

**CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING
MARCH 29, 2023**

1. Call to Order: 6:00 p.m. at City Hall

- Mayor Lawrence called the Clearwater City Council to order Wednesday, March 29, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Luhmann, Winkelman, Schwinghammer, and Vazquez. Also present were Park Commission Members Petty, Dufour, and Schindele, along with members of the staff and guests.

2. Community Center Survey Results

- Members discussed the results of the survey. Results were about 50/50 in support of or against building a community center. Of those in favor, a majority were opposed to the current design. Most wanted a swimming pool or a splash pad (44%).
- Members discussed the feasibility of a swimming pool. The cost to construct exceeds the funds available and the planned budget of \$3 million. For comparison purposes, Members also discussed the operating costs of other area pools – Cokato (outdoor pool, open summer only), net expenditures of \$100,000 - \$120,000 per year, Monticello – (indoor pool, open year-round), net expenditures of \$500,000 - \$600,000. This would create significant levy increases of 7% - 33% on top of any regular levy increases. Member Santos stated that until the city's tax base is much larger, this project does not seem viable.
- Members also discussed the possibility of moving forward with an alternate community center design. Park Commission Chair Petty outlined the background, explaining that the purpose of this project is to create a place for residents to connect, given the lack of a local school building. Residents from either side of I94 can live here for years and never interact. The community center would be a place to do that and create a sense of community. Members considered that the majority of survey respondents were opposed to the current design plan. Mayor Lawrence asked if there was any desire to further pursue a community center at the present time. The majority of Members were opposed.
- Members discussed the possibility of building a splash pad, including some estimated costs, water usage, and licensing needed. After discussion, Members directed the Park Commission to explore options, including a design, location, and pricing options for a splash pad.

3. Park and Recreation Opportunities

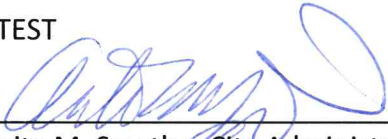
- Members further discussed alternate uses of the Local Option Sales Tax funds, which are restricted by statute. The most popular choices in the survey were expanded development of existing parks (primarily El Dorado Park), a pedestrian bridge over I94, and expanded development of the city's trail system.
- Members considered existing park plans. Future plans for El Dorado Park already include a trail around the perimeter of the park and a possible splash pad.
- Members discussed trail plans. The proposed MnDot T.H. 24 Corridor Project will include a pedestrian bridge over I94. The city would be responsible for trail connections to the I94 bridge. Park Commission members noted that the city had completed a trails plan years ago. Administrator Smythe explained the future planned trails that have been considered, which include connecting the city's parks, connections for the Great River Trail program, of which the city is a member, and connections to the I94 bridge. Members determined that connections to the I94 bridge should be the priority, given the timeframe for the T.H. 24 Corridor Project. They directed the Park Commission to begin work on a trails plan, including location, design, and pricing options, along with a priority list. There was some

additional limited discussion about a future trail along the Mississippi River. Members proposed looking at options for roughing-in a gravel walking trail within the areas that are already owned by the city. This will be discussed further by the Park Commission.

4. Adjournment

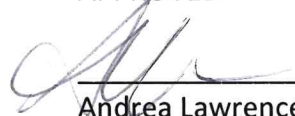
- **MOTION** to adjourn by Luhmann, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

ATTEST



Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED



Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor