



# City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

## Minutes - Final

### Legislative Hearings

**Marcia Moermond, Legislative Hearing Officer**  
**Mai Vang, Hearing Coordinator**  
**Joanna Zimny, Executive Assistant**  
**legislativehearings@ci.stpaul.mn.us**  
**651-266-8585**

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Tuesday, May 20, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

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9:00 a.m. Hearings

#### Special Tax Assessments

- 1      **RLH TA 25-231**      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 899 BURR STREET. (File No. VB2509, Assessment No. 258808)

**Sponsors:**      Kim

*Approve and make payable over 5 years.*

*Yin Thong, owner, appeared via phone*

*Thong: was this today?*

*Moermond: we tried when it was originally scheduled on the sixth, and this was our second call today.*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: September 10, 2024 a Category 2 single-family home was referred by Fire for revocation. Fee waived to October 1, 2024 per Legislative Hearing officer. No Code Compliance on file. No permits. No Certificate of Occupancy.*

*Moermond: what's going on here?*

*Thong: when I had my last appeal this was sold on a contract for deed and he had to work on his credit so he didn't want to get it record it, then you can't do as purchase anymore. That was before I went to China for my cancer treatment and someone scammed money so I had to leave in a hurry. I didn't have time to think about anything. You can come out and do a Certificate of Occupancy inspection for rental. That's for non-owner occupied properties?*

*Moermond: we're talking about the Vacant Building fee today, the cost of the City registering this as a Vacant Building. It's a Category 2 which means there is affair bit that needs to be done before re-occupancy. I recommended a fee waiver to December 1 in October so you had a chance to get it back online with no Vacant Building fee.*

*That wasn't done, which is how we're talking about it today. You had other things come up is what you're saying. I'm still left with a building that has been vacant and required monitoring. Why shouldn't that be assessed to your property?*

*Thong: I'd like another opportunity to have whatever needs to be done. Waive the fee for the buyer to close out. The house has no problems.*

*Moermond: the City isn't of the same opinion and you did have an opportunity to go without a fee, but as of May 20 you have been in the program for more than 8 months. The bill is 12 months, charged prospectively. You're mostly through the year and you don't even have the Code Compliance inspection done. You haven't been taking care of business; you also have some financial issues with Ramsey County as you have over \$8,000 in delinquent taxes.*

*Thong: that's why adding more fees doesn't help me either.*

*Moermond: I'm sympathetic but the City is incurring the cost of managing the property because you haven't been. I can't tell the rest of the taxpayers they're responsible for picking up your bill even if you have legitimate things going on in your life that make it hard. I can recommend it is made payable over time, so it has less of an impact.*

*Thong: what is that form?*

*Moermond: it's a punch list of the four major trades to bring into minimal Code Compliance.*

*Thong: the house has no problem.*

*Moermond: the City thinks it does. The list may be short, I suggest you move quickly so you aren't looking at another Vacant Building fee this year.*

*Thong: that's why I'm trying to get someone to come out. There is nothing wrong. I just had to leave in a hurry when you gave me a chance last time. I'd like another chance.*

*Moermond: no, you need to apply for that inspection. We'll send you the form. You won't get an inspection without that. No exceptions to that. I'll recommend this ratified in whole made payable over 5 years.*

*Thong: please give me another chance. It isn't a Vacant Building. Nothing is wrong with it. I fixed the house before this happened.*

*Moermond: we had this conversation in October. The Council affirmed those results. I can't un-ring that bell. The Council made its decision. You can of course testify and ask the Council for a different outcome. I won't be recommending a different outcome to them.*

*Thong: please, ma'am don't give me the Vacant Building fee. I didn't have an opportunity to perform last time. You can come out and inspect. Whatever you have to do. Please. Don't give me the Vacant Building fee. Nothing is wrong with my house.*

*Moermond: no, I'm sorry you didn't do what you were supposed to either before or after my recommendation.*

*Thong: if you were in my shoes, what would you do. Ma'am I had breast cancer, ok?*

*Moermond: I did too.*

*Thong: I could have been dead.*

*Moermond: so could I.*

*Thong: my cancer was bleeding. I was in so much pain.*

*Moermond: the thing is, other people in the City are not responsible for paying this bill. It is the Vacant Building program.*

*Thong: no, there's nothing wrong with my property. It doesn't cause any problems. People next door and in front are doing drugs and all that. I have people watching my house and I am taking care of it. Inside there is nothing wrong. You can send an inspector out. I just had to deal with stuff. I'm just asking for another chance.*

*Moermond: I'm not going to recommend another chance on this one. Get to it right away and the City won't have to worry about charging another fee. That's where you'll benefit.*

*Thong: the fee is good for one year. Ma'am please, please do whatever you need to do. Waive the fee for me and then you can come and inspect or do whatever.*

*Moermond: I don't think that's fair to the other taxpayers. By the time---*

*Thong: this isn't fair. I'm not doing anything bad ma'am.*

*Moermond: I'm going to cut you off—you can't talk over me anymore. You'll have been in the program 9.5 months by the time this goes to Council. No way I would recommend a waiver at that point. I suggest you move more quickly than that so you don't incur with another fee. Inspectors will not go out without that Code Compliance Inspection Report in place. I'm going to discontinue this hearing now. We will send a follow up email; you can reply back that with any questions.*

*Thong: do you even have a heart? I'm asking for an opportunity. Maybe there's something I'm not understanding. There's nothing wrong with my house. I'm trying to get this resolved. It isn't vacant.*

*Moermond: I do have a heart, so says my doctors, but the real deal is not just having a heart for you but also for everyone in the City who pays taxes in the City. We've gone in circles a couple of times, so I'm going to discontinue this but please respond to that with any questions you may have.*

*Thong: my house is not a Vacant Building program, ma'am.*

*Moermond: you are in the Vacant Building program; you lost your appeal on that.*

*Thong: I told you what happened! Please! You can come out—*

*Moermond: and that doesn't change the November decision. We'll also include James Hoffman's contact information in that email. With all due respect we do have other cases that we need to get too.*

Thong: who else can I talk to?

