



# 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, March 18, 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 25-161**     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1874 STILLWATER AVENUE. (File No. J2513R, Assessment No. 258524)

**Sponsors:**     Johnson

*Approve and make payable over 5 years.*

*Ricardo Patron, Spanish interpreter, appeared*  
*Maria Lopez, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: this is for a substantial cleanup at your property. [Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: October 10, 2024 a Summary Abatement Order was issued to remove/dispose of all metal, wood, garbage, bikes, trailer and contents from property, driveway and alley area. October 16 they spoke to owner who said they were renting dumpster. At the October 25 recheck showed lots of scrapping, debris and sent work order which was done November 20, 2024.*

*Moermond: tell me about the invoice and what is included in the bill.*

*Hoffman: general refuse and trip charge of \$3,150, disposal fee of \$1,428 measured in cubic yards and 2 mattresses for \$70 and 26 tires at \$260.*

*Moermond: it looks like that information was emailed to you March 7 by Mai Vang. Why are you appealing today?*

*Lopez: the person who was there wasn't me. The person with all the trash in my property was a homeless person who came. I called the police on several occasions and we couldn't remove him. My daughter and I were really afraid as he was no relation to us, family or friend.*

*I tried to talk to the inspector when I received a couple of letters. On one occasion the inspector talked to the person and he cleaned up a bit. I had to travel to Mexico for health reasons and I couldn't do the follow up needed for the full cleanup.*

*In the things that were collected as trash there were some things that were not trash and had value. I won't recover the money. No one told me this was going to happen. I worked with my church to rent a dumpster and had 20 volunteers to help and then someone else did the cleanup and now I have this incredibly high bill I have no idea how I will pay.*

*Moermond: when were you in Mexico?*

*Lopez: I had an August trip and came back beginning of September, the second I left October 2 and came back right before Thanksgiving. I don't remember the exact dates.*

*Moermond: the inspector's notes indicate they spoke with the owner October 16. Was that you? Someone taking care of your house?*

*Lopez: it was probably my sister.*

*Moermond: she was looking after the property in your absence?*

*Lopez: yes, my sister and my niece.*

*Moermond: you said there were items of value by the alley taken. Tell me about those items of value that belonged to you.*

*Lopez: they weren't in the alley. They were next to my property outside the kitchen door to the backyard. There was a stainless-steel table, like from a restaurant, 40x48". There was also a snow blower and also a machine for the yard. Two ice coolers from Sam's, those are each \$60-\$80. A pull cart, \$80-\$100. The biggest items were my snow blower and yard machine which were over \$100 each.*

*Moermond: tell me about the trailer full of scrap metal and tires and other items that look like there's scrapping work happening. You're saying a homeless person brought that?*

*Lopez: it was not me so it was the person or persons, one brother from the church was helping me and taking care of making rounds around the property. They saw the person and asked them to start cleaning up. That's where this trailer come from with metal and tires not belonging to me. It belonged to this person or persons. I know I'm the owner but I just need help. Since it started I was calling the police and no one would help. I was very afraid of going to the back of my property with these people, I need help in reducing the amount because the fee is very high.*

*Moermond: yet you were able to deal with a vehicle a few months earlier, as well as garbage in May, and another vehicle in November. Am I understanding this was someone you were providing some assistance to because of some church connection?*

*Lopez: no, I didn't know this person, they weren't associated with the church. The church was providing me help and someone from the church helping me remove them from the property. As far as the letters I received in the past, I would call and they'd talk to person and they would remove the trash. Regarding the vehicles, they aren't my cars, and I paid for a tow truck to move them to Case street. I paid that out of my pocket to remove cars that were on my property because I wanted to comply with the letters from the City.*

*Moermond: 2023 you had orders and four orders in 2024. I don't think there's been an effort to comply with ordinances regarding property maintenance. I'm not sure what is going on with the police. I want to get a list of all the police calls from January 1, 2023 to the present. That may help fill out the picture. We'll add that to the record and send it to you. You are maintaining your property and six weeks passed between when the orders were issued and the crew did the cleanup. I don't see any way to reduce the assessment in these circumstances. I will recommend the Council divide the payments over 5 years to make it less of an impact. You are welcome to ask the Council for a different outcome and we can certainly provide an interpreter should you wish to do that. You can reply back to the email sent from Mai Vang with any questions and we're happy to help.*

*Lopez: I don't want more hearings or more paperwork. I will assume my responsibility and I just want to know how you can help me pay this?*

*Moermond: I can't.*

*Lopez: what's next? I haven't done this before.*

*Moermond: the recommendation is the Council makes this payable over 5 years. The Council Public Hearing is scheduled for May 7. You will receive an invoice within a couple of weeks for one-fifth of the amount, a bit over \$1,000. I would encourage you to make payments on that if you can't pay it off entirely. Whatever is leftover will go on your 2026 property tax bill. Included in your mortgage then probably. For the other years they will be payable in 2027, 2028, 2029 and 2030.*

