South St. Paul City Council Work Session

Session Notes for November 24, 2025

---

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Francis called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:00 PM on November 24, 2025

No formal Council Action is taken at a work session meeting, this is a summary of discussion that took place.

Council Members Present: Jimmy Francis, Lori Hansen, Joe Kaliszewski, Matt Thompson, Pam Bakken, Tom Seaberg, and Todd Podgorski. Councilmember Thompson left the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Staff Present: Ryan Garcia, City Administrator, Mike Running, Police Commander, Clara Hilger, Finance Director. Assistant City Administrator/Human Resources Director Shelly Anderson joined the meeting at 8:30 PM.

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2025 Third Quarter Financial Report

Ms. Hilger provided a brief summary of the 2025 Second Quarter Financial Report.

B. 2026 Budget Update Discussion

Mr. Garcia presented a summary of the 2026 Budget, Property Tax Levy, Fee Schedule, and Capital Improvement Plan for council feedback and discussion prior to the December 1 "Truth in Taxation" public hearing. Council suggested that it was important to provide context and a moderate level of detail in the next presentation as it related to key budget drivers, and the City's "purchasing power" vis a vis the property tax levy. The Council otherwise directed staff to carry forward the proposed 2026 Budget, Property Tax Levy and Fee schedule as presented to the December 1 meeting.

Mr. Garcia discussed staff's desire to bring the 2026 – 2030 Capital Improvement Plan forward for formal consideration in January. Staff and Council agreed that a presentation with a greater level of detail was warranted specifically for the CIP.

C. Finance Update Items

Ms. Hilger provided a comparison of Dakota County communities' certified amounts for unpaid utilities. Ms. Hilger shared that our utility billing process is not substantially dissimilar from our peer communities. She did suggest that predominately the certified accounts are single-family homes, and that anecdotally she's experienced that property owners have communicated an inability to budget for these bills and prefer to have them escrowed with their mortgage.

Ms. Hilger also sought Council feedback on her suggestion to modify the accounts payable approval approach through a revised format in the Council Agenda packets. Ms. Hilger shared an example of how this would look in the future, and articulated that taking this approach would be helpful in mitigating the potential for exploitation of account information and fraud by potential bad actors. Council was comfortable with Ms. Hilger's revised approach.

D. Closed Session Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 13D.03, to Discuss Labor Negotiation Strategies

Motion to close was made by Councilmember Bakken, Seconded by Councilmember Kaliszewski. 6 were in favor of the motion, and the meeting was closed at 8:32 PM.

Motion to reopen the meeting was made by Councilmember Hansen, Seconded by Councilmember Seaberg. 6 were in favor of the motion, and the meeting was reopened at 8:55 PM.

3. COUNCIL COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

Councilmembers asked to review council compensation at a future worksession.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council at the regular work session meeting, Mayor Francis declared the meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/: Ryan Garcia
City Administrator