Moermond: we'll include it in the email. Take care, bye.

Thong: evil, this is evil. Man.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 6/18/2025**

- 2 RLH TA 25-236** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 2285 HAMPDEN AVENUE. (File No. VB2509, Assessment No. 258808)

**Sponsors:** Privratsky

Delete the assessment.

No one appeared

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: custom waiver, owners planned to raze building, held fee to November 1, 2024. Building demoed October 16, 2024.

Moermond: they had a waiver through November 1, building was down October 16 within the waiver period so recommend deletion of the assessment.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 6/18/2025**

- 3 RLH TA 25-221** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1453 PAYNE AVENUE. (File No. VB2509, Assessment No. 258808)

**Sponsors:** Kim

Approve and make payable over 5 years.

Christy Lamoreaux, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: a Vacant Building cat 1 single-family home opened October 31, 2024 for a gas shut off. Registration letters went to a Matthew Nuhfer on Payne. Went to assessment January 3, 2025.

Moermond: in the program since end of October. What is going on? I know we talked about hopefully decreasing this if it was back online again with a provisional Certificate of Occupancy.

Lamoreaux: we ran into a major snag unfortunately. The house wasn't properly winterized by the company hired by the mortgage company. We have to replace the radiator, pipes and both toilets. About \$20,000 worth of work. We're working on getting loans to help with that. We have a start date of June 2, outside of the radiators and boiler so all we have to do after we get the loan is get it replaced. There's no way around it. Replacing boiler with radiators. The rest of the house is fine and we have people lined up to have the rest of the house ready. The goal is June 30 for July 1 occupancy. Funnily, the previous company isn't answering calls when we tried to contact them about their winterizing job. Regardless, we're trying to gather the funds to get it taken care of unfortunately. Delayed a month.

Moermond: mathematically your Council Public Hearing is June 18th. That means from

*the time you went into the Vacant Building program; it is 7.5 months later. If you're thinking July 1, that's 8 months into the billable year and I don't typically recommend the fee is waived or deleted at that point. What I can easily recommend is make it payable over 5 years.*

*Lamoreaux: I appreciate it.*

*Moermond: as soon as you're done call the Certificate of Occupancy program and get that provisional form filled out. That means you can rent it.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 6/18/2025**

**4      RLH TA 25-246      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 68 DOUGLAS STREET. (File No. J2519R, Assessment No. 258541)**

**Sponsors:**      Noecker

*Delete the assessment.*

*Lori Kustritz, EMK Holding Co, appeared via phone*

*Kustritz: we just didn't get it in the mail, we normally do.*

*[No appeals process given]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Summary Abatement Order February 3, 2025 rechecked February 10, 2025 and the work order was done February 14 and noted it was done by owner/Responsible Party.*

*Moermond: you were saying you didn't receive notice?*

*Kustritz: that's just it. Normally we see it and we had a tenant who'd been there 10 years. We knew there was stuff back there because she wasn't very tidy and left us with all kinds of stuff. We were moving all kinds of stuff.*

*Moermond: orders mailed Monday, February 3. The inspector came back on the 10th and it looks like things were still there which was a Monday, and it was done by the 14th. It seems to me since your pickup day was Tuesday that was reasonable in your situation. Also, you do have a history of taking care of things, and orders aren't issued often, which is good.*

*Moermond: I'll recommend deletion. I do believe there was a problem with the mail on this.*

*Kustritz: I appreciate that. We do try and take it very seriously.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025**

**5      RLH TA 25-250      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1300 LAFOND AVENUE. (File No. J2519R, Assessment No. 258541)**

**Sponsors:**      Privratsky

*Approve and make payable over 3 years.*

*Peter Ngyuen, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Summary Abatement Order sent January 9, 2025 to remove and dispose of the indoor furniture, table, toes, cabinets, lumber, scrapwood and miscellaneous debris from the entire property including yard, under the awning, and around garage and alley. Compliance date of January 22, rechecked January 23. Found items not removed, photos taken. Work order completed February 12, 2025 for a total assessment of \$799.*

*Nguyen: I traveled to Vietnam to return my mother in law's body. When I came back I saw everything was clean. Wondered what happened. The tires I put back in my car. The wood I had stored it was gone. People steal my stuff. I didn't receive the paper, maybe I would have removed it. My renter before, every time you sent a letter to remove something, then I did it. I swear I didn't receive the paper and at the time I got the cleanup from the City I wasn't at my residence.*

*Moermond: when were you out of the Country?*

*Nguyen: around January 10.*

*Moermond: who is Thanh Nguyen?*

*Nguyen: my wife. My mother-in-law passed away.*

*Moermond: were you both gone? Who was taking care of the property when you were gone?*

*Nguyen: no one. Even from Vietnam I can check my property.*

*Moermond: not a lot I can do for you here. The notice was sent. It wasn't done. You didn't have someone taking care of the property in your absence. We didn't get returned mail. You didn't have it forwarded to a Responsible Party. It is kind of the cost of being out of the Country. The Council could look at it differently. I know this is a lot of money. I can ask it to be made payable over time, would that be helpful?*

*Nguyen: yes. I am ok with your recommendation.*

*Moermond: I'll recommend it is approved and made payable over 3 years.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025**

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**6      RLH TA 25-207      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 967 SAINT ANTHONY AVENUE. (File No. J2519R, Assessment No. 258541)**

**Sponsors:**      Bowie

*Approve the assessment.*

*Craig Cooper, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Summary Abatement Order issued*

*February 4, 2025 to remove and dispose of the stove/appliance from backyard and from entire property. Compliance date of February 11, rechecked February 12 and work was done by contractor February 19 for a total assessment of \$444.*