*Lopez: I understand more now. I appreciate it because I don't want to have any issues with the City.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**

- 2 RLH TA 25-137** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 606 LAFOND AVENUE. (File No. VB2507, Assessment No. 258806)

**Sponsors:** Bowie

*Approve the assessment.*

*Moermond: we received a stack of emails from the property owner at 5:15 and 5:20 last night and they haven't been reviewed given their late submission. I'll lay this over again to April 1. That would be his 3rd scheduled hearing and if not available I'll recommend approval.*

*[Note: LHO reviewed materials after LH and recommends approval 3-20-25]*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025**

- 3 RLH TA 25-136** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 900 THOMAS AVENUE. (File No. J2507B, Assessment No. 258106)

**Sponsors:** Bowie

*Approve the assessment.*

*Voicemail left at 9:51 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council trying to*

reach Mary Iverson again about an appeal for 900 Thomas. We'll try back in a little bit.

Voicemail left at 10:41 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you again about 900 Thomas. We've tried multiple times and been unable to reach you. There's information on the Council Public Hearing on the back of the letter telling you about this hearing if you wish to testify. I'll recommend approval, thank you.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025**

**4 RLH TA 25-141** Deleting the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 776 DESOTO STREET. (File No. J2504R1, Assessment No. 258542)

Sponsors: Noecker

Delete the assessment.

Jeff Richter appeared

Ross Davison appeared

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Summary Abatement Order sent June 5 to remove and dispose of plastic bottles, recycling materials and miscellaneous debris from the rear of the property. Rechecked June 17. Work was done by the crew June 24. Total assessment of \$396.

Moermond: three weeks between issued orders and crew showing up. Looks like mixed recycling and garbage, back of the building into the alley. Why are you appealing?

Davison: I rent the property from Mr. Richter. Storage only. I clean the alley all the time. The corner is dark and people dump everything down there. Couches, mattresses. I remove it. I have a skid loader so people can get through the alley. I plow the alley for free, just to be a good neighbor. My issue is if I would have known you'd violate me on a little bit of trash. There's no mail service at that location. Hasn't been since the 80's according to the Post office. The statement Jeff submitted is from the neighbors saying what I do. I'd have taken care of it if I knew but there's no mail service. I even installed my own light. There is a big homeless encampment out there, there's trash everywhere. I must clean up mattresses and tires at least twice a month.

Richter: I had another statement from another neighbor and they're asking for better cameras and signage in the area. I misplaced that. You have Bush and DeSoto which is a dead-end alley. Right there is where the dumping is the main problem. The whole area is bad. Like Ross said, he's always cleaned it up and plowed for the neighbors. We're asking Council to put up cameras and signs there.

Davison: the streetlight has been out for over 2 years; I called 2 years ago and nothing was done. That's part of why I put up my own light.

Richter: it has been an issue for years. Where was the original letter mailed to? 1006 or 776 DeSoto?

Moermond: went to Midwest Auto at 1006, and occupant and Midwest Auto at 776 DeSoto. The owner of record with Ramsey County who pays the taxes has to be notified. If you manage that via a lease, it is between you, but ultimately it becomes assessed to the taxes. It isn't a fine, they're charging for the cost of sending the crew out. Ms. Zimny, can you send an email to Public Works about the lighting situation? I appreciate you want the City to install cameras, but they only really do that on City

owned property.

*Davison: you don't have those little trailers with the lights?*

*Moermond: those are available but there's only 4 or 5 and are typically deployed after a major crime, it is as much messaging as surveillance. It isn't cheap and they won't be deployed for dumping. In terms of lighting, that can definitely be fixed.*

*Davison: the alley splits the lot, so we have the alley on both sides. I understand it is our responsibility, but I'm just upset we didn't get notified.*

*Moermond: I'm not sure how you communicate about these things. Let me think about this. Normally we say signage, lights, cameras. We'll deal with Public Works streetlight. I'll put this on my agenda April 1 to put a decision on the record. We can do by that phone. I'll look more deeply at this. Can we get a police call log going back to January 2023.*

*Moermond: in reviewing the file more deeply and the past history, it looks there are no orders prior to this that haven't been complied with. They're always on top of it, this is the exception. I'll recommend this is deleted.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025**

**5 RLH TA 25-147** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 942 BEECH STREET. (File No. J2514R, Assessment No. 258525)

Sponsors: Johnson

*Delete the assessment.*

*Voicemail left at x9078 at 9:58 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Rachel Theobald about 942 Beech and an appealed special tax assessment for a cleanup December 2, 2024. In reviewing the file, it appears to me a fair bit of time elapsed between when orders were issued and crew arrived and the items called out explicitly in the orders were addressed were removed so I'll recommend the Council delete this assessment. We'll send a follow up email to confirm.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**

**6 RLH TA 25-167** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 273 COTTAGE AVENUE WEST. (File No. VB2505D, Assessment No. 258820)

