also highlighted the goals and needs of 2020 and changes resulting from COVID-19, including 2 separated crew shifts and limited in-house services. Discussion ensued about impacts on hiring summer staff and possible reduction in park turf maintenance frequency. Hoversten mentioned the union contract limits the candidate pool to students and challenges of the split crews. Pugh asked if the city should install social distancing signs in parks and transit center. Berquist suggested reminder in quarterly newsletter. Pugh asked about cleaning of play equipment and Hanson questioned the required frequency and whether the city could maintain that level of service. Salazar said that is the job of parents. Pugh said she just wants people to be safe.

Hoversten summarized the major capital improvement projects managed by the city and also by others. Salazar mentioned the Met Council's non-performance in restoring the park and complemented Hoversten on his handling of the situation. Velsor noted he is seeing roller blades and bikes being used in the tennis courts and suggested signage that it is prohibited.

Pugh asked if Public Works has enough personal protective equipment (PPE). Hanson said yes and that they always have a six-month supply on hand for the sewer crews.

F. Fire & Rescue/Emergency Response/Emergency Management – Fire Chief Greg Pederson

Fire Chief Pederson summarized the highlights from 2019 and the key operating statistics on fire calls and staff hours. Pederson noted the building payment will end in 2022 which will help to fund replacement of two major fire trucks. Pederson noted the favorable fund balance variances due to success in obtaining grants and said they have applied for a \$200K FEMA-AFG grant for SCBA equipment.

Pederson noted the top 6 challenges all have to do with staffing and that MFD is above average when it comes to recruiting and retention. Pederson noted the duty officer program is highly effective and they were the first to arrive on 88% of the calls. Pederson said Minnesota is ranked 48th nationally for fire service cost even though we are 21st in the nation for population. Pederson said the volunteer department model is a major benefit and that Minnesota average fire cost is \$234 per household per year and MFD's average is \$193 per household per year while still providing a very high service level.

Mayor Salazar said fire trucks are not a want but a need and the success of the department is a testament to the esprit de corps of the volunteers and Pederson's leadership. Pederson said the department benefits from the strong family traditions, friendships and legacy that you just can't buy. Pederson said COVID-19 has had a substantial impact on the operations and protocols as majority of activities involve a large team, but all are currently healthy and available to respond. Pederson said they will focus on updating the CIP and health, wellness and safety programs for the fire fighters. Pederson said the department has received many donations, including masks, sanitizer and food.

G. Wrap-up by City Manager Eric Hoversten

Hoversten thanked the City Council and Staff for all of the accomplishments. Hoversten said COVID-19 has changed things and shown the importance of continuity of service and the need for government and governance.

Salazar thanked Hoversten and all the hard working city employees and congratulated them on another successful year. Salazar said together we will learn, adapt and overcome.

5. Adjourn by Roll Call Vote

MOTION by Bergquist, seconded by Larson, to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. Roll call vote - In Favor: Larson, Velsor, Bergquist, Pugh, Salazar Opposed: None Abstain: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Raymond J. Salazar

Attest: Catherine Pausche, Clerk