*Cooper: I thought one of my guys picked it up, we didn't know until later on. I didn't know they sent out a letter. That's why it was close to the house, it was right at the back of the house. I didn't think they'd go in the yard.*

*Moermond: where was mail sent to Mr. Hoffman?*

*Hoffman: occupant and Lavern Anderson Sheppard.*

*Moermond: not seeing your name on here, Mr. Cooper, are you newly involved?*

*Cooper: been around for a while.*

*Moermond: the notification went to the owner of record with Ramsey County. Do we work with Sheppard frequently?*

*Cooper: we did, not so much anymore. We did at the time. I knew the stove was there because we brought it closer to the house and were having it removed. I didn't know there was notice from the City, or I would have made sure it was gone. We had someone who was supposed to be coming and we didn't even know it was the City who was the one who did it.*

*Martin: no response since April 25 to the Fire Inspector about scheduling the inspection for the Fire Certificate of Occupancy.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025**

**7**      [RLH TA 25-199](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1390 SHERBURNE AVENUE. (File No. J2517R, Assessment No. 258530)

**Sponsors:**      Jost

*Reduce assessment from \$779 to \$200.*

*Brandon Griffin, owner, appeared*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: Summary Abatement Order issued January 3, 2025 to remove and dispose of trash bags, contents, tires, totes, and scattered trash from the property. Compliance date of January 10, rechecked January 13 and work order done January 23 for a total assessment of \$779. Photographs attached.*

*Griffin: where were you sending these letters originally?*

*Moermond: three locations, the occupant, Sanneh Foundation on University and 1390 Sherburne LLC on Conway.*

*Griffin: our foundation, Sanneh Foundation, owns these houses. Typically, it is staff living in them. I sent my team to clean it up. It isn't the tenants; it is a corner lot and they're dropping it off in the alley in the piles. We aren't sure if its neighbors, the auto center around the corner, and the tenant's bags aren't the same as the ones being*

*dropped off. It continues to happen and I can't figure out who is doing. I don't want to keep being liable for illegally dumped trash in the corner lot.*

*Martin: throughout the City we do have dumping. The new trash service does have 12 bulky items for free. Unfortunately, if it is on your property it is your responsibility. You can put up no dumping signs, under video surveillance signs, motion lights. That does tend to help.*

*Griffin: we did install cameras. I don't think it has happened since but motion lights are a good suggestion. I will do that. My big thing here is just some understanding it isn't our nonprofit or the tenants. We're about as much of a victim as perpetrator here. Some levity with the bill. These people don't have cars, yet someone is dumping tires consistently and I can't catch them.*

*Moermond: do you have signage up? The garage seems to block a majority of the parcel and I'm wondering if a no dumping under video surveillance sign at the start of the alley people know.*

*Griffin: yeah, I can do that.*

*Moermond: it looks like it was 20 days between when the orders were written and the cleanup happened. I'm looking at photos, rear yard, driveway, behind garage and by alley and the photo appears to be alley side and inside the yard with some sort of contractor bag.*

*Griffin: that was definitely the tenants. They were cleaning out the basement. That is from them for sure, it is the stuff around the back alley, the tires, the white bags. The tenants don't use white bags. I think someone is just adding to the pile. They wouldn't have hefty bags AND white trash bags. I've talked to the tenants and they swear up and down they don't know who is doing it.*

*Martin: in the future call the inspector to discuss if you get another one. Tell them what's going on.*

*Moermond: black plastic bags show the original location from January 3. I'm seeing the backyard things cleaned up, and then I'm seeing I believe different items on the driveway. The before photo by the contractor on January 23 I see at least 11 of the kitchen garbage bags. I see different plastic tote at the base of the garbage, and if it isn't entirely different it is vastly different than the original set of orders. I also suspect your garbage didn't get their tenant out on time.*

*Griffin: possibly. We've talked about picking up the trash and they've done a good job most recently. I haven't done like a "trash audit" but even sending my team over they say it looks like someone dumped stuff. Its not very visible. I don't know what else to do. I will put up signage and motion lights, but I'm at the beck and whim of the rest of the City and how I'd get in front of that.*

*Moermond: I'm going to decrease this, but not eliminate entirely. That is because I think the driveway items are different. Some of the items behind the garage is the same. What persuades me more is the time that went by between January 3 and January 13 on the recheck and it was fully another 10 days before the crew showed up. That was a couple garbage pickups, and I see the top has different bags. I'll get you down to \$200 on this.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 6/4/2025**



- 8      **RLH TA 25-240**      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1141 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2519R, Assessment No. 258541)

**Sponsors:**      Privratsky

*Reduce assessment from \$389 to \$190 and if no same or similar violations through October 14, 2025 delete entire assessment.*

*Chinedu Ezirike, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: we do have your text chain you forwarded to staff this morning [Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Summary Abatement Order was issued February 13, 2025 to remove improperly stored or accumulated refuse which may include: garbage, rubbish, loose and scattered litter, discarded furniture, appliances, vehicle parts, scrap wood and metal, recycling materials, household items, building materials or rubble, tires, brush, etc., from entire property including yard, boulevard, alley, and driveway. Compliance date of January 20, rechecked January 21. Work was done when crew went out February 26, total assessment of \$389.*

*Ezirike: as he stated, I was out of town when the notice came and when I got back and checked my mail, I wondered what was going on because I didn't put anything back there. What ended up happening was one of the contractors had put stuff in the back of the building unbeknownst to me. Once I got the letter I immediately called them and had them address it. They sent me photos and I was like, great, it is taken care of. Then the only thing I could do was only wait for this hearing.*

