



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

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Remove/Repair Orders

- 1 [RLH RR 25-31](#) Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 1079 ARKWRIGHT STREET within fifteen (15) days after the November 19, 2025, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Kim

Layover to LH (Monday) November 10, 2025 at 9 am for further discussion.

Glen Beske, owner, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: The building is a two story, eight-unit, brick apartment building on a lot of 9,627 square feet. The Fire Certificate of Occupancy was revoked on July 25, 2021, due to a fire and the property was referred to Vacant Buildings with files opened on July 27, 2021. The current property owner is Glen Beske, per Amanda and Ramsey County Property records.

On June 11, 2025, an inspection of the building was conducted, a list of deficiencies which constitute a nuisance condition was developed and photographs were taken. An Order to Abate a Nuisance Building was posted on July 9, 2025, with a compliance date of August 8, 2025. As of this date, the property remains in a condition which comprises a nuisance as defined by the legislative code. Taxation has placed an estimated market value of \$180,000 on the land and \$341,500 on the building.

Real estate taxes are current. The vacant building registration fees are now due and owing. An application for a Team Inspection was received on August 7, 2025, but has not yet been done. On August 7, 2025, the \$5,000 performance deposit was posted.

There have been ten Summary Abatement Notices since 2021. There was one work order issued for boarding/securing. Code Enforcement Officers estimate the cost to repair this structure exceeds \$200,000. The estimated cost to demolish exceeds \$60,000.

Moermond: apartment building with a large fire 4 years ago. No rehab since that time.

Hoffman: a fence was placed around the property. Some boardings.

Moermond: the team inspection was applied for in August. Here we are 2 months later. I know there's been an impact on Department of Safety & Inspections with the cyber-attack. Is that what caused the delay?

Hoffman: I believe so, yes. I can't speak for Clint as to their plan for these, I just get updates as they provide them.

Moermond: the process started with Department of Safety & Inspections in July with the order to abate, then September when the Public Hearing notice. The application was done in between those, which is good. Mr. Beske we have both Fannie Mae and you showing up as owner?

Beske: right, Wells Fargo. I did pay the \$5,400 Vacant Building fee July 27th.

Moermond: that's probably due to the same cyber incident.

Beske: did original permits get deleted too?

Hoffman: they expire after a year anyway. Right now, we don't have a record.

Beske: that's part of my problem, I don't know where he left off. I know building, permit, electrical permits were pulled.

Moermond: let's talk about the computer system first. We have 30 years of electronic records; you aren't alone in this.

Hoffman: all of our legacy programs we'd use to research and put notes in, all of that data is stuck in limbo and we cannot access it. We are in the process of rolling out a new program where they are working on trying to backdate some of the legacy info into the new one. It will help; it will just take some time. As far as previous permits were concerned, that was well over a year ago. You have 180 days to start, and another 180 days if nothing happens they are automatically closed.

Moermond: the new team inspection report will delineate those things that need to be done. So, wherever your contractors left will be considered during that walkthrough. That gets you from where you're at now to the finish line. That will help and what you'd want to bring to a new contractor.

Beske: I was looking forward to that.

Moermond: tell me what's been happening for the last 4 years.

Beske: I got some money from the insurance company. St. Paul fire was great, but it took over a week for insurance to get the adjuster out. It was during Covid. I cleaned out the tenant's stuff they'd left behind. They said we couldn't do anything until our inspector comes out. that took 2.5 months. I'd lined up a contractor, that turned into 3 months before he even did demo. The one side was still pretty good, along with the third floor. It was a fire in the laundry room, so it was mainly smoke damage. He gutted that whole half of the building. Then all of a sudden the whole other side gets gutted. He filed a lien on the property January 2025. Ramsey County sent me a thing finally saying I had a clean title after we settled. End of April I was touching base—he

reframed all the outside walls. There's still 2x4's sitting unused. I don't know if it ever got inspected.

Moermond: we'll figure that out.

Beske: the only part in the lower level that wasn't finished framing is because the Water Department was doing their lead-based line replacement.

[Moermond walks through the requirements needed to rehab: financing, bids, schedule, property maintained

Moermond: it does look to me like you have been taking care of things. I think I need to make a call to the Department of Safety & Inspections and the inspector who coordinates the team inspections and see if we can't expedite this inspection due to its Category 3 status. Your Council Public Hearing is November 19th. I don't think we'll have things done by then given the City can't respond in a timely fashion.

I'd like to talk to you November 10th. I fully expect November 19th at the Council Public Hearing I'll be asking them to send this back to Legislative Hearings to work through the plan. You've already taken the first 2 steps I look for, which is posting the bond and ordered the Code Compliance Inspection Report. You have a good track record right now. Hopefully you'll have an inspection report by then you can take to contractors.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 11/10/2025

Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements

- 2 [RLH RR 25-29](#) Third Making finding on the appealed substantial abatement ordered for 594 BRUNSON AVENUE in Council File RLH RR 25-8.

