

MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Tuesday, February 11, 2025 – 6:00 PM
Ashland City Hall Council Chambers

1. Roll Call

The Tuesday, February 11, 2025 City of Ashland Committee of the Whole Meeting was called to order by Council President Charlie Ortman at 6:28 p.m.

PRESENT: Kevin Seefeldt, Sarah Jackson, Ana Tochterman, Andrew Goyke, James Gregoire, Charlie Ortman, Nancy Szyndor

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Matthew Mac Kenzie, City Administrator Brant Kucera, City Clerk Denise Oliphant, Public Works Director John Butler, Utility Supervisor Brian Ledin, Fire Chief Stuart Matthias, and other interested citizens.

2. Approval of Agenda

Ortman requested to move the first discussion item to later in the agenda to allow for the Fire Chief to be present. Seefeldt moved, seconded by Jackson to approve the amended agenda. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

3. Council President's Report

Ortman had nothing to report.

4. Administrator's Report

Kucera noted that he along with staff are working to research more alternatives and numbers to bring back and discuss regarding special assessments. Book Across the Bay is the coming weekend and it looks to be successful considering the weather conditions.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Appointing a Representative of the City of Ashland for Ashland County Comprehensive Plan Discussions (*Mayor*)

The Mayor requested approval from Council to allow Council President Charlie Ortman to speak on behalf of the City while attending the Ashland County Comprehensive Plan meetings. A motion by Seefeldt and second by Tochterman to forward the item to the next Council meeting for formal approval, passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. Discussion and Possible Action to Allow the Fire Department to Apply for Duluth Superior Foundations Grants to Fund Paramedic Education Tuitions (*Fire Department*)

Matthias introduced the item and answered questions from Council. A motion by Seefeldt and seconded by Goyke to approve submitting the grant application, passed unanimously by voice vote.

C. **Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Requiring Permitting for Vacant Housing within the City (*Mayor*)**

Mac Kenzie introduced the item and answered questions from Council. It was agreed to have staff begin developing the permitting process and bring back to Committee of the Whole.

D. **Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Structure and Organization of the Communication and Finance Task Forces (*Mayor*)**

Ortman began by asking Councilors their thoughts as to the structure of each of these task forces. Each offered their preferences as to date and time to meet, duration of the meetings, to have a chair for the group, and the level of authority each task force was to have. No formal action was taken on this item.

6. **Items for Future Discussion**

Seefeldt requested to see a rough draft of an ordinance on rooming houses for review.

Goyke asked to return the Homeless Encampment Clean Up Policy to the Committee of the Whole for further discussion.

Ortman wished to ask Lissa Radtke of the UW-Extension Office to present the Ashland County Comprehensive Plan to Council in the near future.

Ortman asked to see a model ordinance pertaining to vacant homes.

Mac Kenzie noted that Rob Prater, Ashland School District Superintendent, will be attending the next Council meeting to discuss the referendum on the Spring Election ballot.

7. **Adjournment**

A motion by Goyke and second by Tochtermann to adjourn, passed unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise Oliphant,
City Clerk