

City of Springdale Council

October 4, 2023

President of Council Vanover called Council to order on October 4, 2023

The governmental body and those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. McNear took roll call. Council members Anderson, Ghantous, Hawkins, Jacobs, Ramirez, and Vanover were present. Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup was absent.

President Vanover: Before we get into the minutes, you will find before you Ordinance No. 39-2023. This is the ordinance to get the ball rolling on that fire truck. So, I'd like to add it to the agenda. I'll need a motion to add.

Mr. Hawkins: I move to add to the agenda, Ordinance No. 39-2023.

Mr. Anderson: Second.

President Vanover: Any further discussion? (None)

Motion to add Ordinance No. 39-2023 is approved with six affirmative votes. (Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup was absent)

President Vanover: Ordinance No. 39-2023 is added to the agenda. And we'll do it at "8a" where we normally do our ordinances.

The minutes of the September 20, 2023 meeting were considered. Mrs. Ghantous made a motion to accept the minutes; Mr. Hawkins seconded. The minutes were approved with six affirmative votes. (Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup was absent)

Presentation – Metro on Demand Service

President Vanover: Mr. Jones, do you to lead in on the Metro?

Mr. Jones: Well, that's a good lead in. So, thank you Mr. President. We actually have a presentation, I think you're anticipating this. We've announced this a couple of different times, so, we'll actually turn it over to the folks there, and you might want to add too that you have your vehicle out there in case somebody wants to see it.

Mr. Miller: My name is Troy Miller. I'm Government Relations Liaison for Cincinnati Metro. First, I want to say is, "Thank you" to Hamilton County because the tax levy we passed, this is the type of service we're putting on the streets now to help the community. So, this has been an award-winning thing for the whole county, so, there's a lot of great things going. Tonight, Amy Reynolds is going to come in and give the presentation about MetroNow!, and how it's serviced, and how it's doing in this zone here. It's a great service. I've got "swag bags" as we call them; grab a bag before you leave. We've got a stress bus in there if you guys get stressed. I'm going to hand it over to Amy.

Ms. Randall: Thank you Troy. Good evening everyone. Thank you for having us out tonight to talk about the new MetroNow! service. My name is Emi Randall, I'm Senior Manager of Transit Planning and Mobility on Demand, so, I've been charged with assisting with rolling out of these zones, and with monitoring the pilot. These are our pilot zones that we've launched in helping inform the launch of the next zones that we do plan to launch. I want to go through a little bit about the program with you, and explain the service, and, then just open it up for any questions that you might have regarding the service. So, MetroNow! is a new innovative, on-demand service that we're providing in specific areas within Hamilton County. We're utilizing smaller vehicles, and providing this service within designated zones in suburban parts of the County. We did launch the Springdale/Sharonville Zone, which is shown on the slide here, Zone E, on the map in blue. That zone was launched in May of this year, and then we launched Zone C, which is shown in orange on the map there, the Northgate/Mt. Healthy Zone in July. So, the trips must start and end within these designated zones for this service. So, it's really intended to provide access for shorter trips, daily needs; things like shopping, health care, jobs, schools, those types of trips. We do plan to launch four additional zones that are shown here on the map within the next year to year and a half based on availability of vehicles and availability of drivers.