Sponsors: Kim

*Approve and make payable over 5 years.*

*Lakiesha Lee, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Vacant Building opened by Matt Dornfeld May 1, 2024 per referral from Fire Inspections. Appealed and waiver given to August 3, 2024. No work done, still an active Category 2 Vacant Building.*

*Moermond: what's going on today?*

*Lee: when I came to the court at that time I had the whole full detailed outline of what I was working with Allstate on my claim for repairs. I don't understand how I was given to August 3, to do all these repairs. As of today, I have a new roof. I have things done from that list. I've had updates since then. I was unemployed until December 2024. I'm still living in my mom's basement with my 3 kids. I tried to apply for so many different places for assistance and everyone has told me no. I've been doing all this alone making \$20 an hour. My mortgage keeps going up and I don't even live in the home. I don't understand where or how this assessment and being on the Vacant Building list--when I look online it says I should have received documents—I never got that. To move my kids back there. I don't know what I'm supposed to do except a \$540 Code Compliance Inspection and I'm waiting for my tax refund. I had to file bankruptcy last year. I'm doing my best with no help, no nothing. I can't go purchase another place. I'm doing my best until this is fixed.*

*Moermond: what happened last May, and when we talked in June, the Vacant Building fee was waived through August. No expectation to be complete by then, it was giving you time without any fee so if you got it done there would be no fee. That's where we started. I'm glad you got a new roof, but it looks like no permit was pulled for that work. I'm flagging that for you to be aware of. The \$500 fee is for the Code Compliance inspection. You need that report to give you the to-do list of items to be addressed before reoccupancy. If this goes unpaid and assessed to your taxes, that will show up first on your 2026 taxes. I can recommend this is payable over 5 years to make it smaller bites. So, one-fifth is a bit more than \$500 for the next 5 years. I don't know if your circumstances will change, and I don't know about funds for dealing with this I wouldn't have shared already. I know we talked a lot about what may be available. I will reach out to Abdihamid again, who you talked with last year, he may have some new ideas. It was condemned so I'm left with a Category 2 Vacant Building.*

*Lee: that's what is crazy. How is it condemned? Because I didn't answer an inspector's phone call. How can it be condemned without anyone even walking inside?*

*Moermond: I know the Council looked at this and they decided it should be a Category 2. The vacate was heard by them April 17. I can't re-litigate that. It does appear they were inside the home.*

*Lee: that's after the condemned sign was up, he'd never walked in the house.*

*Moermond: and I can't re-hear that because it was heard and appealed to City Council, all I can look at is the result of that hearing. The question is what do we move from here?*

*Lee: I recall them lifting the condemnation and putting it in the Vacant Building program.*

*Moermond: the resolution says the Council deny the appeal and property must be vacated on or before April 24, 2024. That was confirmed by my office April 5 in a follow up letter. The best I can do is recommend they make it payable over 5 years. We'll send a follow up letter with Mr. Badri's contact information. The Council Public Hearing is April 2.*

*Lee: sure, right before I spoke at the rotunda for some other cause going on with the state. I will be down there April 2, not a problem. This is very sad that this is what the City is doing to single mom with 3 kids. No one is helping here. Abdihamid, I've called*

him, talked with him, nothing has changed or happened. And reelections are coming. Good luck with everything. This is so sad. I have a lot of visibility. A lot of advocacy work in supporting public safety and communities. It is sad I can't even get support. But that's alright, I will see you April 2.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025**

**7 RLH TA 25-156** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 901 EUCLID STREET. (File No. J2510T, Assessment No. 258520)

Sponsors: Johnson

Reduce assessment from \$566.50 to \$324.

Jose Moreno, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: a tall grass and weeds notice went out September 24, 2024 with a compliance date of September 28. It was rechecked October 8 and the work wasn't done. Work orders was sent and the work was done October 14, 2024 for a total proposed assessment of \$566.50.

Moreno: we never received notice. We signed for the house September 2 I believe. We were still getting mail from the previous resident, Julie. Maybe it was sent to this address under her name, but we don't open her mail. We didn't own it yet, but we were taking care of the property consistently. It was two months later we moved in, but did stop by the property. We also have proof of purchase for a lawnmower so we could do the very thing we were asked to do. We'd like to not be charged for this as we weren't aware.

Moermond: notice was sent to you, Mr. Moreno, and ALSO to Julie Garrett at this address. Two envelopes would have arrived. Tell me, we have a closing date of August 2, 2024. Mr. Hoffman, was any mail returned?

Hoffman: I don't believe so.

Moermond: it looks like the grass was measuring a good 17 to 18 inches along the side of the property according to the measuring tape. That wasn't being dealt with. These orders were two months into your ownership. It looks like you hadn't mowed since you bought it.

