



Recommending Committee Minutes

1. Call to Order

Minutes:

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBERS KNUDSEN, SEAMAN and ALLEN-PALENSKE

ALSO PRESENT: DEPUTY CITY MANAGER STEVE FORD, CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY VAL STEED, CITY CLERK LUANN HOLMES and ASSISTANT DEPUTY CITY CLERK CHEYENNE LARANCE

2. Announcement Regarding: Compliance with Open Meeting Law

Minutes:

ANNOUNCEMENT MADE: This meeting has been properly noticed and posted at the following locations in accordance with the noticing standards as outlined in NRS 241.020: City Hall, 495 South Main Street, 1st Floor; the City of Las Vegas website – www.lasvegasnevada.gov; and the Nevada Public Notice website – notice.nv.gov.

3. Public Comment: Comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters on the agenda for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:

The following individuals spoke in support of Item 5: LINDA STOUT, CHRISTIAN DANIELS, TRACY PUCKETT, THERESA BELL, SARAH MORTIMER and MAURICIA BACA. They each explained how Mylar and latex balloons can be deadly to our local wildlife and their environment. The balloons are especially deadly to desert tortoises, who are attracted to the colors of balloons and mistake them for food. It was also mentioned that there is a finite amount of helium on earth. It is the only element on the periodic table that is considered a non-renewable source, and liquid helium is often used in medical diagnostic equipment. There are many substitutes to balloons and the group urged the Committee to support the bill.

4. For possible action to approve the Final Minutes by reference of the April 29, 2024 Recommending Committee Meeting

Motion made by Victoria Seaman to Approve

Passed For: 3; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

For-Victoria Seaman, Brian Knudsen, Francis Allen-Palenske;

5. Bill No. 2024-11 - For possible action - Amends LVMC Title 10 to add provisions to generally prohibit the outdoor release of balloons inflated with a gas lighter than air. Sponsored by: Councilwoman Nancy E. Brune

Minutes:

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing open.

CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY VAL STEED provided an overview of the bill and noted that COUNCILWOMAN NANCY BRUNE requested that any infractions be considered a civil violation. The first offense would be a fine of \$250 and subsequent events within a 12-month period would carry a fine of \$500.

KEVIN HERZIK, Special Assistant to Council, indicated that the bill was crafted after COUNCILWOMAN BRUNE learned that the release of balloons is detrimental to our wildlife, public lands and power sources. He said desert tortoises and bighorn sheep, which are symbolic to Nevada, mistake balloons as food and it kills them. Further, 12,000 residents were left without power last week due to the release of balloons. He asked the Committee to understand the implications of this issue and offered to answer any questions.

Because any infractions would be dealt with by Code Enforcement, SETH FLOYD, Community Development Director, informed the Committee that nuisance violations are typically low priority and would be addressed as they are reported.

SHERRI GROTHEER, President of Protectors of Tule Springs, said their organization aids in preserving, protecting and educating the public about the Tule Springs Fossil Beds area. Their goal is to provide a clean, green and safe environment for residents to recreate and give first-class opportunities in the field. She said their members spend countless hours cleaning up the desert, and passing this ordinance would give the Council an opportunity to advance their mission of a cleaner Las Vegas. MS. GROTHEER added that helium is an essential element for welding, and continuing to use it for non-essential needs is driving up the cost of construction, medical care and research.

JEFF VAJDA, Protectors of Tule Springs, said he spends many hours every week picking up trash, most of which is comprised of balloons. He is also a retired 30-year military aviator and stressed that flight safety is also public safety. He and others have been involved in incursions involving balloons, and he pointed out the amount of air traffic Las Vegas has. MR. VAJDA said Las Vegas is an international city, and if we fail to address this then it appears that we are tone deaf. COUNCILWOMAN SEAMAN inquired about the number of planes taken down by balloons, and MR. VAJDA did not have the exact numbers but said there is data out there.