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Ms. Randall (continued): Here's what the vans look like. We do have one parked outside tonight, so hopefully you saw that coming in, and we'll have it here for a little while longer if you want to take a look at that later tonight. But, each van can accommodate eight people plus two wheelchairs; all of the vans are wheelchair accessible, and they have ramps that deploy right outside the door. And then, we also have space for four child seats within the seating arrangements, but you must bring your own child seat. I also want to note that with each paying adult passenger, children under 37 inches can ride free up to two children with each paying passenger. So, that's another great benefit of the service. It's really easy to book a ride. You can do this on your phone with an application that you download very similar to like an Uber or a Lyft type of service, or you can call and use the telephone, and our dispatch will arrange that ride for you and provide you with the ride information. Fares are just two dollars each way, so, whether you're going from one far corner to the other far corner of the zone, or you're just going half a mile down the street, it's just two dollars each way. Right now, we're operating the service on weekdays from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., and then on the weekends, the service operates from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Major holidays will operate on that weekend service. Again, this is something that we're monitoring as a part of the pilot, but, service hours could change, or the zone boundaries could change based on what we learn as we continue to roll this out. This slide shows kind of what that app looks like. When you download it, you can download the MetroNow! app on the Apple App store, or on the Play Store if you have an android device. Just follow the instructions to set up an account. It's pretty simple. And, then, once you're on the application, it uses the GPS, so the app knows where you are. You just enter where you want to go into that app, and it will provide you with a ride option. It will say, "The van can pick you up in ten to fifteen minutes", for example, or, "The van can pick you up in 20-25 minutes, so, it will give you a window in which your ride will arrive. And then, the application will send you notifications if you choose Book Ride, when you get that option, The app will give you notifications to know the vehicle is coming soon, the vehicle has arrived. So, again, it's pretty simple to do. You would follow that process to get to your destination. And, then, if you want to book a reverse ride to go home, for example, you would follow that same process. If you prefer to use the phone, you can call our dispatch number (513) 551-5555, and then our dispatch will set that right up for you and give you your estimated arrival time for the van to arrive. You can use cash, so you can pay that two dollar cash fare, or you can use EZfare to purchase a MetroNow! ticket and scan it on our phone, just like you would for your fixed route service where we offer EZfare ticketing. This is a map showing the Springdale/Sharonville zone. Areas within the zone include the Woodlawn Kroger, the Goodwill site, the Tri County Mall is also in the zone, as well as Springdale Target, and then some areas off of Kemper Road, some of the industrial areas there in that northeast corner. This slide shows how the ridership has grown within the zone since we've launched it back in May. The highest ridership day that we've had for the Springdale/Sharonville zone was on September 7th, and that was 67 rides in one day. The month of September, we had a little bit over 1,000 rides; 1,123 rides and we're averaging about 47 rides per day for weekdays. On the weekend, our ridership is a little bit lower; about 28 rides per day on the weekends. So, we are continuing to see this ridership grow, and we're looking for opportunities to get out in the community and promote the service, and continue to build on this ridership. We would like to see this ridership double again in the next few months. This is a heat map of where we're seeing the rides; the most popular destinations and origins for those trips. As you might expect the Woodlawn Kroger is at the top of the list. Bob Evans is a huge ride generator. We may have some employees that are using that service to get to work, which is great. Sam's Club is a big one, Princeton High School, the BMV station, as well as the Meadows at Maple Knoll, which is a senior living community. So, this is great. We're seeing each month that this list changes a little bit, but, for the most part, those larger commercial areas are at the top of the list. This slide, I apologize it's a little bit rough to read, so this is the distribution of rides across the daytime. So, on the left hand side, this is the weekdays of service, and the far left is the first hour of service. So, 6:00 a.m. until 7:00 a.m. And then, the last bar, is that last hour of service; 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. So, you can kind of tell here where we've got some peak ridership in the a.m., and then some peak ridership between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., indicating that people are often taking two trips; they're going somewhere early in the day, they're coming back later in the day. So, this is just information that we're continuing to monitor, and we'll be using this information to inform if we're going to make any changes to those service hours. The right hand side of the slide is the same data, but for weekends. We are seeing a lot of "later in the day" trips on the weekends, so we will be looking at whether or not we want to expand the service later into the evening as we gather more data. In this slide shows the ridership for both of the zones that we've launched. The bars in green are the Springdale/Sharonville zone, and the bars in blue is the Northgate/Mt. Healthy zone. So, as you can see, in August and September,

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Ms. Randall (continued): the Northgate zone has climbed above ridership from Springdale. We actually did anticipate that that zone would generate more ridership, so, it's not surprising, but we do want to make sure that the Springdale/Sharonville zone continues to grow in ridership. So, a little over 3,000 rides total, between both zones for the month of September. So, that's great. Then, the "on-time performance", we're running at about 97% on time performance for the service, so, we're really excited about that, and what that means is when you get your ride proposal and it says the van would arrive in ten to fifteen minutes, 97% of the time it's falling within that timeframe that it gives you for that ride proposal, so, it is very reliable, and you can get to expect where you want to go within that timeframe that it gives you. This slide shows ridership across the days of the week. Again, kind of mid-week are the biggest days. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday are all high ridership days for us, and then the ridership falls off on the weekend. Again, the green bars indicate the Springdale zone, and the blue bars indicate the Northgate zone. That concludes the data that I have to share. I'm happy to take any questions that you might have about the zone, any feedback that you're getting from community members, and thank you for having us here to provide the information to you.

Mrs. McNear: I have used the service. I actually used it to come up here to a meeting so I could explain to everybody that I used it, and what my experience was. It was very easy. I do have an android phone, I'm not highly technical on it. It was easy to download the app. It was very easy to book the trip. I used cash, it did tell me every minute the bus will be here in nine minutes, eight minutes, seven minutes; very, very simple. It picked me up at the end of my driveway. It was very, very easy. Then, when I got on the bus, they said, "Well, where exactly do you want us to drop you?" I said, "At the end of the driveway". So, it was very easy. The bus was clean, smelled like a brand new vehicle. It was air conditioned. The driver was very, very nice. I told her what I was doing. I said, "This is a test so I can tell the public how this experience went." And she said, "Oh, here, here's a bunch of pamphlets. Pass them out when you get up to the building", which I did, so, it was a very good experience.

Ms. Randall: Great.

Mrs. McNear: Like I said, very easy. If I can use it, everyone can use it. Now, the 8:00 p.m. timeframe, you know, I had to hitch a ride home, so, I couldn't use it on the return trip, so, perhaps you'll look at extending the timeframe a little bit in the evenings. I can see where people would probably like to have a later timeframe if they're going out to dinner; 8:00 may not be late enough. But, I used it another time on a Saturday. That timeframe was fine because it was an afternoon event that I was going to. But, if I can use this, I've never used a "Lyft" service, so I never had to download anything like that, but, very easy to use the application. Thank you.