Moreno: we were trying to maintain the grass. We were still trying to deal with our lease from where we were living, out in Plymouth. We tried our best to do it while we were moving our stuff. We weren't aware this was a necessity and there would be a charge or someone would make a report against our property. If we would have known or seen the notice we would definitely have been keeping up on that maintenance. We didn't receive any notice so we were unaware. The last thing we want to do is accrue charges from the City.

Moermond: so, you closed August 2 and moved in September 2? You were moving between those two times, didn't get notice, but you weren't there all the time checking the mail.

Moreno: we did check the mail every time we were out there. I don't see anything like

that. We received other notice from our insurance after closing but not these.

Moermond: all cities have these types of laws. I'm struggling here, the City did do the work and there is a cost associated with that. Maybe a bit of reduction in the charge, let me review. The orders say \$160/hour and the invoice talks about 2.5 man hours. The \$160/hour makes me think its inclusive of all the people out to do the work. The billing changes happened and weren't reflected yet in the tall grass and weeds letter.

I think I can get you down to \$324. It is still an assessment but it is \$240 less. We don't have returned mail. The expectation is you take care of it. It tells me things weren't being maintained in the transition time between closing and you moving in.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025**

**8 RLH TA 25-160** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 562 GALTIER STREET. (File No. J2513R, Assessment No. 258524)

Sponsors: Bowie

Continue Council Public Hearing to September 10 and if no same or similar reduce assessment from \$485 to \$242.

Henry Schnitzer, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: a Summary Abatement Order went out October 23, 2024 to remove and dispose of tires, chairs and miscellaneous debris from backyard and entire property. Compliance date of October 30, rechecked October 30th and the work wasn't done. Work order was sent and the crew did the work November 11 for a total assessment of \$675.

Schnitzer: I had no idea; I never got the letter. I keep up my property because I know what happens if you don't. I never got a letter; I've been doing this for 10 years. I always clean it up when I get the letters. I never got one which is why it wasn't picked up. I did see in the packet emailed to me it was sent.

Moermond: are you Brickhouse LLC on Holly?

Schnitzer: yes.

Moermond: it does look like when orders have been issued in the past you've taken care of things. A vehicle a couple of years ago with some Excessive Consumptions, but not much else.

Schnitzer: the tenants just put their stuff there, I'm good about picking up the stuff. Then I got the bill for \$700, I was like woah, what is this for?

Moermond: I'm going to look more at this. The City didn't have any returned mail. It also went to the occupant. Two letters to you at Holly and one to Galtier.

Schnitzer: it is weird, I typically always get them.

Moermond: when two letters go out it is less likely both would be lost, but—



*Schnitzer: weren't you sending other letters out about the sewer at the time, so maybe I didn't open because I thought it was a sewer letter. That's probably why. I guess I'm guilty, but I don't want to pay \$700, you know. All the money I spend getting rid of mattresses and other people's junk. \$700 for two tires.*

*Moermond: I'm going to look further into the refuge and trip charge which seems high. I'm going to ask the Department to look further into that. That line in the invoice doesn't make sense to me. You also have a good history which is in your favor. We'll follow up by email with the recommendation and anything we find.*

*Follow up after hearing by Moermond: for 562 Galtier, it is an odd situation and the original order photos we have some tires. In the follow up photos on reinspection there are the tires and some sundry debris: bikes, a grill, a couple outdoor chairs. Nothing significant. When the crew arrived to do the cleanup we have a photo of the property address—loaded in March due to a computer glitch in November—and Mr. Westenhofer just loaded the invoice dated November 13 with a general refuse trip charge for 1 hour, \$450, general disposal \$51, tires \$10. One tire. There is no before photo of the back of the house by the contractor. All I have in the photo is a chair and a board, which there's nothing wrong with it. I am not clear how that takes an hour nor where the volume comes from for the \$51. I'll determine a reduction in 2 weeks when I review the file again.*

*After review: notice says \$260/hour, plus \$51 MSW disposal fee, and \$10 tire, \$164 service charge for total of \$485. Continue Council Public Hearing to September 10 and if no same or similar reduce assessment from \$485 to \$242.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**

- 9**      [RLH TA 25-155](#)      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 133 MAGNOLIA AVENUE EAST. (File No. J2513R, Assessment No. 258524)

**Sponsors:**              Kim

*Layover to LH April 15, 2025 at 9 am (unable to reach PO; called outside time-frame given).*

*Voicemail left at 11:21 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Michael Spafford for an appealed tax assessment for 133 Magnolia Avenue east. This is a 9 am hearing and we've run late this am, I'd like to reschedule this to April 15, but still will reach out to confirm if that date works.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/15/2025**

- 10**      [RLH TA 25-146](#)      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 804 TATUM STREET. (File No. J2513R, Assessment No. 258524)

**Sponsors:**              Jalali

*Layover to LH April 1, 2025 at 9 am. Recommendation forthcoming (CPH May 7)*

*Alexzan Richmond, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Summary Abatement Order was issued November 4, 2024 to remove and dispose of the Bagster and contents from the boulevard. Compliance date of November 12, not done on reinspection November 12. Work was done by the time the crew showed up November 13. A couple previous orders in 2024, 2021 and 2020 all abated by owner.*