*Moermond: the orders went out, when the inspector went out to see if it was done, the answer was no so a work order went out and at the same time your guy cleaned it up. You had it cleaned up by February 24th. The crew arrived on the 26th and they said yes it is gone, but we're going to charge you for the trip out. I looked at your history and you've had graffiti a couple of times, but no other violations. You take care of business and I want to note that for you and I'm inclined to decrease this significantly if you have no same or similar. That means you're on top of things and City doesn't have any founded violations. I'll recommend this is reduced in half now, down to \$190 and if there are no same or similar we will delete it entirely.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025**

- 9      [SR 25-88](#)      Review Request of Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1350 HAGUE AVENUE adopted by Council on May 15, 2024 under File RLH AR 24-25. (File No. VB2407, Assessment No. 248806)

**Sponsors:**      Bowie

*Layover to June 10, 2025 at 9 am (unable to reach PO).*

*Tried calling 11:22 am – rang out and call dropped*

*Moermond: we'll revisit this in 2 weeks as it isn't time sensitive. No ability to leave a Voicemail.*

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Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 6/10/2025

## 10:00 a.m. Hearings

### Special Tax Assessments

- 10     [RLH TA 25-248](#)     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1470 DALE STREET NORTH. (File No. 2504T, Assessment No. 259004)

Sponsors:             Kim

*Layover to LH June 3, 2025 at 10 am (unable to reach PO).*

*Voicemail left at 10:46 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Elton Mykerezzi about an appealed tax assessment for tree removal at 1470 Dale Street North. We'll try you back in a few minutes.*

*Voicemail left at 11:02 am: mailbox full and unable to leave a Voicemail.*

*Moermond: layover to June 3.*

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 6/3/2025

- 11     [RLH TA 25-247](#)     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 588 FOREST STREET. (File No. 2503T, Assessment No. 259002)

Sponsors:             Johnson

*Layover to LH June 3, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion. Staff to investigate legal notice.*

*Clyde "Ford" Wagner, owner, appeared*

*Wagner: it is owned on a contract for deed and he's the holder.*

*Moermond: that would be Joe Steinmaus, Metro Holdings??*

*Wagner: yes.*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Forestry Supervisor Adam Strehlow: July 15, 2024 it was inspected and marked for removal. Compliance date August 14, 2024. Rechecked September 30, 2024. Photos went on file and urgent notice left on door. Given to Hugo's Tree Service December 3 and completed by Hugo's December 18th.*

*Moermond: urgent notice placed on door when?*

*Strehlow: September 30th at the recheck.*

*Moermond: the total cost is \$3,409.66, including a service charge. Mr. Wagner, tell me what's going on?*

*Wagner: three main concerns. The first being it is a rental property, so with that I never*

*received that notice. Now I hear it was on the door. Dealing with tenants it hardly ever gets to me, not an excuse. After learning that, is it not standard to send it to the Ramsey County? The forwarding tax address?*

*Strehlow: the initial letter is mailed to the mailing address on file of the owner.*

*Wagner: where was that mailed and when?*

*Strehlow: Metro Holdings, LLC 7279 40th Street in Oakdale on July 17, 2024.*

*Moermond: you should have received an email with this May 14th from Mai Vang. You should have these materials. I'm looking up what Ramsey County reflects for fee and tax owner.*

*It looks like Metro Holdings. That's who received notice, not CFW Realty, which is you?*

*Wagner: correct, Metro Holdings isn't the owner.*

*Moermond: technically they are, they own the fee simple title. You don't own the title until your Contract is paid off. Just like a bank.*

*Wagner: who is financially responsible for it? Me.*

*Moermond: well, if you don't take care of it they are.*

*Wagner: through a much bigger problem than this, they would have to foreclose and assume that financial obligation.*

*Moermond: one of the ways, yes. Following the path and saying you didn't get notice. A notice got mailed to Metro Holdings, they didn't share that with you. You got the notice on the door but it is a rental property?*

*Wagner: correct.*

*Martin: it doesn't have a Fire Certificate of Occupancy.*

*Moermond: oh! How long has it been a rental?*

*Wagner: I don't know when we signed the lease. It sat empty for a couple months.*

*Moermond: tell me what you would or wouldn't have done differently if you had that knowledge of the tree order. The City had every reason to believe it was owner-occupied because it wasn't in the Fire Certificate of Occupancy program. You didn't remove the tree, would you have otherwise?*

*Wagner: that was my third issue—how are you doing to argue the cost when there is already a bill? I'm a general contractor and work on different projects all the time. That price, to me, is insane compared to what I could have got it done for privately. I was shocked when I got the bill. I could have got 10 trees cut down for \$3,400. If I knew I would have had an employee go cut down the tree; it would have been a minor issue for us to take care of it. Not knowing, not receiving—I understand now it was placed on the door—it never got passed to me or we wouldn't be here today. I didn't even know it was cut down until this showed up. Then I drive by and look at the tree. It probably*

would have been addressed this summer anyway because it was growing up into my soffit and garage. Just to protect the house from further damage.

Moermond: do you go by the house at all?

Wagner: it is tucked down in the alley, behind the garage. I do drive by the front if I'm in the area.

Moermond: how often is that?

Wagner: once every couple of weeks if I'm doing a project in the area. If I'm on the west side it may be a month or two.

Moermond: this is Emerald Ash Borer, tell me about why you're concerned about removal on the schedule you are.

Strehlow: ash trees become very brittle when they die. From Emerald Ash Borer it becomes a liability very quickly and time is of the essence. It was near powerlines in the alley.

Wagner: the liability other than my own garage? Was it the phone pole?

Moermond: I think public safety is the right term. Liability is an insurance question you'd deal with. These gentlemen are concerned with downed lines hurting someone, burning property.

Strehlow: right, and drivers down the alley and free use of neighboring property.