Sponsors: Noecker

Layover to LH (Monday) November 10, 2025 at 10 am for abatement status.

Moermond: there is a new development and documents attached to the record.

Hoffman: September 10, 2025 there was a substantial fire that the St. Paul Fire Department and Department of Safety & Inspections managers deemed the structure needed to be razed immediately. That was done and the contractor needed the waiting period to do the hazardous materials clean up which is currently underway.

Moermond: this was a fire that started in the kitchen, but they don't know what because it was such a badly damaged building throughout they couldn't go in because it was so unsafe.

Hoffman: based on the report, yes

Moermond: the building is mostly down, but the demo site itself is still a nuisance as the demo isn't complete.

Hoffman: the permit should be closed and final site work done next week.

Moermond: I'll continue this to November 10th and we should have a clean

recommendation at that time.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 11/10/2025

10:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 3 [RLH TA 25-371](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 360 KENNARD STREET. (File No. J2512B, Assessment No. 258112) (To refer to October 14, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

Sponsors: Johnson

Layover to LH January 13, 2026 at 10 am.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 1/13/2026

Special Tax Assessments-ROLLS

- 4 **RLH AR 25-96** Ratifying the assessment for Collection of Vacant Building Registration fees billed during July 31, 2024 to April 22, 2025. (File No. VB2601, Assessment No. 268900)

Sponsors: Noecker

Referred to the City Council due back on 1/14/2026

- 5 **RLH AR 25-97** Ratifying the assessment for Securing and/or Emergency Boarding services during May 2025 (File No. J2601B, Assessment No. 268100)

Sponsors: Noecker

Referred to the City Council due back on 1/14/2026

11:00 a.m. Hearings

Correction Orders

- 6 **RLH CO 25-9** Appeal of Parker Hoen to a Correction Notice at 1635 MONTREAL AVENUE. (Refer back to October 14, 2024 Legislative Hearing)

Sponsors: Jost

Grant the appeal.

Parker Hoen, owner, appeared

Moermond: I did pull someone from Public Works from their work to get some answers this morning.

Staff update by Supervisor Lisa Martin: we did send a revised correction notice

September 25 under 43.03. I did take photos this morning, it hadn't rained until recently. There is drainage and erosion coming out. Dirt buildup on the sidewalk. I didn't see anything on the front sidewalk, but depending on how much rain there is it could go on the front.

Moermond: I'm struggling with where you're seeing the dirt on the sidewalk. Is it the second photo?

Martin: 5 photos sent, the first was from afar, the next is showing the drainage coming off the retaining wall pointing towards the front, but it would go into the two-sidewalk area due to the hill. The third photo shows the fence with retaining wall on the side of property and shows the dirt across the sidewalk. Then a close up of the dirt. Then the last was just another view showing the path all the way through from Rome to Montreal along the fence line.

Moermond: I think we cannot determine at this point if there's erosion. I will recommend the appeal is granted and Department of Safety & Inspections revisit the situation by April 1, 2025. With respect to the erosion coming off the hill by the fence and leaving dirt in the walkway, it isn't significant but it does appear something is happening there. I would try to figure out a way to stabilize those soils. I don't think it was clear which area we were looking at. If there are things you want to do before April 1 to stabilize those things then you can.

Referred to the City Council due back on 11/12/2025

2:00 p.m. Hearings

Fire Certificates of Occupancy

- 7 **RLH FCO** Appeal of Abdalla Tobasi to a Fire Fire Inspection Report at 933
25-61 MINNEHAHA AVENUE WEST.

Sponsors: Bowie

Grant to January 1, 2026 for compliance.

Abdalla Tobasi, owner, appeared via phone

Moermond: following up on your two properties and the call box situation. Wanted to walk through some of Supervisor Imbertson's findings. I wanted the exact fire code language and some of their experience in St. Paul. Mr. Imbertson has done some follow up, let's get that report.

Staff update by Supervisor Mitch Imbertson: in the follow up weeks we're finding as far as we can tell we have been enforcing this consistently at other locations and requiring call box or phone under the same code provided on your report. Another option for compliance would be to discontinue the after-hours dispensing. But if it continues during hours when store isn't open we couldn't find any reason for exception. Single purpose call boxes that have a single button and connected to a cell dialer or phone line calling to 911 directly. No intermediate monitoring service needed. That's what we've found other stations use. That would meet that communication requirement.

Tobasi: I couldn't find someone to do this for me. For 30 years I haven't had a problem, I've done everything you asked of me. I'd be glad to hire them to get this

done but I don't know who to find. That's why I was trying to find information from the MN Service Station Association.

Moermond: you shared that in the last hearing. We did have the Fire Supervisor identify a few locations with this. I'm really going to say, I don't think this is something we should be granting an exception for. There are alternatives. I'm going to ask the Council to give you an extension to January 1, 2026 for compliance, which means installing that phone or other alternative, or a proposal that accomplishes the same thing, an alternative means of compliance, or you could stop pumping after-hours.

Referred to the City Council due back on 11/12/2025

**8 RLH FCO
25-60**

Appeal of Abdalla Tobasi to a Fire Fire Inspection Report at 809 SELBY AVENUE (806 SELBY AVENUE).

Sponsors: Bowie

Grant to January 1, 2026 for compliance.

Abdalla Tobasi, owner, appeared via phone

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Referred to the City Council due back on 11/5/2025

**9 RLH FCO
25-64**

Appeal of Todd Knudten to a Fire Certificate of Occupancy Correction Notice at 1205 HOMER STREET.

Sponsors: Jost

Grant to January 19, 2026 for compliance.

Todd Knudten, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Mitch Imbertson: this is a commercial gas station with a fire inspection in July. Report was issued and we cited 2 items, first is to repair damaged pumps 3 and 4 to service. The second was related to unsupervised fuel dispensing. We are looking for a sign with the working as listed in report giving emergency instructions in case of spill or fire and requirement for an emergency call box. Historically this would have been a pay phone at most locations.

Knudten: this has been in operation since the 1950's and has been a self-service store since the 1970's, dispensing fuel for 24 hours a day for about 20 years now. I'm wondering what the reasoning is for 20 years after this has been happening, unsupervised overnights, I'm wondering why a phone with a direct line to 911 is necessary in today's world when cell phones are had by just about everyone. When this law was written I imagine it was prior to cell phones since it mentions coin operated phones. There's another part that indicates there needs to be posted telephone numbers for owner, operator and Fire Department. It seems ridiculous to have to have my name and number by this call box. Another concern would be false alarms if it goes directly to 911. How are the false alarms going to be handled? Currently if I have false alarms on my burglar alarm they start to charge me. I'm wondering what code says about that. I'm also wondering where is this in operation in St. Paul? Talking with my vendors I'm getting a deer in the headlight reaction; they don't know of any stores with this.

There is a kill switch for a spill at the store. That's labeled on the front of the building that turns the pumps off. I don't see a reason for a phone box in 2025. Just seems like an expense I'd incur for little or no benefit to the community.

Moermond: Mr. Imbertson, this seems to be where a particular section of code wasn't enforced or was missed by previous inspectors. I've certainly read the City Attorney's insight that just because it was missed in the past doesn't mean it isn't a present violation. What's the Department say?

Imbertson: I don't know an exact explanation in this case. It is possible it was missed in the past, but we don't track information on which stations are 24 hours or not and staffed and if they allow after hours dispensing, unless they were proactively asking us. It could have very easily been inspected and received incorrect information or been under the impression it was staffed, or it was true at the time it was inspected and changed later. It also could have had a phone on site that is no longer there. We see that frequently.

As far as excessive alarms, I don't want to speak for the police, I assume they'd handle it the same as any other sort of prank phone call system. It isn't connected to the alarm system.

Knudten: it isn't considered a nuisance to the Police Department?

Moermond: it is more important that it is available. It certainly wouldn't be the first 911 hang up having to be investigated. Going back to the kill switch. That is important and it is its own thing under the fire code. We're just down to the notion someone should be able to pick up phone or similar device to be able to get through to 911 to handle an emergency. It is presuming that not all people have cell phones. I heard you say your

vendors aren't familiar with this?

Knudten: yes.

Moermond: Mr. Imbertson has looked into this, as we've been going more of these. In the locations we've found we have been enforcing it consistently in any case we're aware of this. Circumstances could be different in each case, so I don't know specifics, but we've been consistent as far as we've been aware. We've seen various means of compliance, from a standard phone to a single button call box connected to a cell dialer or phone line that dials straight out to 911.

Knudten: there are stores in St. Paul with these?

Imbertson: yes.

Moermond: we can get you some information. Let's give you until mid-January for compliance. There are 3 ways to comply as I see it: which means installing that phone or other alternative, or a proposal that accomplishes the same thing, an alternative means of compliance, or you could stop pumping after-hours. Let's say January 19th, 2026. You can certainly ask for a different outcome from the Council. For me, it is too unfortunate to let go and it is unfortunate it wasn't called out earlier.

Referred to the City Council due back on 11/12/2025