*Richmond: I just want to make sure I am not paying for the City removing the Bagster as stated, it was removed prior to them coming out. I do have a receipt from Waste Management who came to pick it up ON the 13th. The City didn't clean it up.*

*Moermond: that isn't the charge. The proposed charge is for the trip out there, not the cleanup of the Bagster. I'd like to look more deeply into the trip charge. There is an assessment for the cost of the trip, it was made. How long have you owned the property?*

*Richmond: September 2020.*

*Moermond: a few orders but always taken care of by you which is positive. I want to take that into consideration. I'd like to take a deeper look at the charges here and see what I can do but I can tell you this is what the contractor charges the City for the trip. We will see what we can do okay? Would you prefer to communicate by email or have another call?*

*Richmond: I can do either. Email may be better so I can include my husband.*

*Moermond: we'll do that via email and share anything we learn along the way.*

*Moermond: two things I want to follow up on: one is the compliance date was BEFORE November 12, but November 12 is the day that shows up predominately in the notice and the crew was out November 13. Timelier than I've seen any case today, and when they showed up on the 13th it was gone. It was rechecked on the 12th and still there when inspector goes by but gone by the time the crew came the next day.*

*The other thing is the trip charge is \$225 but it's a charge for an extra City trip but does the code cover the cost of that under Excessive Consumption? We made the trip; the work wasn't done. Do we have provision in code that isn't consistent with the provision in the contract? If we were sending the Parks crew and they showed up and the work wasn't done we'd charge them the PAEC rate, does the Code regarding PAEC prevail over contract.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/1/2025**

## 10:00 a.m. Hearings

### Special Tax Assessments

- 11 RLH TA 25-56** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 685 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST. (File No. VB2505, Assessment No. 258804) (Refer to March 18, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

**Sponsors:** Yang

*If Fire C of O is issued by April 16, 2025 reduce assessment from \$5,077 to \$2,538, otherwise approve in full.*

Sean Ryan appeared via phone

Called 11:41 am for Clapp: Voicemail full, cannot accept messages

Moermond: any progress in getting this set up for cold storage?

Ryan: we've been waiting for the weather to turn to complete the list Inspector Imbertson made.

Moermond: timeline on that?

Ryan: in the next month. We have to get our electrician in.

Moermond: I'll put this in front of Council April 16 and if you have your Fire Certificate of Occupancy I'll recommend the assessment is reduced by half. I wouldn't be able to recommend anything further than that.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/16/2025**

**12 RLH TA 25-140** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 810 BUFFALO STREET. (File No. J2511R, Assessment No. 258519)

Sponsors: Bowie

Reduce assessment from \$853 to \$663.

Erick Simola, o/b/o owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: Summary Abatement Order issued September 3, 2024 to remove and dispose of dressers, scrap wood, mattress, and miscellaneous debris from front yard, backyard, trailer and entire property. Compliance date was September 10, it was rechecked on the 10th and the work was not done so a work order was sent. That work was done October 16 for a total proposed assessment of \$853. No returned mail. Vehicle Abatement Order September 3, 2024 with four Excessive Consumption bills and December 16, 2021 garbage orders issued that was done by the owner.

Simola: I represent the owner and do work on his property cleaning up orders like this. He's been very sick beginning last summer. When the tenant moved in, she started paying through Venmo, so he didn't check the P.O. Box. I went over and saw the dresser, asked the tenant about it. Called the owner he said he hasn't received any letters but hasn't been to P.O. Box. He went after I called him and said he did get a letter. I said that was a problem. I went and talked to the tenant again and she said all the stuff was gone, she thought it had been stolen. She said she had rugs on the fence she was cleaning, a dresser on the step waiting for help to move inside and a flower bed in her trailer. It was all gone. I understand the dressers and stuff in front, the scrap wood, but she had stuff in the trailer I don't get why they took and the rugs on the fence. She thought it was stolen until we got this letter.

Moermond: it is helpful to read orders to see what the inspector is looking for.

*Simola: but why the stuff in the trailer?*

*Moermond: the stuff in the trailer was explicitly named in the letter. I can't reduce it. The main thing I hear is he was sick and not checking his mail for orders. Are you Sims Holdings?*

*Simola: that's my management company.*

*Moermond: orders went to Infinite Visions, Mr. Barlage, the occupant at 810 Buffalo, and also to you at 278 Chelsea. Three letters went out. I'm not finding a way I could legally reduce this assessment.*

*Simola: were the rugs on the original complaint? I didn't think they were.*

*Moermond: unless it is specifically an exterior rug, it would be covered as a household item on the exterior.*