Mr. Anderson: Like Mrs. McNear, I've had very positive reactions to the service being in Springdale. I think it's wonderful that you chose us as a starting point. I hope the ridership goes up as people start to see it as an option. The more times people see the vans, I keep getting questions like, "What is that?", and I'm able to help evangelize that. All the feedback has been positive. The only comments I've gotten back are questions are always like, "Can it move one street further out?". Not all of Springdale is in the Springdale zone. Depending on the zip code you're in, just like the Beacon Hills neighborhood is just out, so people would have to walk to Kenn Road to get in, and it's like it's a block, you'll be okay, but they always want it a little bit further, a little bit further, like in Sharonville, my mom wants to ride it, and she wants to be able to get to church, which is like one block further than the main street; you get pretty close though, so it's great. We love the service. The one question I have is, is with the two dollar fare, does that include a transfer for people who might want to go further or switch to a main line, or do they pay a separate fare?

Ms. Randall: It does not currently, but that is one of the things that we are evaluating actually. This week, we're conducting a survey of riders that have ridden at least five times on the service. We're calling them to ask them about their experience, and that is one of the questions that we're asking is if they're transferring to our fixed route service, and if we had a package that included transfers, looking at the fare options as well.

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Mr. Anderson: Yes, that's great. No, that first mile/last mile, was always a challenge, so I appreciate you trying to solve that. And, I love the buses that they include handicap-accessible and children's options. Those are wonderful. That's very forward thinking, so I appreciate that.

Ms. Randall: Thank you.

Mr. Hawkins: MetroNow! is a great transportation opportunity, again, very thankful that you included Springdale in your initial rollout. You addressed a little bit, and Mrs. McNear had said it too, the one thing that I would ask for is more consideration for a little bit more time on the back end of that. I know we were going to use it for a birthday party to try and move a bunch of teenagers around, but, the timeframe didn't work in terms of getting back, so, that's the only thing that I would ask for some more consideration on, but, it's a great service. Thank you.

Ms. Randall: Sure.

President Vanover: I think you've answered the questions.

Mr. Miller: I'd like to say one thing. We work with the City Administrator's office, Mr. Jones here, and one of the things we're putting out is a flyer, it's actually in Spanish also, to try and get all the community. We have a couple of samples out on the table, but we'll be having flyers coming out.

Ms. Randall: We plan to hit some of the areas of the community where we know you have Hispanic populations to make sure they're aware of the service. Thank you to Mr. Jones for helping us coordinate all that.

Mayor Webster: I think this is the best thing since sliced bread to hit Springdale. My wife and I were out driving around the City on Saturday. We must have seen six or eight of those buses. It seemed like every place, every street we went down, there was another one, there's another one, there's another one, so, I guess my question to you right now, is have we met your expectations? Are we close? Have we exceeded them?

Ms. Randall: We would like to see more riders.

Mayor Webster: I'm sure you would.

Ms. Randall: Yes, yes. We have not quite gotten to what we want to see in terms of demand for this particular zone. So, that's why we want to get out and promote it more and make sure everybody in the community knows it's available, give it a try. So, yes, we do want to grow the ridership.

Mayor Webster: Okay, well, to the people of Springdale, let's not let this slip through our fingers. This is a golden opportunity and something that everybody can take advantage of and it's a great service. I had some other comments I want to make about the SORTA if you guys are finished with your presentation.

Mr. Miller: Yes.

Mayor Webster: So, what was the millage that's funded this operation? Was it a quarter, or a half a mil? Do you remember?

Ms. Randall: I believe it's 0.8% on the sale. Is that correct?

Mr. Miller: The sales tax is 0.8%; 25% of that goes to the roads of Hamilton County, the other 75% goes to the transit. So, roughly about \$40 million dollars right now is going to the roads projects in parts of Hamilton County.

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Mayor Webster: Okay, I was one of the earlier supporters. As soon as that was announced, I jumped all over that, and said it was about time that the County communities started contributing to something to the transit system, so at least that gives us a seat at the table to demand some service. And, I think on your end of it, it's all of the sudden now we're paying customers, where before we were free riders, and so, anyway, that's why I wanted to see us realize a service like we have today. But then, before the election, you folks announced that there was a transportation component to this thing, and that really put me over the top. I said, "Man, we've got to pass this thing." And so, just to give you an example, we got notification yesterday that we are going to receive \$2 million dollars in a grant for Northland Boulevard from SORTA; \$2 million dollars. Now, this is an \$8.6 million dollar project. With their \$2 million, I think right now, that puts us to about \$7.5 million dollars-worth of grants, so we're within \$1 million dollars of having that Northland Boulevard, which is one of the largest road projects probably in the history of this City at \$8.6 million dollars, and so, right now if we bid the project today, we'd be on the hook for \$1 million dollars of it, which is pocket change when you look at 8.6 million (dollars), and, the good news is we've still got some requests outstanding that we haven't heard back from, and so we're hoping to close that million dollar gap, so, I think the future looks bright for Northland Boulevard, and thanks to SORTA, great job. Like I said, best thing since sliced bread.

