



City Council Meeting

April 8, 2024

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Lund called the City Council Meeting of April 8, 2024, to order at 7:17 p.m.

Present

Mayor Scott Lund
Councilmember Dave Ostwald
Councilmember Tom Tillberry
Councilmember Ryan Evanson
Councilmember Ann Bolkom

Others Present

Walter Wysopal, City Manager
Beth Kondrick, Deputy City Clerk
Scott Hickok, Community Development Director
Sarah Sonsalla, City Attorney

Pledge Of Allegiance

Proclamations/Presentations

Approval of Proposed Consent Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt the proposed Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Bolkom.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Approval/Receipt of Minutes

1. Approve the Minutes from the City Council Meeting of March 25, 2024.
2. Receive the Minutes from the Council Conference Meeting of March 25, 2024.

New Business

3. Resolution No. 2024-44, Approving a Grant Agreement with the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization for a Hydrodynamic Separator.

4. Resolution No 2024-45, Approving a Grant Agreement with the Rice Creek Watershed District for a Hydrodynamic Separator.
5. Resolution No. 2024-46, Approving a Grant Agreement with the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization for Stormwater Improvements at Sylvan Hills Park.

Licenses

6. Resolution No. 2024-43, Approving a Temporary Intoxicating Liquor Permit for Tim Hoffman of Totino Grace High School for a Fundraising Event on April 27, 2024.

Claims

7. Resolution No. 2024-47 Approving Claims for the Period Ending April 8, 2024.

Open Forum, Visitors: (Consideration of Items not on Agenda – 15 minutes.)

David Carlson commented that he spoke at the last Council meeting related to concerns he had with prior abuse of his children. He provided more details on what occurred with his children and a concern that he has that the couple adopting his daughter may be connected to others he has concerns with.

Mayor Lund said he was not sure that the City would be able to assist. He asked and received confirmation that Mr. Carlson has spoken with the Police Department. He also confirmed that Mr. Carlson's children are now over 18.

Councilmember Tillberry commented that he is unsure where the City Council would fit into this picture, and stated that perhaps Mr. Carlson would be better served by bringing his concerns to an attorney.

Adoption of Regular Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the regular agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

Public Hearing(s)

8. Public Hearing to Consider On-Sale Liquor License by Debesay Girmalul for Continental Restaurant and Resolution No. 2024-42, Approving On-Sale Liquor License for Continental Restaurant.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Beth Kondrick, Deputy City Clerk, presented the application for an On-Sale Liquor License from Debesay Girmalul for the Continental Restaurant. She reviewed the background and analysis of the request, stating that staff recommends approval of the request following the public hearing.

Debesay Girmalul, applicant, commented that in this location he currently has the food service license and would now like to obtain the necessary license to serve alcohol. He stated that his intent is not to focus on just alcohol, but to offer that in addition to his food menu. He commented that he would continue to run his business professionally.

Mayor Lund asked and received confirmation that the restaurant is currently open and serving food. He asked about the applicant's prior food service experience.

Mr. Girmalul commented that he did operate a large restaurant in another country, but this is his first attempt in the U.S. He confirmed that he was aware of the 60/40 rule related to food and alcohol sales.

Mayor Lund provided additional expectations for food service to be the main focus, noting that alcohol sales are not to continue past the time food is served. He noted the problems that existed for the business that previously operated in this location.

Mr. Girmalul replied that if alcohol sales became an issue, he would simply stop serving those beverages.

Councilmember Tillberry stated that the website for the business shows an event hall and asked if there is a separate license required for that.

Ms. Kondrick commented that this license would cover the event hall as well.

Councilmember Tillberry asked if Mr. Girmalul has experience selling alcohol.

Mr. Girmalul commented that his restaurant in Nyrobi served alcohol and that operated for 20 years. He noted that this would be his first-time serving alcohol in the U.S. as this is his first restaurant in the U.S.

Councilmember Bolkcom stressed that the City is very serious about the 60/40 rule for food and alcohol. She asked for more information on the type of food served and the training that would be provided for the staff serving alcohol.