Moermond: I hear you didn't get the written notice originally. There was notice posted on the door and that's the question I have now. I would want to bring to the Forestry attorney. I have a parallel situation I'm judging this against. The City is required to provide notice via first class mail for just about everything. If it is a case where we're knocking a building down, the most serious thing, the Vacant Building team sends first-class mail and does personal service. In a lot of cases those go nowhere. We have a provision in the code that by placarding the building it is also considered notice. I'm trying to think through if everything else fails is that notice sufficient, or do we need the other layers. That's where the rub is for me. It needs more thought.

Wagner: and the placard is after at least one letter?

Strehlow: I remember this one, I left an initial inspection door tag. I realize I probably spoke to the tenant, and they said they wanted it to go to a contractor. That doesn't affect our timeline or process in any way.

Wagner: the tenants are Columbian and don't speak English. I have to use a translator.

Strehlow: this was a gentleman who was not Hispanic and spoke perfect English. Again, it doesn't affect our process in any way, but an initial notice was left with a real human on the property on the date of the inspection.

Moermond: you spoke with someone who was presumed to be the owner because he said go ahead and hire a contractor. It presumably wasn't Mr. Wagner, since he isn't remembering any of this. Whoever had that conversation didn't communicate that to

*you. Is there an obligation for that person who had that conversation with forestry to communicate that to you about what is going on? If there is, that obligation is a private matter between you and whoever that was that may have financial implications the City isn't a part of.*

*Wagner: we don't even know who that person is.*

*Moermond: we don't now, know. Is it learnable? I don't know.*

*Wagner: this isn't your problem, maybe just a matter of fact, but you hand them anything, they don't know what that is. It could be a \$3,000 assessment, a \$1,000 check, they don't know and just throw it to the side. It isn't anyone's problem, just a matter of fact. Part of why this probably never got to me. I'm confused about who got this notice.*

*Moermond: and people have English-speaking friends and bilingual friends, so I don't know the circumstances but I do believe the forester talked to someone.*

*Wagner: I'm not disputing that at all.*

*Moermond: if someone is not able to speak English, we are obligated to have an interpreter on the line and we have a service that does that right away. That's true of all City employees. I don't know what happened. We can't assume someone's comprehension just because they have a dialect, etc. They have to tell us. Just so you know our process in those circumstances. I will talk with the City Attorney's office on the notice issue. I have a parallel with Vacant Buildings and that placarding is sufficient. Is it in your case? I'm not sure, but I think you deserve better information than you have now.*

*Wagner: if it is sufficient, there's still first-class mail sent even if placarding is sufficient?*

*Moermond: yes. But any of those means count, it doesn't have to be all of them. Any count. Personal service OR first-class mail OR placard on the door. All count as legal notice.*

*Wagner: I'm somewhat familiar with the Vacant Building process, what is your first attempt in this case? Mail to the taxpayer on record? It gets kicked back, we tried to call?*

*Hoffman: right, but we start with a placard.*

*Wagner: you START with the placard?*

*Hoffman: absolutely, we open a Vacant Building and it gets placarded on the front door.*

*Wagner: before it gets torn down though you send mail?*

*Hoffman: absolutely. Typically to whoever registers the property or the owner on record with Ramsey County. In this case, had the City known it was a rental we would have had that information to contact you.*

*Wagner: on your end, yes it shows Metro Holdings and CFW Realty, but then my tax*

address?

*Moermond: Ramsey County shows fee owner, the person in title, as Metro Holdings, Joe Steinmaus. Contract for Deed, you, in Hugo. CFW LLC.*

*Wagner: at my address. Whether it's the rules or procedure, in my mind I should be getting a letter.*

*Moermond: understood you've made that argument. There's also been two placards on the door. You seldom go by and appears to be communication issues with your tenants which all complicate the matter. I don't know who talked to the Forestry person. Those conversations are also notice. But did they represent the property? Did they talk with you? Who knows the circumstance. I will consult and I think that's all I can do today. Your Council Public Hearing is June 18th, so let's talk June 3 and see if we can't get this sorted out then.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 6/3/2025**

**12 RLH TA 25-223**

**Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1624 SEVENTH STREET EAST. (File No. J2518R, Assessment No. 258534)**

**Sponsors:** Johnson

*Approve the assessment.*

*Jireh Mabamba, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: a Summary Abatement Order was issued January 9, 2025 to remove and properly dispose of scattered trash, cardboard and miscellaneous debris from the property. Compliance date of January 16 rechecked January 16 and found in noncompliance. Work was done January 29 for a total assessment of \$444.*

*Mabamba: I bought the property that was vacant for several months. There was a bunch of trash around it, which I removed before I moved in. Then after a few months someone left trash there. This was around March. I called them to tell them someone dumped trash and someone needs to clean it up. This is a different incident. It was removed without my knowledge. I have never received that letter that was emailed to me. I went and spoke to my neighbors about a history of mail getting misplaced. They said it is constant with things going to 7th street WEST not East. It makes no sense the owner of the house would put the garbage somewhere here. Someone drove by and dumped the trash. It has been an ongoing thing, not an isolated incident. People constantly dump stuff and leave, leaving it for the residents to address. During the winter that alley is full of snow. It is me and a few neighbors that use our personal money to get it plowed. I'm investing in the City and taking care of my property. When I get bills like this, I don't think it's fair because I'm one of the people that is actively doing something about this neighborhood and I'm the person they're attacking. I don't think this is justifiable. There are other things in the neighborhood we should be addressing. If I had seen the letter I would have addressed it.*

*Moermond: code indicates proper notice is via first class mail. 3 letters went out, 1 to occupant, one to Mr. Mabamba, and one to previous owner which we'd ignore. You said*

*there was no returned mail?*

*Martin: correct. Looking at the items out there, cardboard was out there for over 20 days and could have easily been cut up and put into the recycling.*

*Mabamba: correct, because the house was vacant a very long time when I purchased it.*