Ms. Randall: Thank you.

Mr. Miller: Thank you.

Ms. Randall: And, congratulations on your grant.

Mr. Miller: Yes.

Mayor Webster: Thank you.

President Vanover: While we're still in presentations, we have some firemen that are patiently waiting.

Mr. Jones: I think at this time, we'll bring up our Fire Chief, Anthony Stanley, and we'll kind of turn things over to you.

Chief Stanley: Thank you Mr. President, Council, Elected Officials, City Administration. We're always grateful for the opportunity to come here and introduce new individuals that have joined our wonderful Fire Department that we have. We're going in a great direction. We have a very young department right now. A lot of young officers, a lot of young firefighters. We're doing a lot of training, and just getting everybody up to speed, and just trying to continue to push the bar and raise the bar, and just push our department forward and make it the best department that we can make it. So, we had our Senior Captain, he decided to leave. He took a job with another Fire Department, which left a huge hole in our Fire Department. He was, by far, the most senior line officer that we had. We made the decision to open the promotional process up to fill that vacancy to the outside, so, we had two of our three lieutenants internally applied for that Fire Captain's position. Two very capable individuals; they're doing a great job for us on lieutenants roll. They're very bright stars in the Fire Department, so we were happy that they threw their name in the hat, and entered into the process, and then we got several external candidates that we narrowed down to two. Went through an extensive assessment center by an outside agency comprised of neighboring Fire Chiefs, so there was not internal valuation; it was all external evaluators. After that, we had two interviews, which all four candidates participated in that, and our internal candidates, they did really well. We were very proud of the job that they did, especially being two newly promoted lieutenants, so we were very pleased with how they did. However, we decided to select Captain Tom Jackson. I'll go ahead and bring him up. Come on up. So, Tom Jackson has a lot of experience. First of all, he grew up in Reading, so he's a local kid. Not local to Springdale, but a pretty local kid. Graduated from Reading High School. He went on to earn an Associate Degree in Fire Service Leadership, Bachelor Degree in Fire Service Management, and a Master of Organizational Leadership. He continued his education, and was a graduate of Ohio Fire Executive Program that is taught through Ohio Fire Chief's Association. He has 21 years in the fire service, so, he has a lot of experience. So, we didn't get a "green" guy. He came a neighboring department; he came from

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Chief Stanley (continued): Forest Park Fire Department. He was there for a long time. He has two years as a lieutenant. The last 14 he's been a Fire Captain. So, he comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and experience, not only inside the firehouse, but on emergency scenes. I've personally known him pretty much his whole career, and just remember him when he was just an ambitious firefighter trying to find his way. You quickly could see that he was going to be something special. He went on to become a great fire officer. He has a very good reputation around the County, we worked with him a lot. Our Assistant Chief Scott Williams, he was our Unit One Captain. They would interact on runs a lot when we would have mutual aid come here, we would go to Forest Park to assist, and just always impressed us with the job that he's done, and his main goal is always to keep his people safe. So, that came out in his interview, but, he shows it every day in his actions and that approach that he takes when he comes to work every day. So, he has a wonderful family. He's married, has two sons. His very proud of his family. He talks about them all the time. He enjoys spending time with them in his off time, going to their sporting events, and playing with his dogs. He loves his dogs. He talks about his dogs a lot too. But, he's done a great job for us. He's hit the ground running. It is not an easy transition, especially as an external candidate to come in in a supervisory position, but, our Department just welcomed him with open arms, even the candidates that weren't successful have been doing a great job assisting him getting acclimated to the way that we do it. He knows how to be a Fire Officer, but, we're trying to teach him just some of the institutional knowledge that we have about Springdale. Assistant Chief Williams, he designed a two week training program for him. For two weeks, he was on 40 hours. He wasn't on shift work, and he came in and worked side by side with Chief Williams, and he did a great job training him and just had the foresight of all the boxes that he felt like he needed to check to be ready to function. Captain Jackson did a great job asking questions, taking notes, so, he has a whole notebook to reference from that training, which is amazing. Like I said, we had two shining internal stars, but we just could not pass up on the opportunity to bring this much knowledge and experience into our Fire Department. So, he's raising that bar. He's going to make me a better Chief, and he's going to make all of our officers better, all of our firefighters better, and we are absolutely thrilled to have him. I introduce you to Thomas Jackson, our newest Fire Captain. Also, he is in charge of training. He is our training captain. (applause)