ANTHONY RUIZ, Government Relations Manager for NV Energy, explained that NV Energy collaborated with various stakeholders during the 2023 Legislative Session to phase out electrically-conductive balloons in the state. AB (Assembly Bill) 321 now requires a weight to be attached to these balloons when sold, and they are currently working on its implementation. He noted that their focus is on foil and Mylar balloons, which are electrically conductive and can spark when they come into contact with power lines, posing a risk to their equipment and endangering the safety of their customers and utility workers. From 2018 to 2022, over 400 outages were caused by Mylar balloons which impacted 600,000 customers. These combined instances created approximately 190,000 outage hours, and just last Thursday, over 12,000 customers in North Las Vegas lost power due to Mylar balloons interacting with power lines. For COUNCILWOMAN ALLEN-PALENSKE, MR. RUIZ said Mylar balloons should be completely phased out by 2027, and although he did not have any data on latex balloons, he opined that it is possible for non-Mylar balloons to get caught up in power lines. COUNCILWOMAN SEAMAN confirmed through MR. RUIZ that he does not have any data on latex balloons.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN said there is a lot of opportunity for a communication strategy on making sure children and parents are educated on the impact of balloons, and he is willing to step forward and work with the State. He had concerns regarding the application of the ordinance, noting that the City does not have a lot of resources to go after people that are releasing balloons. Additionally, he feared that the minority and underserved communities would be impacted the most by this bill, and he did not want the City to impose fines on this population. He felt educating business partners about not using or selling balloons and creating park rules would have a much broader impact than punishing someone who does not know they are breaking the law. The Councilman said the City has a very limited Code Enforcement team, and he felt their energy was better focused on keeping the streets clean. He opined that this was also a culture matter, and it is important for all jurisdictions to change their mindset around releasing balloons. As such, he could not support a bill that would cite or fine individuals in a park when there are other ways to address the matter.

COUNCILWOMAN SEAMAN agreed with COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN'S comments and said she would also work on educating the public on the effects of balloons.

COUNCILWOMAN ALLEN-PALENSKE understood the goal of the bill and said we should all be working towards a cleaner Nevada. However, she hosts a yearly event in Ward 4 to memorialize the fallen officers of 9/11 and a balloon release takes place. The Councilwoman asked the bill sponsor for an exemption, which was declined, and therefore she could not support the bill.

See Item 3 for related discussion.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing closed and announced that this bill would be eligible for adoption at the City Council meeting of June 5, 2024.

Motion made by Brian Knudsen to Deny for a Recommendation of Do Not Pass

Passed For: 3; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

For-Victoria Seaman, Brian Knudsen, Francis Allen-Palenske;

6. Bill No. 2024-12 - For possible action - Adopts that certain document entitled "First Amended and Restated Development Agreement for Vegas Rising," regarding property generally located at the southeast corner of Richfield Boulevard and Wilmington Way. Sponsored by: Councilwoman Olivia Díaz

Minutes:

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing open.

PETER LOWENSTEIN, Deputy Community Development Director, explained this amendment incorporates one parcel into the development and staff recommended approval.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing closed and announced that this bill would be eligible for adoption at the City Council meeting of June 5, 2024.

Motion made by Victoria Seaman to Approve as Do Pass

Passed For: 3; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

For-Victoria Seaman, Brian Knudsen, Francis Allen-Palenske;

7. Bill No. 2024-13 - For possible action - Authorizes the issuance by the City of Las Vegas of its General Obligation (Limited Tax) Medium-Term Transportation Bonds, Series 2024A, in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$30,000,000 for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving and equipping street projects. Proposed by Susan Heltsley, Director of Finance

Minutes:

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing open.

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER STEVE FORD said this bill is order, passed all requisites and staff recommended approval.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing closed and announced that this bill would be eligible for adoption at the City Council meeting of May 15, 2024.

Motion made by Brian Knudsen to Approve as Do Pass

Passed For: 3; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

For-Victoria Seaman, Brian Knudsen, Francis Allen-Palenske;

8. Bill No. 2024-14 - For possible action - Authorizes the issuance by the City of Las Vegas of its General Obligation (Limited Tax) Sewer Refunding Bonds (Additionally Secured by Pledged Revenues), Series 2024B, for the purpose of refinancing certain outstanding Sewer Bonds (Series 2014A) in order to achieve interest savings. Proposed by Susan Heltsley, Director of Finance

Minutes:

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing open.

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER STEVE FORD said this will bring savings to the City and recommended approval.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN declared the Public Hearing closed and announced that this bill would be eligible for adoption at the City Council meeting of May 15, 2024.

Motion made by Brian Knudsen to Approve as Do Pass

Passed For: 3; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

For-Victoria Seaman, Brian Knudsen, Francis Allen-Palenske;

9. Citizens Participation: Public comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters within the jurisdiction of the Recommending Committee. No subject may be acted upon by the Recommending Committee unless that subject is on the agenda and is scheduled for action. If you wish to be heard, come to the podium and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion on any single subject, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:

None.

10. Adjournment

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Cheyenne LaRance, CMC, Assistant Deputy City Clerk

THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOTICING STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN NRS 241.020:

The City of Las Vegas website – www.lasvegasnevada.gov

The Nevada Public Notice website – notice.nv.gov

City Hall, 495 South Main Street, 1st Floor