*Simola: they can legally remove things from the trailer? That's confusing.*

*Moermond: please remove and dispose of the miscellaneous debris from backyard, trailer, and rest of property." It is explicitly named in the order. It did go to you, Mr. Barlage, and the occupant. She could file a claim if she thinks something was stolen by the City. I'm going to recommend approval of the assessment.*

*Simola: when did the price go up to a \$400 trip charge? I don't remember it ever being that high.*

*Moermond: the City has a private contractor doing the work now. It is a trip charge plus the service provided.*

*Martin: \$450/hour plus whatever they remove which includes cubic charges as well.*

*Simola: how long has that been in place?*

*Moermond: I don't have it in front of me, I think it started 15 or so months ago.*

*[Note after hearing Moermond: in reviewing the Summary Abatement Order more carefully relating to the contractor charges and Ms. Martin pointed out this is yet another one the Summary Abatement Order indicates it is \$260/hour rather than the \$450 charged, the Summary Abatement Order was not updated to reflect current charges. Reduction down to \$663 is recommended.]*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025**

**13**     [RLH TA 25-91](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 2002 JAMES AVENUE. (File No. J2506E, Assessment No. 258305) (Refer to April 22, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

**Sponsors:**             Jost

*Refer back to LH April 22, 2025 at 10 am to reinspect for compliance with first deadline in work plan.*

*Ryan Weber, occupant, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: I got a copy of the plan you submitted. Ms. Martin will give some feedback on that.*

*Supervisor Lisa Martin: we've had issues on this garage for quite some time, that's what created these Excessive Consumptions.*

*Weber: Ms. Klemme purchased it from me and I'm purchasing back on a contract for deed.*

*Moermond: I will accept this work plan and do follow up in stages. What I'll recommend is the pending Excessive Consumption bills are appealed separately. I'm going to take your work plan at face value with an April 15 date for framing and doors. I'll look at this April 22 and if that's done we'll move on to the next step.*

*Martin: there does need to be a permit on file.*

*Moermond: getting that first step done gives you another month to meet the next deadline.*

*Weber: that is reasonable.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

- 14**     [RLH TA 25-159](#)     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 671 COOK AVENUE EAST. (File No. J2516R, Assessment No. 258527)

**Sponsors:**     Yang

*Reschedule to April 1, 2025 at 10 am.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/1/2025**

- 15**     **RLH TA 25-157**     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1071 ENGLEWOOD AVENUE. (File No. J2515R, Assessment No. 258526)

**Sponsors:**     Bowie

*Recommendation forthcoming pending submission of evidence by PO.*

*Scott Latessa, owner, appeared via phone*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: Summary Abatement Order was issued November 25, 2025 to remove and dispose of refrigerator, tires, pallets and miscellaneous debris from backyard and entire property. Compliance date was December 2, rechecked December and work was not done and work order issued. Per the email the work crew went out and the owner refused clean up, so they were charged a trip charge. No returned mail and history at the property.*

*Moermond: what does refused mean specifically?*

*Martin: they were there with the St. Paul Police Department and the owner didn't allow them on the property.*

*Latessa: I have witnesses who did the work in the back. The police didn't show up. I only had an abatement for the cars in the back. It is fraud and I have multiple*

witnesses.

*Moermond: this charge isn't for removing items, it is a trip charge for the crew going out. Just a flat charge when the work wasn't done by deadline. Plus service charge on top of that. If you have witness statements that may be useful I am happy to look at that.*

*Latessa: if they didn't do anything why are they charging? I asked for an extension and the dude didn't answer the phone.*

*Moermond: I'm looking at a charge for a trip. They went out and were denied access so they couldn't do the work.*

*Latessa: I have multiple witnesses about that. I could talk to Alyssa, I could talk to Rob, I could talk to Aaron, CJ and Brittany.*

*Moermond: I'd welcome any additional information you have.*

*Latessa: what are you looking for out of these people? I can get notebook pages, phone numbers.*

*Moermond: I won't be calling up people and interviewing them. If you want to submit written statements or have them testify that's fine.*

*Latessa: how?*

*Moermond: you received a packet March 6 by Mai Vang, you can reply to that with any additional information and I'm happy to look at it.*

*Latessa: is there another way than email? I'm not a tech guy.*

*Moermond: of course, you can send by US Mail. [gives address]*

*Latessa: what exactly can they make statements about? How do they prove whether or not the police came or not. They never stepped on the property, they left.*

*Moermond: this isn't a police charge, this is for a contractor coming out, their trip charge. I can't tell you what someone should say, I will just look it over and consider it.*

*Latessa: as far as falsified information? What happens if it is found the City does that?*

*Moermond: I haven't found that, but we can cross that bridge if we get there.*

*Latessa: I'm just asking because this all may be a waste of time if failing to show up and permit anything, the fact the cops showed up is one thing and didn't show up is another. I'd rather not waste your time or mine considering I'm handicapped with a disabled kid and I'm a single parent. I've been dealing with enough stuff with the City as it is.*

*Moermond: if you want to submit more information that's up to you. I can't tell you how it will impact my deliberation. That's really up to you.*

*Latessa: the whole County is set up this way, it just seems so ridiculous. Paying twice as much for taxes on a house and you can't get any information from the County, the*

authorities just come by and lie and say whatever they want. I have spinal injuries and simply ask how we can resolve things and then suddenly I have a court date, couldn't find anything out. My electricity and phone are about to be shut off. I'm trying to resolve the situation. I can't get a straight answer out of anyone.