Captain Jackson: Thank you for the support from the City. Chief (Stanley) mentioned it earlier, but, the other two guys who were in the process, as soon as it was announced that I was getting it, the day we announced that I was getting it, Lieutenant Hansen was the first one to reach out to me, congratulate me. He's helped me out a lot. I don't think it would have been as easy for me to come over if I didn't have the support from him. He was kind of put in a weird position, so, I think it should be recognized the effort that he put into when it could have very easily gone a different way. To the City in general, thank you for accepting me, thank you for giving me the chance. And, to both of the Chiefs, really hard leaving a place for 20 years to pretty much start over, and these two went above and beyond what I thought could have happened. So, to the crews, they have been accepting me pretty well. I feel like I'm further ahead than I would have been if I didn't have their support. Then, to my wife, she dealt with a lot of it, the stress going through it, things, like that. So, she's been really supportive, so, thank you. I love you too. And then, my boys, thank you guys for coming, and I do talk about my dogs a lot. But, thank you. I appreciate it. (applause)

Chief Stanley: So, just in closing, I just want to thank you all again for the support that you give for the Fire Department. We have a tough job at times; very dangerous job at times, and it's comforting to know that we have the support of all of you. You give us the tools and the resources and the support, the manpower, everything that we need to go out and provide a good service for all of you, and for the rest of the citizens, and the business owners, and patrons of Springdale. So, we'd just like to thank you for everything that you do for the Fire Department. Thank you very much.

President Vanover: Thank you.

Mayor Webster: It's always tough when you go outside and you bring in somebody and put them in charge as a person of authority. In this particular case, it's really tough because this young man here is coming from the outside and he has about a third of our Fire Department under his management and supervision as one of our three captains. I don't know how many months he's been with us.

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Chief Stanley: A few months.

Mayor Webster: A few months. But, anyway, in talking to the varied Firemen over there, I have yet to hear one person voice any resentment of the fact that we went outside and we brought somebody in, and put them in a position of authority, and I think that says wonders for the job that he's doing over there and the attitude that he's displaying. So, welcome to Springdale. Hope you have a long career with us. Thank you very much.

Captain Jackson: Thank you.

Communications

Mrs. McNear: We did receive an email from a resident as a follow up to the Council. It was addressed to Council, myself, and to the Mayor. A response was sent to him by three members of Council. If anyone wants additional details, it would be on record in my office. And that's all we had for this evening. Thank you.

Communications from the Audience

President Vanover: Before we get started, I will ask that those not speaking respect those that are. We will not tolerate heckling, or interruption, so, with that, is there anybody in the audience that would like to address Council for any reason?

Mr. Higgins: Thank you Mr. President. Mick Higgins, I am no longer a resident of Springdale, so I would have to ask the President for permission to speak.

President Vanover: You have it.

Mr. Higgins: Thank you Mr. President. I wanted to come in today and tell a story from about three and a half years ago. My son was going up for Eagle Scout, and, part of the process is you have to have an Eagle Scout Board of Review. And, that Board is made up of three members of the scouting community, and four members of the community that you respect. And, Steven selected a couple of his teachers, and I asked Mayor Webster to sit on the Board. And, he graciously did so. And, he had the opportunity, and he pulled me aside, and said kind of, "Why are you asking me to do this?" The reason behind it is, you know, although we may have had a disagreement once or twice, 98% of the time, and the decisions that he made were the right decisions for the City. He has definitely lead the City through some very tough economic times where we see other local areas shuttering services and stuff, Springdale just kept on an even sail, and I know that there were tough decisions and planning made to make that happen. And, I acknowledge that it was his leadership that did that. And, although we have kind of had some disagreements very publicly, that private conversation was not made public until today, and I wanted to come in here and say that I do acknowledge you have done a tremendous job for the City of Springdale. And, at times, it's very tough. I've heard discussions about sidewalks, I've heard the discussions about everything else taking place, and some people are not happy when they leave here. But, regardless, the one thing I could say is that the Mayor listened to me. He listened to everybody else that got up here to speak, and definitely gave you your time and your voice. So, I know that, and I am 52 years old, my entire life, you have dedicated to public service, and, when it's impossible to make everybody happy, but continue to want to do this, it takes a special individual so, I'm sure other people have come up here before, but I wanted to come up here publicly and thank you for your service to this City, thank you for everything that you have done, and, wish you a lot of fun in everything else that comes next, because, it's got to be a little less stressful than running this City. But, Mr. Mayor, thank you for a tremendous job and I wish you the best of luck. Thank you.

Mayor Webster: Mick (Higgins), thank you very much. Your comments are very special, and I really appreciate those. Like you said, we haven't over the years always seen eye to eye, and as a matter of fact, I think you stood in the well of the Council there one night and said, "We're going to recall you Mayor Webster". And, so, anyway, we kissed and made up so to speak. But, anyway, Mick, thank you very much for the comments. I really appreciate it.

Mr. Higgins: Thank you for your service. .

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Mayor Webster: They mean a lot to me.

Mr. Higgins: Thank you.

Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance No. 39-2023

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING PROPOSAL THROUGH SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CLERK OF COUNCIL/FINANCE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH VOGELPOHL FIRE EQUIPMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,860,560.00 FOR THE PURCHASE OF A 2026 E1 AERIAL PLATFORM QUINT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mr. Hawkins made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 39-2023; Mr. Jacobs seconded.

