

**Minneola City Council
Meeting Minutes
Minneola City Hall
November 14, 2023 at 6:30 PM**

The City of Minneola City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Pat Kelley. Also present were Councilor Pam Serviss, Vice Mayor Debbie Flinn, Councilor Erick Hernandez, Councilor Joe Saunders, Scott Gerken (City Attorney), Mark Johnson (City Manager), and Kristine Thompson (City Clerk).

CALL TO ORDER

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A moment of silence was observed, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Vice Mayor Debbie Flinn**.

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nathan Focht, 707 Blue Citrus Ln., suggested the City should hire a Public Information Officer.

Aruna Varma, 1773 Sundance Chase Rd., asked when a workshop would be held to discuss Minneola Ridge.

Scott Gerken indicated the items relating to the project would be seen by the City Council at the next council meeting, which is November 21st.

Councilor Hernandez suggested holding the workshop on Monday, November 20th.

Council's consensus was to hold the workshop on November 20th.

Mayor Kelley requested an electronic message board be placed in the area of the project to inform the area residents.

Mark Johnson asked where the sign should be placed.

Mayor Kelley suggested he did not have a preference for the sign's location.

ELECTION RESULTS

Scott Gerken explained the transition schedule for the recently passed term length and term limit is detailed in Ordinance 2023-23. Seats 1, 3, and 5 will be up for election in 2026. Seats 2 and 4 will be up for election next year, in 2024, for a four-year term. The ordinance also explains if the full length of the term extends beyond the eight-year term limit, the candidate will be unable to run for that seat.

Kristine Thompson, City Clerk, read the 2023 official results which indicated Pam Serviss was reelected to Minneola City Council Seat 1, Pat Kelley was reelected to Minneola City Council Seat 3, and Joseph Saunders was reelected to Minneola City Council Seat 5. Both Ballot Question 1 relating to term length and Ballot Question 2 relating to term limits passed.

Council Seat 1:

Monica Luna – 479 votes

Pam Serviss – 1,066 votes

Council Seat 3:

Nathan Focht – 762 votes

Pat Kelley – 831 votes

Council Seat 5:

Juana Delacruz – 315 votes

Kelly Price – 607 votes

Joseph Saunders – 617 votes

Ballot Question 1:

Yes – 795

No – 764

Ballot Question 2:

Yes – 1,068

No – 484

Scott Gerken swore in Pam Serviss to Seat 1, Pat Kelley to Seat 3, and Joseph Saunders to Seat 5.

CITY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA

There were no comments.

Item 1: City Council Meeting Minutes – October 17, 2023

Item 2: Purchase Request – Neptune Meters

Item 3: Surplus Request – 2003 Ford Expedition

Item 4: Surplus Request – Cardiac Monitor

MOTION by Vice Mayor Flinn, SECONDED by Councilor Hernandez to approve the City Manager's consent agenda.

AYE: Serviss, Flinn, Kelley, Hernandez, Saunders

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

COUNCIL DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Item 5: Ordinance 2023-30 Smoke Shops – Second Reading

Scott Gerken indicated a few revisions were needed and requested the City Council consider tabling the item until the December 5th council meeting. He spoke about the moratorium, which was declared in the Minneola Downtown CRA due to concerns with potential criminal activity seen in some uses. This moratorium was later expanded to the Minneola Mountain CRA and later to the entire City. He indicated the sale of tobacco is preempted by the State, so the City is unable to regulate this use, but the City can regulate the sale of paraphernalia. One regulation included in the ordinance was a distance requirement of 500 feet.

Mayor Kelley suggested the distance requirement should be increased to 1,000 feet.

Scott Gerken also explained the ordinance included a provision which would limit the number of smoke shops that can be in the City. The Planning & Zoning Commission expressed concern with this provision, so if the Council agrees, this will be removed from the ordinance before it is seen by Council on December 5th.

Council's consensus was to remove this provision from the ordinance.

There was further discussion regarding distance requirements.

Public Comment

Tom Hratko, 580 Blackstone St., spoke negatively about smoke shops.

David Yeager, 13415 Sullivan Rd., expressed concerns about smoke shops.

Jennifer Morse, 1064 Golden Dawn Loop, expressed concern with the ordinance.

MOTION by Councilor Hernandez, SECONDED by Councilor Serviss to table Item 5: Ordinance 2023-30 Smoke Shops – Second Reading to the December 5, 2023, City Council meeting.

