I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Thorsen  
Council Member Walczak  
Council Member Sonnek  
Mayor Furlong

Absent: Council Member Petersen

Staff: City Manager Scott Duddeck, Deputy Clerk Mary Mills, Community Services Administrative Assistant Olivia Boerschinger.

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (4-0), Council Member Petersen absent, motion carried to approve the agenda as submitted.

IV. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Discussion regarding governor support for local businesses.

City Manager Duddeck reviewed a proposed Resolution in support of local businesses, providing input to the Governor’s Office that the City of North St. Paul is seeking support for local small businesses to manage their businesses safely, protect themselves and their customers. He added this will be done immediately after it is approved by the City Council.

Council Member Thorsen stated the spirit of this Resolution is not to violate any laws. He added the City Council had reached a consensus that something would be drafted for approval at tonight’s meeting. He stressed the importance of encouraging and working with small businesses so they can move forward with plans to re-open.

Council Member Thorsen stated the City Council can express concern for small businesses and the difficulties they face, as well as economic impacts and focus on opening up safely. He added City Council Members can do something on their own if they believe it is too controversial or if they are afraid of litigation.

Mr. Duddeck stated that a letter of support will be drafted and sent tomorrow, with the approval of the City Council and the City Attorney.

B. Allow bars and restaurants to use public right-of-way for outdoor seating, and discussion of food trucks.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff requests City Council consideration of utilization of public space for bars and restaurants. He added City Staff is also considering a regulatory process for allowing food truck operations. He noted this would involve a temporary agreement under which food trucks would be allowed to set up in temporary locations.

Mr. Duddeck stated the City Attorney has indicated the City should consider an Ordinance amendment to include food truck operations. He noted some food truck vendors are already in operation and have expressed interest in continuing to operate in North St. Paul.

Council Member Sonnek stated food trucks should be allowed to operate as much as possible. He added he feels it would be unfair to have a food truck parked outside of an establishment that is also serving food. He stressed the importance of supporting local food trucks, and also offering residents another option for eating out.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether food truck vendors would need a permit or license to set up in public places. Mr. Duddeck stated food truck vendors have been included in the special events permit process in the past. He added an Ordinance adoption should be considered for regulation of food trucks. He noted a regulation process can be set up immediately that would be as simple as possible, requiring proof of license to operate from the Department of Health, and proof of insurance.

Mr. Duddeck asked whether the City Council is concerned about any specific areas where they would not want to see a food truck, for example, in public parking lots near the lakes. Mayor Furlong stated that would be a good place for food trucks to be located.

Council Member Walczak stated the City should have some control over where food trucks can set up and keep track of how many food trucks are in operation. She asked whether this would be limited to North St. Paul businesses.

Council Member Sonnek stated he agrees there should be some sort of regulation. He asked whether City Staff could take a look at how other cities are handling this issue. He noted he is unsure whether it would be possible to limit this process to North St. Paul businesses only.

Mr. Duddeck stated a temporary Ordinance amendment could be enacted that would allow food trucks to operate similarly to bars and restaurants, with no license or registration fee, and information about where they can set up. He added this issue can be brought back to the City Council for consideration of a permanent Ordinance.

Council Member Walczak asked whether there should be a length of time for the food trucks to be set up at a specific location. Mr. Duddeck stated food trucks are looking for a place to set up for the whole summer.

_It was the majority consensus of the City Council to support food truck operations in the City of North St. Paul and to instruct City Staff to introduce a registration process._

Mr. Duddeck stated a Policy has been provided by the City Attorney’s office for the City Council’s review and consideration, to allow bars and restaurants to re-open in downtown North St. Paul with temporary outdoor customer service areas. This was discussed at length at the
workshop and staff will work with the bar and restaurant owners to assist in this temporary situation.

On motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (4-0), Council Member Petersen absent, motion carried approving a policy for temporary outdoor customer service areas.

V. GENERAL BUSINESS

Mr. Duddeck requested that the City Council submit their nominations for the Community Service Awards to City Staff.

Council Member Thorsen asked whether the City Council will meet at City Hall for their next regular meeting.

Mr. Duddeck stated City Staff are working on logistics for holding the upcoming City Council meetings at City Hall, under the Statewide order for gatherings of 10 people or less.

Council Member Thorsen stated the City of Fridley is holding their City Council meetings at City Hall. He asked whether Mr. Duddeck has reached out to their City Manager. Mayor Furlong stated the City of Oakdale is also holding City Council meetings at City Hall.

Mr. Duddeck stressed the need to limit the number of people in Council Chambers. He added the general public can call in via Zoom, and other spaces in City Hall can be made available with video monitors. He noted his goal is to hold the June 16, 2020 meeting in Council Chambers.

Mr. Duddeck stated the weekly online meeting of the County Manager and City Managers on Monday June 1, 2020 will include a discussion regarding the opening of beaches, which has been set back due to the last Statewide order.

Council Member Walczak asked whether the swimming area is open. Mr. Duddeck stated the swimming area signage has not changed, warning swimmers that there is no lifeguard on duty. He added the City has not taken any action to change the sign.

Council Member Thorsen stated he followed up with Bob Myers at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) about graffiti in the Gateway Trail tunnel. He added Mr. Myers is setting up a conference call with other DNR staff, and he indicated there will not be any issue with having the City perform maintenance in the tunnel and add surveillance cameras.

Council Member Walczak asked whether anything has been done to clean up the graffiti in the tunnel. Mr. Duddeck stated he has not been over there, and he has not received an update from the DNR that clean-up has been done.

Mayor Furlong stated there is also graffiti on the Berwald building by Rotary Park. Mr. Duddeck stated the Berwalds are aware of the graffiti and intend to take care of it.

Mr. Duddeck stated he would keep the City Council updated on the house at 19th and Helen. He added there is a neighborhood meeting scheduled for May 27, 2020. Council Member Walczak
asked whether the City Council can attend the meeting. Mr. Duddeck stated the City Council cannot attend as that would be in violation of the Open Meeting Law.

Council Member Thorsen requested information about this issue, as he is not aware of the details. Mr. Duddeck agreed to provide additional information to Council Member Thorsen.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Walczak, Seconded by Council Member Sonnek, with all present voting aye (4-0), Council Member Petersen absent, Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest: /s/ Scott A. Duddeck, City Manager/Clerk