*Moermond: you purchased in 2024 and this is happening January 2025.*

*Mabamba: it was vacant after purchasing for some time as well.*

*Moermond: is this where you live now?*

*Mabamba: no, this is where my sister lives, she moved from Texas. No one moved in right away because they had 5 kids they had to move. She started moving slowly in June. Went back to Texas. They've been moving periodically. It was definitely a possibility no one was there for 20 days. I live in the neighborhood and come occasionally and cut the grass, but January I pay someone to plow that alley. There is a possibility no one was there.*

*Martin: there are vehicles in the driveway in the photos. And there is no Certificate of Occupancy on file.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 6/4/2025**

**13**      [RLH TA 25-237](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1245 ALBEMARLE STREET. (File No. J2520R, Assessment No. 258548)

**Sponsors:**            Kim

*Layover to LH June 17, 2025 at 10 am (unable to reach PO).*

*Voicemail left at 12:40 PM: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Nancy Hole about your appealed tax assessment again for 1245 Albemarle. I'm calling as late as I can. I'm going to have Joanna Zimny send an email so you can share your reasons for appealing in writing and we can work off that and hopefully we can connect with you that way. Otherwise, work with Ms. Zimny to come up with another solution.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 6/17/2025**

**14**      **RLH TA 25-235**

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1244 MATILDA STREET. (File No. J2520R, Assessment No. 258248)

**Sponsors:**            Kim

*Delete the assessment.*

*Chris Krowez, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: a Summary Abatement Order went out February 5, 2025 to remove and properly dispose of the scrap wood and metal including Christmas tree in the alley. Compliance date February 12, rechecked February 21. Work was done February 26 for a total assessment of \$544. No photos from inspector,*

including on Summary Abatement Order. All items mentioned in Summary Abatement Order were gone except for scrap wood.

*Krowez: I'm a first-time homebuyer still learning the process. I understand a homeowner's responsibility, but when I got the order—first, I didn't get it until the week after. I immediately followed the instructions and called the inspector on the form, twice. Twice on the 10th and again on the 12th. Left messages and got no reply. No call back. I was looking for an extension and an explanation so I can make sure I fully complied. I'm panicking and seeing a big money cost to this and just trying to do it right. But I don't know what needs to be cleared. I saw Christmas tree, I was like what Christmas tree? Went out and looked in back, someone had dropped a tree behind my house. I dealt with it now that I knew I had to. But didn't have clarification on what was classified as scrap wood or metal. I was trying to get that information to comply and get an extension to do it. That's why I'm looking for some relief. I wasn't trying to get out of it, I was trying to get more information and follow the steps given to me. I wasn't given the tools to succeed.*

*Martin: Ms. Moermond, we did have issues with the inspector and phone systems. He was newer and didn't have things set up correctly for a while. That's why those messages may have not been returned. There's no history at this property.*

*Moermond: Given problems with the phone system and I trust you reached out for clarification and I'll recommend deletion of this assessment. I'm sorry you went through the hassle.*

*Krowez: I appreciate the learning opportunity. I'm still learning. I now I have a better understanding of what I need to do. Thank you for that, I really appreciate it.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025**

- 15 RLH TA 25-239** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1922 WILSON AVENUE. (File No. J2520R, Assessment No. 258548)

**Sponsors:** Johnson

*Delete the assessment.*

*Tried calling 12:43 pm – connected then immediately disconnected*

*Tried calling 12:44 pm- connected and said sending to Voicemail, then disconnected immediately.*

*Moermond: in reviewing the documentation the Legislative Hearing officer determined the garbage in question was in a secured area and therefore handled appropriately and recommend deletion of the assessment.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025**

### **Special Tax Assessments-ROLLS**

- 16 RLH AR 25-49** Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during February 12 to 26, 2025. (File No. J2519R, Assessment No. 258541)

**Sponsors:** Noecker



Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025

- 17     **RLH AR 25-50**     Ratifying the assessment for Snow and Ice Removal from the Public Sidewalk during February 21, 2025. (File No. J2502S, Assessment No. 258547)

Sponsors:             Noecker

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025

- 18     **RLH AR 25-51**     Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during February 26 to March 3, 2025. (File No. J2520R, Assessment No. 258548)

Sponsors:             Noecker

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/9/2025

## 11:00 a.m. Hearings

### Orders To Vacate - Code Enforcement

- 19     [RLH VO 25-10](#)     Appeal of John Schultz a Notice of Condemnation as Unfit for Human Habitation & Order to Vacate for the premises, Notice of Condemnation as Unfit for Human Habitation & Order to Vacate for the RV, and a Vehicle Abatement Order at 1623 YORK AVENUE.

Sponsors:             Yang

*Grant to June 4, 2025 for reducing occupancy and June 6, 2025 for balance of the orders.*

*John Schultz, owner, appeared*

*Staff update by Supervisor Lisa Martin: all the cars are gone, the RV is gone, the yard is cleaned up. The occupants from what I understand the person in the basement moved upstairs and it sounds like Sam isn't completely gone, and Linda, plus the gf and her 2 kids and their girlfriends. Still over occupied.*

*Shay, Sam, Linda, Linda the girlfriend, her two adult children and their girlfriends.*

*Schultz: there are no girlfriends anymore. I'm filling out paperwork for Sam Barker to remove his belongings. I'm going to drop it downstairs. He won't answer the phone. The guy who works with you said we have to give 30-day notice. This paperwork says 14 days.*

*Martin: I'd go with what the paperwork says. You may want to speak to an attorney. I do believe the belongings have to be held onto a certain amount of time before you can get rid of them.*

*Schultz: I'm going to do that downstairs when I leave here and get that straightened out.*

*Martin: where is Shay staying?*

*Shultz: Shay will go where Sam was. But your guy says we can't touch his stuff for 30 days. I wanted to know how long I have to fix the gazebo and change the locks on the doors? I showed your guy we had the patio door screwed shut.*