132 **AYE:** Serviss, Flinn, Kelley, Hernandez, Saunders

134 **NAY:** None

135
136 **MOTION PASSED: 5-0**

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138 **Item 6: Discussion – Status of Hancock Road Light Study**

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140 **Mark Johnson** explained how the City has led the effort in bringing everyone to together to find
141 solutions for concerns expressed relating to traffic and pedestrian safety on North Hancock Road.
142 He mentioned since the road is not city owned, the City is only able to make suggestions. He
143 indicated the County has plans to enhance signage, add half mile plaques, restripe the bus
144 crosswalk, add pedestrian signage, median cross overs, upgrade sign colors, add “School”
145 pavement markings on the roadway, and has contacted S.E.C.O. to add lighting.

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147 **Mayor Kelley** asked how far down the lighting will go on Hancock Road.

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149 **Mark Johnson** suggested at one time it was discussed to go 300 feet, from Big Sky Court, but he
150 was not sure if that was consistent with the latest information.

151
152 There was a discussion regarding the possibility of installing a sidewalk on Turkey Farm Road to
153 connect to Hancock Road.

154
155 **Mark Johnson** explained Lake County Parks and Water added crossing signs on the trail, portable
156 lights have been added at the trail crossing, which are lit from 5:30 a.m. until 7:30 a.m., until
157 additional lighting is installed, and the stop signs on the trail are being lowered. He mentioned
158 F.D.O.T. will host pop up events, set up along the path students take while walking to school to
159 provide pedestrian safety education in the morning and afternoon. F.D.O.T. will also be observing
160 pedestrian bicycle traffic near Grassy Lake Elementary and Lake Minneola High School and
161 provide free reflective gear to these students. The high school students will be given “Lunch and
162 Learn” opportunities and the elementary school students will be given a chance to participate in
163 an art contest focused on bicycle safety. They have also offered to do a helmet fitting for students
164 who ride bicycles to school.

165
166 **Public Comment**

167
168 **Nathan Focht** spoke about flashing school zone signs.

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170 **Joanna O’Halloran**, 618 Arbor Pointe Ave., indicated she was present representing the Hawk
171 Eye Parents group and spoke about how the group plans to raise money to hire a private crossing
172 guard. She also suggested a “No Turn on Red” sign should be placed at the corner of Education
173 Ave. and Hancock Rd.

174
175 **David Yeager** suggested a pedestrian bridge should be installed over Hancock Road.

Item 7: Discussion – 102 S. Highway 27 Appraisal

Mark Johnson indicated the City received an appraisal of the property near the new library in response to the Council's recent interest in purchasing it. It was appraised for \$305,000; the owner is asking for \$425,000.

While the Council is interested in purchasing the property, their consensus was they could not spend that much over the appraised value and asked Mark to see if the price could be negotiated with the property owner.

FINAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

David Yeager, 13415 Sullivan Rd., spoke about issues he is experiencing with his solid waste service.

Joanna O'Halloran, 618 Arbor Pointe Ave., spoke about the 5-acre lot on the corner of Education Way and North Hancock Avenue.

REPORTS**Councilor Hernandez**

- Spoke about waiting to add the final layer of asphalt until after the construction in a subdivision is complete, so the road is not damaged during construction.
- Inquired about city issued cell phones for City Council.
 - **Mark Johnson** suggested the Council can let him know if any of them would like a city issued cell phone.

Scott Gerken

- Stated he intends to bring an ordinance to an upcoming City Council meeting relating to the City's solid waste contract with GFL.
- Spoke about the Sunshine Law.

Councilor Serviss

- Indicated she would like the City to begin looking into constructing a pickleball court, a splash pad, and a first responder memorial.

Mayor Kelley

- Spoke about the time limit established by resolution for all public speakers.
- Spoke about a review of the City's charter and the possibility of establishing districts.
- Suggested the City should hire a public information officer (P.I.O.).
- Asked that the city manager's contract be placed on the agenda so it can be updated.

Mark Johnson

- Asked council for their input on selecting a road name for the road adjacent to the new school in the Hills of Minneola.
- Council's consensus was to request "Strimenos Way" or something similar for the street name.


MOTION by Vice Mayor Flinn, SECONDED by Councilor Serviss, to adjourn.

AYE: Serviss, Flinn, Kelley, Hernandez, Saunders

NAY: None


MOTION PASSED: 5-0

(Meeting adjourned at 8:21 P.M.)



Pat Kelley, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kristine Thompson, City Clerk