Moermond: I'm looking at a tax assessment for a trip charge by the contractor. I can't help with the other stuff. You wanted other information considered and I'm happy to look at that.

Latessa: what does that mean?

Moermond: I heard from City staff. You said you had witness testimony. I said ok, send me information that you think is important for me to consider.

Latessa: that they didn't do the work, yeah. I'm not going to waste my time with that. It is already a biased system where you've already made your decision and is only about them showing up. The fact they're allowed to lie and not take accurate photos is pretty much criminal.

Moermond: I have a trip charge in front of me. You are saying the police didn't show up but you have other people who can testify. If you want to submit something, great.

Latessa: if it was about the cleaning, there's nothing to discuss. The City did come out and I dismissed them. they told me to talk to the City work and ask for an extension. I did that and got one. I'm the one who had to do the work so why am I being charged?

Moermond: as I've said multiple times, it isn't a charge for the cleanup; it is a trip charge.

Latessa: that's what I just said!

Moermond: please don't talk over me or I will end this call.

Latessa: I'm going to hang up then! I've said it twelve times too---there ain't no f\*cking way—

[call disconnected]

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**

**16**     [RLH TA 25-163](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 952 FOURTH STREET EAST. (File No. J2516R, Assessment No. 258527)

**Sponsors:**             Johnson

Layover to LH April 15, 2025 at 10 am (unable to reach PO; called outside time-frame given).

Voicemail left at 12:27 pm: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you about your appeal for 952 Fourth Street. We are running extremely behind today. We'll reschedule this to April 15, and if that doesn't work you can reach out to staff and discuss other options. Thank you.

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/15/2025**

- 17 [RLH TA 25-154](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2515R, Assessment No. 258526)

**Sponsors:** Kim

*Layover to LH April 1, 2025 at 10 am for DSI to look for missing invoice documentation.*

*Trieu Tran, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this was a Summary Abatement Order that went out October 17, 2024 to remove and dispose of auto parts, pallets, appliances, household items, wood debris and miscellaneous debris from rear of property, backyard, and property. Compliance date of October 31. Rechecked October 31 and property owner requested a 2-week extension, rechecked against November 7. December 4 staff was on site with the St. Paul Police Department, owner was told to remove all vehicles not registered to the property. Owner was towing a vehicle upon arrival. Staff removed some trash & scrap material from the back/rear yards. After an hour of waiting and only being able to do 30 minutes of work staff explained to the owner they would return in 1 week to finish out the cleanup. December 11, 2024 the Owner finished cleanup and removed unauthorized storage from the property.*

*Tran: first of all, I don't agree with that charge because when they came out and started the cleanup, they gave me the time to do that. Before the date they came the police stopped by and reminded me. I said I'd be done by that day. The morning when they came I got every car out already, when they came I had two cars of metal. It was there because I was going to use and keep inside the building. But they said I didn't clean it and started cleaning. When I put the last car outside the street I didn't know they took the metal. They cleaned out some of my metal and some tools and equipment I was still using.*

*Moermond: we'll take a look and talk to you again in a couple of weeks' time and see if we can get to the bottom of it.*

*Tran: October they sent me the letter and I started to clean up and Code Enforcement told me to keep working on cleaning up. He said it was ok for me to keep the equipment, he didn't say he was going to charge me.*

*Moermond: we will look at this more and Mai Vang will get back to you with a hearing date, otherwise we'll send an email. I will look at this more deeply.*

*Moermond: one thing we need follow up on is the invoice itself attached to the record last week indicates the trip charge was \$225 and that was the only thing on the invoice. The assessment is \$951. No documentation to support that higher charge right now. We'll give Department of Safety & Inspections a chance to bring forth further documentation.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/1/2025**

- 18 **RLH TA 25-148** Deleting the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 714 LAFOND AVENUE. (File No. J2504T3, Assessment No. 258545)

**Sponsors:** Bowie



*Delete the assessment.*

*No one appeared*

*Moermond: there are no before photos taken by the contractor, so no documentation of conditions on arrival. Therefore, recommend deletion of the assessment.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025**

- 19**     [RLH TA 25-152](#)     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1453 PAYNE AVENUE. (File No. J2515R, Assessment No. 258526)

**Sponsors:**     Kim

*Layover to LH April 15, 2025 at 10 am (unable to reach PO; called outside time-frame given).*