Mr. Girmalul commented that they serve culturally diverse food. He stated that he would train all employees to check identification on all customers, regardless of age. He stated that they also have a time limit during which they would offer alcohol service, noting that his restaurant closes at 11 p.m. but the hours may be different for the event hall. He stated that event hall customers must also have food included in the service.

Councilmember Ostwald asked if the restaurant caters for the events at the event center or whether an outside caterer could be used.

Mr. Girmalul commented that generally they serve the food, but outside food is allowed with the proper catering licenses provided. He stated that his plan would be for beer and wine service but perhaps liquor in the future.

Mayor Lund asked if there are any plans for remodeling or improvements on the exterior.

Mr. Girmalul commented that they have invested in improvements to the interior, and he will now begin to improve the outside appearance.

Councilmember Bolkom asked if there is concern with the 60/40 ratio for those that use outside catering.

Mr. Girmalul stated that he does have a plan to regulate alcohol service during those events.

Mayor Lund noted that perhaps for events that would like alcohol service, the business requires that the restaurant is used for catering to ensure the 60/40 rule is met.

Councilmember Evanson asked for details on staffing and management of the restaurant and event space.

Mr. Girmalul provided details on his staffing, noting that once the business grows, he will continue to add more staff. He was aware that if someone else were added to management, they would need to be added to the liquor license.

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to close the public hearing, Seconded by Councilmember Bolkom.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adopt Resolution No. 2024-42, Approving On-Sale Liquor License for Continental Restaurant. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

New Business

9. Ordinance No. 1421, Public Hearing and First Reading Amending the Name, Boundaries, Powers and Construction of Government Chapter of the Fridley City Charter.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilmember Bolkcom.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Kondrick presented a proposed amendment to Chapter 1 of the Fridley City Charter. She reviewed background information on the request, summarizing details of Chapter 1 along with the proposed amendments. She reviewed the next steps, should the first reading be approved.

Mayor Lund invited any members of the public to provide comments.

No public comments were provided.

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to close the public hearing, Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 1421, Amending the Name, Boundaries, Powers and Construction of Government Chapter of the Fridley City Charter. Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

10. Ordinance No. 1422, Amending the Fridley City Code Chapter 105, Commissions, to Establish a Public Arts Commission.

Scott Hickok, Community Development Director, provided background information on public art and the public engagement process that occurred thus far and the recommendation that moved forward to the City Council. He reviewed the proposed ordinance which would establish a Public Arts Commission. He reviewed the next steps, should the first reading be approved.

Councilmember Tillberry asked if there would be a process to involve the new Commission in public projects to determine if there would be an opportunity to include public art.

Mr. Hickok replied that there would be a staff liaison, currently identified as himself, and noted that it would be his responsibility to identify those opportunities.

Councilmember Evanson asked for more information on the creation of a 501-3c organization and how that would work with this group.

Mr. Hickok explained that the 501-3c would be separate and operate independently with the purpose of fundraising to further the interest of public art. He stated that the Commission would be an advisory commission to the Council. He stated that the by-laws of the 501-3c would tie that organization to the Public Arts Commission.

Councilmember Tillberry noted that it would be similar to the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation.

Councilmember Bolkcom thanked the residents who have participated, noting the enthusiasm of the group.

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 1422, Amending the Fridley City Code Chapter 105, Commissions, to Establish a Public Arts Commission. Seconded by Councilmember Bolkcom.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Informal Status Reports

Councilmember Bolkcom noted the 44th Avenue bridge discussion scheduled for the following night at City Hall.

Councilmember Tillberry commented on the wonderful fundraising event that was held the previous Saturday at Springbrook Nature Center, hosted by the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation. The Council thanked the City staff and other volunteers who assisted in preparing and running the event.

The Council also asked residents to take a photo of their water service line and provide it to staff.

Adjourn

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Moore
City Clerk

Scott J. Lund
Mayor