Mr. Hawkins: We had this discussion at the last meeting, and, just for those that weren't present, or those that didn't see that meeting, these ladder trucks or towers are extremely helpful for our firefighters in terms of managing fires, not just for getting up to certain levels, but, also having an angle in which you can attack the fires from above. The Finance Committee had a presentation from the Chief (Stanley) and Assistant Chief (Williams) going through that. I can tell you that, from over the years being on Finance, and talking about towers or ladder trucks going back to, I think nine to ten years ago, this price has doubled. So, that the price for this vehicle is going to continue to increase on an annual or bi-annual basis routinely, and so we turn around and blink, and it will be over \$2 million dollars quickly. So, it's an opportunity to take care of our first responders who are taking care of us, and so, I'm in support of this. Thank you.

Mr. Anderson: I don't feel under any duress with the entire Fire Department here watching us (laughter) when I say I fully support all the equipment you guys need to keep us safe. Do I remember correctly that the expected life of this truck is something like 20 years or 30 years of service? So, this is a major purchase, but the lifespan of it is extensive because we keep maintaining it. Is that right? Okay. Thank you.

President Vanover: Well, our current vehicle is 23 years old. It has served us well, but, we've reached the point that we're having to hand-make replacement parts. The company that built it is no longer in existence today. So, and, we do this tonight, we're still three years out before we see that piece of equipment. So, it's Christmas in October to some degree, but, it's long, long needed.

Mr. Hawkins: And, along those lines, we don't have to pay for it until then as well.

President Vanover: Right.

Mr. Hawkins: Thank you.

Mr. Jones: Just wanted to say how much I appreciate not only the leadership by Assistant Chief Williams, but the staff that's worked diligently on making sure this was "spec'd-out" to every single thing that we're going to need moving forward. They did not put things in there they did not need. It's not that. What I'm excited about is that they have the tools and equipment that's going to allow them to do their job to the best of their abilities. And, something like this is, the way they take care of things, we're looking at another 25 years for this particular apparatus, but, again, Mr. Williams, I know you don't want to take credit for that, but I am clearly aware that you spearheaded that and we're very grateful for your efforts.

Mr. Ramirez: I want to echo that. Mr. Jones, Mr. Hawkins and I sat through the presentation by the Assistant Chief (Williams) and Chief (Stanley). A very detailed and great presentation by the two and I want everybody to know that it wasn't like, "Hey, we need another fire truck, let's go buy one." So, they were very detailed, built it out just as we needed, and we rely on them to give us the information and they did a great job of it, and I can't wait to get the new truck. Thank you.

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President Vanover: Well, and along those lines, this process has been going on for two years, so, it's not a quick "pull the trigger" thing. Timed well, and we definitely need to get this moving.

Ordinance No. 39-2023 passed with six affirmative votes. (Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup was absent)

Mayor Webster: Mr. President, I'd just like to say a few words to all the firemen we have out here. It's nice to see you guys come out to support your new Captain, and I'm sure you all stuck around to make sure that we did our job and then passed this. I just wanted to put you on notice. Come over anytime you want, but, not every time you're going to walk through that door with a \$2 million dollar toy. (laughter) Be safe out there.

President Vanover: Yes.

Resolution No. R14-2023

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

Mrs. Ghantous made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R14-2023; Mr. Hawkins seconded.

Resolution No. R14-2023 passed with six affirmative votes. (Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup was absent)

Executive Session

Mrs. Ghantous: I move that we go into Executive Session pursuant to Article 2(D)(1) of the Charter of the City of Springdale to consider Economic Development matters.

Mr. Hawkins: Second.

Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Article 2(D)(1) of the Charter of the City of Springdale to consider Economic Development matters passed with six affirmative votes.

Council departed chambers at 7:45 p.m. Council returned to chambers at 8:22 p.m.

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|------|
| Old Business | - | None |
| New Business | - | None |
| Meetings and Announcements | - | None |

Communications from the Audience

Ms. Daniels: Hello. Good evening. My name is Carmen Daniels, I stay at 12095 Chesterdale Road in the Heritage Hill side. On September 21st, around 3:55 p.m., I reached out to Mr. Andy House, the Building Inspector, to get an understanding of a letter I had received regarding Ordinance 153.252(F)(4)(k), that dealt with outside storage. He mentioned that I had a chair that was considered a home occupation item. I explained to him that I have a 96 year old father-in-law, and we used it when he visits because it's comfortable for him. He said that it was being stored on the table. I said the reason it was on the table was because the gentleman that mows my lawn placed it on the table so he can mow the grass. I wanted to speak to his supervisor because I was concerned why I would get a notice for something like that. He told me that the gentleman was busy. I told him I wanted to escalate the call to someone else and I asked to be transferred to the Mayor. Around 4:12 p.m. I left a message for Doyle Webster on the City voicemail. He immediately called me back on his cell phone. I explained to him the situation, and asked who else I could speak to. He said that he couldn't help me, but to contact the manager on Tuesday since he was on vacation. And, I told him, Mr. House never mentioned that, he just said he was too busy. He then went on to say there was several complaints on my red car. I said the car has plates, tags, and insurance on it. The only thing needed is air in the

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Ms. Daniels (continued): tires, and my husband plans to put some in it. I said it was due to us having several cars and it isn't driven much. Out of nowhere, he then went on to say that I drew the line when I refused to put his campaign sign in my yard back in 2019. I told him that I was a democratic precinct exec for my area, and I did not think it was a good idea to do that, even though we're a non-partisan community. He told me he was not going to help me because he is a Republican, and I am a Democrat. I told him you were chosen as the Mayor of the City of Springdale and you are to represent all of us. He went on to say that he put me on the Recreation and the BZA (Board of Zoning Appeals), where I got paid. I told him nothing was given to me. I attended the meetings and participated in the decision making on both boards. I even served with some of you all, and I was a secretary on the BZA, and I earned whatever I received. In the background, I heard his wife. I told him to put her on the phone because several months ago, I had made a comment on Facebook about how shameful it was for some of the ranting that was going on either belittling Mr. Anderson, or some of the residents that come before you all and speak. And, I said it was a shame to watch how the Mayor treated people. Even before that, a racist comment has been from the daughter when I lost the election to Mr. Vanover, where she said, "Bye Felicia". I've called several of you, and I thought that his rantings should have been stopped. The response I got from Mr. Tom Vanover was that he being poked, so I guess that was giving him the okay to do whatever he did, belittling the residents and his fellow Council people. I also told him to put his wife on the phone because I had a message for her. I said as the First Lady of the City, and as a candidate for Council, the way she acts is unacceptable. I hope and pray that the residents take a good look at the candidates running to represent us, and choose those that can show empathy and compassion for others. I have received many calls about the direction our City has taken, and not a lot of them have been favorable. I recall when I came before you all several years ago asking why I was being replaced on the BZA, the Mayor had a valid point when he said that the City was going in a different direction. The direction it has taken has not been a very good one for those of us that live here when it comes to voicing our concerns. I grew up in a small village, the Village of Lincoln Heights, where our motto is, "You can't serve the people if you don't love the people". And, I don't see that love shown from some of you all when it comes to our residents. So, I'm asking the people please vote for someone that has integrity and someone that will respect our voice. Thank you.

Mr. Jacobs: It's a very specific question because the thing I would like to find out is can we resolve issues even though it's a small one. Is there awareness on whether the issue was that the chair was on the table or that the chair is outside? And, the reason I ask, I've spoken to residents who might be dinged for parking in their lawn for example. Just from this seat, I'd like to see us enforce that when it's repeat offenders, whenever possible. If it was put on the table once for cutting the grass, if it's up to me, I'd like to see enforcement somewhere else. Do you have knowledge whether the issue is the chair is in the yard, or it's on the table?

Ms. Daniels: Well, he said because it was on the table, and I told him we currently stay with my father in law. He's 96, so we weren't home. I didn't know he put it on the table. But, he put it there so he can finish cutting the grass. Normally, it's in the grass, because it's the chair that he likes to sit in.

Mr. Jacobs: Do we know if it's a violation if it's in the grass?

Mayor Webster: No, I don't know that. But, Mr. Jacobs, your biggest concern is the chair on the table?

Mr. Jacobs: No, no, Mr. Mayor, I'm sorry to interrupt. I preface my comments. It's a micro-specific thing, and I'm seeking a solution to the problem on the one area that I could ask a question about. I can't address all the complaints she's levied at the City, and I don't intend to. And, I'm sorry I interrupted.

Mayor Webster: Mrs. Daniels is falsifying....

Ms. Daniels: Mr. Jacobs that was the reason why I was concerned because I'm like as much as I've seen in our City, you're going to ding me because a chair is on the table? And then when I asked to speak to his supervisor, he just said he was busy. I was like too busy to talk to a resident? So, I did have a concern about that, which is why I asked for the call to be escalated.

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Mr. Jacobs: I understand. Thank you.

Mayor Webster: My concern about the comments Ms. Daniels just made here, I think she crossed the line. She stands here, before Council, campaigning for and against the candidate. I don't think in the history of this City we've ever had somebody openly campaign on the floor of Council, for or against a candidate, and I think that's deplorable. Mrs. Daniels, I take it you're not very happy with the Building Department today, is that right?

Ms. Daniels: No, I'm very happy with the Building Department because I spoke to the supervisor, and he explained in more details, but, I did not campaign. I said vote for someone who can show empathy. I didn't say to vote yes or no for your wife, so, if the shoe fits, then wear it.

Mayor Webster: Are you or are you not happy with the Building Department?

Ms. Daniels: I am pleased with the response I got from the Building Department, Mr. Webster.

Mayor Webster: Well, I'm glad you're happy with them because....

Ms. Daniels: Not from you, but from them.

Mayor Webster: Can I talk now? Can I talk? I sat here and I listened to you, and now it's my turn to talk and I would appreciate it if you would not interrupt me. I've sat in this seat for 28 years, and your yard has gotten more complaints.

Ms. Daniels: Not true.

Mayor Webster: That is true. I know what people have told me why don't you do something with that corner lot over there with that red car with the flat tires. Everybody else in the City gets citations, but you didn't get any, so you might be happy with the Building Department. I'm not happy with the Building Department and what they've done for 28 years and I'm glad that they finally got around to making you clean up your front yard. I went past it over the weekend. It looks a heck of a lot better than it's ever looked in 28 years.

Ms. Daniels: It wasn't the front yard sir, it was the side, and the gentleman I asked him because I figured I was being targeted by you, there's only been one complaint. He pulled up the record, so I don't know what complaints you're getting sir, because the supervisor said there was only one, and one and several do not sound the same.

Mayor Webster: The supervisor does not sit in this seat. He doesn't hear from the community. I've heard from the community and I've past that on the Building Department a number of times that something needs to be done with your property.

Ms. Daniels: They should have cited us, and they didn't.

Mayor Webster: They should have cited you. You got that right. They should have cited you a number of times.

Ms. Daniels: Anyhow, that was my concern you all. Thank you.

Mayor Webster: I'm not through talking, but, that's fine. You can hear in your seat. You're the one that brought up these partisan politics. I knocked on your door years ago; complete stranger. You come to the door, we had a nice conversation. I figured, I like this lady. I think she can add something to the Parks and Recreation Commission. I didn't run out to my car and get my registered voters list to see if it's "R" or "D"; I could care less. I looked at the person, and that was good enough for you and I for over 20 years. It's all it took. You do your job, I reappointed you. I'm a Republican, and I appointed a Democrat to a job that got paid. For over 20 years, never one time did you say, "I can't take that check because a Republican is responsible for me getting that. No, no, I'm going to take that check regardless, but when the

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Mayor Webster (continued): Republican comes knocking at the door, and said, "Carmen, I've always had a sign here, can I have a sign?" No, you wouldn't even give me a yes or no. You told one of the Council people's spouse's, "I'm a precinct executive of the Democratic Party, so I couldn't have a Republican sign in the yard." Oh, so you want to draw the line there, but you don't want to draw the line when I said "Carmen, would you like to serve on the BZA?" Or to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission two or three times? No, that was okay. So, you're the one that wants to draw the line on partisan politics. Not me. When I make my appointments, I don't look at what their voting records are. I could care less. I look at is can that person do the job. I would defy you to look at my appointments and tell me that I haven't followed that rule. Another thing, when I returned your call, it was what can I do to change the law. Don't shake your head. That's exactly what you said. You wanted me, I said talk to Carl (Lamping), talk to Carl half a dozen times. Well, what am I supposed to do if that doesn't work? Can I come back to you? I said no. What can I do to get the law changed.

Ms. Daniels (off mic): I did not ask you to change no laws. So, be truthful. I did not ask you that. When you told me he would be back Tuesday, I said okay, that's all I said, and you went on (inaudible).

Mayor Webster: You don't want me to change the law.

Ms. Daniels (off mic): I know you can't change it. I'm not stupid. (inaudible)

Mayor Webster: I've never fixed a ticket or a citation in 28 years, and I'm not about to start now.

Ms. Daniels (off mic): So there was no need for you to fix a ticket. Now be truthful sir. Be truthful. I did not ask you to change the law, and I know you can't.

Mr. Haugh: My name is Kevin Haugh, I live on Elkridge Drive. Ms. McNear, thank you for bringing up the letter that I sent to Council. I just have to say I wish I was shocked that I only got three out of nine responses. Three people responded to me; Mr. Anderson, Mr. Jacobs, and Mr. Hawkins responded to me through various means; through text messages, through Facebook messages, through emails. No one else responded to me. We all sit here and say we want the best for Springdale, but no one wants to sit down and talk about the issues. We want to say that we don't know what each other wants; we don't want to have those discussions. I'm open to having discussion if any of you are. Shoot me a text, email, Facebook message, smoke signal, whatever you need. Come by my house. You have my address, you have my phone number. I'm happy to meet with anyone who wants to have a better Springdale. Thank you.

Update on legislation still in development

Mr. Hawkins: As you review your Internal Memorandum, Item Number I was addressed with Resolution No. R14-2023; A Resolution Accepting the Amounts and Rates as Determined by the Budget Commission and Authorizing the Necessary Tax Levies for 2024. That passed with six affirmative votes. Added to the agenda is Ordinance No. 39-2023; An Ordinance Accepting a Proposal through Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing and Authorizing the Mayor and Clerk of Council/Finance Director to Enter Into an Agreement with Vogelpohl Fire Equipment in the amount of \$1,860,560.00 for the purchase of a 2026 E1 Aerial Platform Quint and Declaring an Emergency. And that passed with a 6-0 vote.

Recap of legislative items request for next Council meeting

Mr. Hawkins: There's nothing requested unless there's anything from Council or the Administration.

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Adjournment

Mr. Hawkins made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Jacobs seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy McNear
Clerk of Council/Finance Director

Minutes Approved:
Tom Vanover, President of Council

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