*Martin: ok, yes, he did note that.*

*Moermond: I just printed the Attorney Generals handbook on land lord tenant law. I want to make sure you have good information and is clear is it is different if you live there than if you are a landlord who lives elsewhere. If this is your own home there may be differences, I want you to be aware of that. It should be covered in this book. How many unrelated adults are we over?*

*Martin: at least 2. If Sam's stuff is there and we don't know where he is, that would be 3.*

*Moermond: Linda and her two kids are related, but not their girlfriends. So no one else could move in and they are at-limit. You can keep getting rid of people, sounds like that's in your best interest.*

*Shultz: yes.*

*Martin: Mr. Kedrowski did a recheck for people and vehicles yesterday and we can set up a time to remove the locks and work on some of the other items. Then recheck in a couple of weeks?*

*Moermond: let's put a deadline on that. This goes to Council next Wednesday, and your deadline for reducing occupancy is June 4th and in terms of the remaining orders let's say June 6th.*

*Martin: he's taken care of the items that were our biggest concern, which was all the folks and the vehicles. As far as smoke detectors, we've taken care of that. He locked the patio door, so moving in the right direction. Just small things and he's talking about selling so if he wants to sell with some things the new owner would take care of, but we do need the locks off the doors. The ceiling height in the basement was checked and it was fine, so that's crossed off. He didn't check the extension cord or the leaking freezer.*

*Shultz: there was no cord when he was there.*

*Moermond: ceiling abated, measurement proved that order incorrect.*

*Martin: yes. Most of the items have been resolved and the rest is kind of exterior items.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/28/2025**

### **Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements**

- 20**     [RLH SAO 25-40](#)     Making finding on the appealed nuisance abatement ordered for 681 VIRGINIA STREET in Council File RLH SAO 25-37.

**Sponsors:** Bowie

*The nuisance is not abated.*

*Moermond: the deadline came today and the work wasn't done by the 16th, it is the 20th. The Bagster?*

*Martin: it is still there; it is not in compliance.*

*Moermond: I'm going to recommend the Council find the nuisance is not abated and authorize the department to take action. Let's send an email to the appellant indicating that is the outcome with the photo from Kedrowski. Staff will go by next Tuesday before Wednesdays Council Public Hearing.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/28/2025**

## 1:00 p.m. Hearings

### Vacant Building Registrations

- 21     [RLH VBR 25-21](#)     Appeal of Gladys Igbo to a Vacant Building Registration Fee Warning Letter at 385 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST.

**Sponsors:** Bowie

*Layover to LH May 27, 2025 at 1 pm (unable to reach PO).*

*Voicemail left at 1:36 pm: we're trying to reach you about 385 University Ave. We'll try you back in a few minutes here to hopefully discuss it.*

*Voicemail left at 1:45 pm: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you again about your appeal for 385 University Avenue. This is our second call today. We won't be calling again. We were really hoping for an update from you about a conversation with Clint Zane, the building inspector. You hired contractors and were looking to get permits squared away. We'll continue this another week and that will be your last chance before it goes to City Council.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 5/27/2025**

## 2:00 p.m. Hearings

### Fire Certificates of Occupancy

- 22     [RLH FCO 25-28](#)     Appeal of Rosa Gomez to a Correction Notice-Reinspection Complaint at 1123 PAYNE AVENUE, UNIT 2.

**Sponsors:** Yang

*Layover to LH May 27, 2025 at 2 pm for update after Plumbing Inspector follow up.*

*Rosa Gomez, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: following up on your plumbing permit. I spoke with the Senior building*

*official, who spoke with the senior plumbing official who will be calling the contractor who never got the permit inspected. That hasn't happened yet, but Paul Zellmer is on the job and doesn't think there is an issue. We'll call you again next week.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 5/27/2025**

**23      [RLH FCO 25-27](#)      Appeal of Mary Durkop to a Correction Notice - Re-Inspection Complaint at 1725 THOMAS AVENUE.**

**Sponsors:**              Privratsky

*Grant to June 3, 2025 for items 5, 6, 9 (via water shut off to unit), and 10, and to September 1, 2025 for balance of April 8, 2025 orders.*

*Ken Hertz, attorney, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Der Vue: Our office received a complaint specifically unit 5 for leaks under the sink. Sarah Bono and I conducted the inspection which included damaged flooring, damaged windows, expired extinguishers, heavy content in mechanical room. January 24, 2025 Bono received a call from Durkop that the tenant moved to a different orders and new orders were issued January 25. Scheduled inspection on March 4 confirmed it was unoccupied but none of the repairs were completed. No documentation has been received for pest control.*

*Hertz: one of the key issues was the tenant was moved to a different unit. The basis for the appeal is the unit is vacant currently. The building is under contract to be sold and closing will be within the next 2 weeks. The intention of the buyer is to do a full renovation of the property. It is written the purchase agreement that work won't be done to units nor vacant units occupied. It would be duplicative, a waste of resources, to start the work now when it is intended to be done by the buyer on a vacant unit. I will add the fire extinguishers were taken care of.*

*The maintenance tech indicates no indication of mice in the unit. The salient point is it is under contract and the remedy would be it be pushed out to a period to allow the new buyer to take control and do the repairs as necessary and probably in a more professional level than my client.*

*Moermond: I'm not having heart burn about the floors or windows, but the pest control and fire extinguishers I want confirmed are done. The leaking under the sink is likely problematic for the building, not just this unit. Maybe just shutting off the water to just the unit?*

*Vue: I would agree, yes.*

*Moermond: that seems like a simple fix to address that. The heavy content around furnace and water heater is impactful.*

*Hertz: that's fine. I actually suggested that before this hearing so he may have gotten to that. it is a potential safety hazard, I'm fine with that.*

*Moermond: pest control, Ms. Vue, you look for what?*

*Vue: we would like evidence of an attempt to control. The original inspector did see*

evidence of that. Now it has been unoccupied for a few months a reinspection of the unit would suffice.

Moermond: the balance of the orders we could push to September 1.

Hertz: number 10, number 6, we'll do the water shut off to the unit, and the pest control will just be an inspection to see if there's any more activity?

Vue: yes.

Hertz: I think this is appropriate and I appreciate it.

Moermond: let's go two weeks on those items and September 1 on the balance.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 6/4/2025**

**24**      [RLH FCO 25-33](#)      Appeal of Rebecca J Monsoor-Cassidy Tr to a Fire Certificate of Occupancy Correction Notice - Complaint Inspection at 944 CROMWELL AVENUE.

**Sponsors:**      Privratsky

Layover to LH June 10, 2025 at 2 pm for further discussion.

Rebecca Monsoor Cassidy, owner, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Der Vue: we received a complaint this was likely operating as a triplex. Inspector Torrance Harriel inspected April 11 and confirmed it is a triplex. It is approved for a 2 unit in the City. Correction orders were issued to apply for a change of use. Under MN State fire code chapter 102, a change of occupancy shall not be made unless the use or occupancy is made to comply with the requirements of this code and the international existing building code. Typically, this means the property owner should contact our Building division to obtain appropriate permits and documentation for approval for the change of use. I understand there was an application submitted to the building division.

Monsoor Cassidy: that proceeded the correction order AND the complaint. I talked with your people and the complaint department and the suggestion was I withdraw, I was ill advised by Housing Hub, who I'd hired to help with leasing. They advised I apply for a triplex license, so I did that but because I'd been told all these years I'm a nonconforming duplex, it was actually incorrect. I talked with AJ Neis and he said that it was an error, so I worked with Nathan Bruhn and he suggested I withdraw my triplex license request. It is nonconforming duplex, not a triplex, then I am designated that because I have a MIL apartment in the basement which accesses my unit. That is what I used for all these years and why I was designated nonconforming. I was devastated because I've never had a problem in 50 years with getting a correction notice. I tried to go through the proper channels and planning said I need to explain I'm a nonconforming duplex with a MIL apartment with access through my home. I'd like to withdraw my application for a triplex and my need for anything further.

Moermond: this is two stories with a finished basement. Is there a locking door between your unit and the mother-in-law apartment?

*Monsoor Cassidy: no, it is wide open.*

*Moermond: so, it is wide open but separated for some privacy.*

*Monsoor Cassidy: right, because it's the lower level. I don't really use it anymore because of my health.*

*Moermond: you can get in, and there's nothing preventing them from coming up?*

*Monsoor Cassidy: no locks at all. I had a contractor steal \$45,000 of insurance money 2 years ago. The State is now pursuing them and we have a hearing tomorrow for him and I'm thinking he may have had someone make a call just to try and get me in trouble.*

*Moermond: tell me what the second story is like?*

*Monsoor Cassidy: 2 bedrooms. It is 1898, two bedrooms. Not a palace.*

*Moermond: a 2-bedroom unit you rent out?*

*Monsoor Cassidy: yes.*

*Moermond: it wouldn't be a triplex if it is completely accessible between first level and basement.*

*Vue: right, then it wouldn't be considered a triplex.*

*Monsoor Cassidy: the assessors office has me as a triplex. I called them and said the City has me as a duplex. They said we don't care; we do what we do and they do what they do. So, I'm sort of trying to please both parties. I pay triplex taxes but I am really only a nonconforming duplex and have been that way for 50 years. I gave up on trying to get them to acknowledge that. It wasn't an issue until recently.*

*Moermond: the County's information says this is a homestead and describe the property as "residential one to three units" and later a land-use code that says three-family dwelling platted lot. I'm thinking that's not the same thing and you talk to the Ramsey County Recorder's office, not the tax office. When you buy or sell a property the title is registered in your name at the County and these details should be recorded at that time in the Recorder's office. That's completely separate from taxation. I think they may be more involved in this day to day. [information printed and given in hearing] I would say these two things—you want this to show as a duplex with the County. I think there's mixed messaging going on in their information.*

*Monsoor Cassidy: I think I am too, I'm very confused.*

*Moermond: the Recorder's office may be a good place to straighten that out. For our purposes today, getting you out of the Fire Certificate of Occupancy program. I'm happy get you out of the program, but I'm looking for Ms. Vue to take a photo of the door separating basement and main level for our records to show why this is the decision being made.*

*Vue: I think that would be more than sufficient, yes. Show how the main level is accessible to the basement.*

*Monsoor Cassidy: can you wait until after my big hearing the 25th?*

*Moermond: not a problem, there is no hurry.*

*Monsoor Cassidy: I've talked frequently with Nathan Bruhn, I could ask him to come out? Would that be okay?*

*Moermond: I think it would be easier if Ms. Vue and her team went and I say that because he's the building official and will have a busier calendar. Whatever photos you take, by having them Mr. Bruhn and future fire inspectors can see them. He'd be looking at the same thing. Let's talk again in a couple of weeks. Can we talk the week of June 2?*

*Monsoor Cassidy: I have some health appointments I'm working through, if I could go home and check my calendar and let me know who to talk to if it doesn't work?*

*Moermond: work with Ms. Vue and her team and you find a date. I will figure out and close the file June 10th once we have those photos and grant your appeal.*

*You have a change i*

*n use application that went in April 23, but you can totally withdraw that. Call or email Nathan Bruhn.*

*[Der Vue gives direct number to contact for scheduling]*

*Monsoor Cassidy: once I get that approval, then that goes into the record so no one can say—I don't need to be present June 10th?*

*Moermond: no, we can call if we need too. It may not even be needed. I just pulled the original building permits for your home. It says dwelling, so likely a single-family home and converted to duplex. That's why it is legal nonconforming, since the area is zoned for single-family homes. It was there before the zoning, but it doesn't conform with its neighbors.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 6/10/2025**