*Voicemail left at 12:44 pm: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling about the appealed special assessment for 1453 Payne. We are running extremely late today and I'm sure you've moved on with your day. We'll reschedule to April 15, reach out to staff if that date doesn't work.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/15/2025**

- 20**     [RLH TA 25-168](#)     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 716 ROSE AVENUE EAST. (File No. J2516R, Assessment No. 258527)

**Sponsors:**     Yang

*Approve the assessment.*

*Chang Vang, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: we just received at 8 last night some photos from you and I haven't had time to review them, so I'd like to continue this so I can review that before we discuss the matter. Do you have a preference between April 1 or 15 to reschedule too?*

*Vang: we can talk without the photos.*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: a Summary Abatement Order was issued December 16, 2024 to remove and dispose of mattress and debris from driveway and property. Compliance date of December 23, rechecked December 30 and January 6, 2025. Work was done January 10th by the crew for a total assessment of \$1,779. This is a Category 1 fire opened August 12, 2025 after extensive damage. Condemned August 11, 2024 and changed to a Category 2 on December 30, 2024 due to sale of dwelling. No Code Compliance Inspection Report on file.*

*Vang: November 29, 2024 we had a cleanup two mattresses and black bag. I called the garbage company to see why they didn't take care of it. They finally agreed they didn't do the job so they would take care of that, not the 3 bags outside or the mattress. I called back to complain about that. I also talked to the CSR to make sure the hauling was cancelled because it is vacant now.*

January 9, 2025 I called the City to complain about people throwing trash onto the property. I asked if I could report to police, they said no, police won't do anything. Then staff told me if the trash on the property there will be a charge, but not in the right of way. It is frustrating I called Nelsie Yang and she said we could call the garbage company to pick up the items on the property, up to 12 a year. We didn't know that. No one told us anything about that. The City didn't say that when I called either. My question is, if you have a plan in play how come you don't advertise it to the people so they don't keep throwing trash onto other's property?

Moermond: the orders were issued December 16, you acquired the building 11 days later, and the work was done January 10. A 3-week extension was granted so the work didn't have to be done by December 30, it was given until January 10th. The order again was issued to the previous owner but you were evidently aware of it as you're talking about it. It would be their responsibility to communicate to you there was an order on the property. I would suggest reaching out to them to seek funds you think you are due. They did know about the orders easily a week before you closed.

Vang: I talked to them, they said they never received any note from the City. They move a lot and changed their address. Some of the trash they cleaned on January 11 was trash that was good siding. I know for sure the mattress was there before, and the black bag. That's something I complained to the City about, someone throwing it there. Some of the cleaning was good items we were using; they took everything. The TV was still there on the 13th. It looks like they weren't properly cleaning and what they claim they cleaned were items we were using.

Moermond: when the contractor arrived, I see a couple of mattresses, cardboard and broken furniture, a number of garbage bags, some scrap metal in the back and scrap wood around the property. That doesn't look like dumping to me. You are welcome to make that argument to the Council. Right now, there was an order written and it was clear in my opinion, I'm going to recommend approval.

Vang: the City has the program to help the people to come have the trash company pick up to 12 items for year.

Moermond: that takes effect in April under the new hauling contract, it was only 3 items prior to that.

Vang: so, the coming April, not previous?

Moermond: there is a lot of items around the yard not cleaned up, including a lot of scrap. I don't think the trash pickup would be that impactful for you.

Vang: I don't need to pay until I talk to Council?

Moermond: no, you won't an invoice until after the Council Public Hearing May 7.

Vang: are you able to do half? If the owner pays half?

Moermond: I can't do that.

Vang: the City has a communication problem. IF you could waive half and we could pay half.

Moermond: I don't see a problem with communication from the City in this matter. You

*spoke to the City, received an extension, that seems pretty clear to me. I would speak with the previous owner but I won't recommend a reduction. The Council could look at it differently than I do.*

*Moermond: for clarity's sake this transacted October 18, 2024 for \$0 and then again December 30th 2024 for \$0. This was a contract for deed per Mr. Vang and the contract hasn't been registered evidently because the owner of record and tax owner with Ramsey County is Kong Pheng Her and Chue Xiong. That would be helpful to get registered. In either event the original order was issued prior to the December 30th transaction.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**

- 21 [RLH TA 25-129](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 435 VAN BUREN AVENUE. (File No. J2504E2, Assessment No. 258314) (Refer to April 1, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

**Sponsors:** Bowie

*Refer back to LH April 1, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion.*

*John Townsend, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: I'm calling about three tax assessment appeals for 435 Van Buren. Looks like we have a lot going on. [Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this is regarding a Vehicle Abatement Order issued February 29, 2024 for multiple vehicles without current tabs, parked in the yard. Issued orders to remove or make code compliant. Two Excessive Consumption fees totaling \$303. That's from May 28 and June 12 for noncompliance. Another \$303 for June 26 and July 10 and one more \$169 from July 25. Again, the vehicles were still in noncompliance at that time.*

*Moermond: every two weeks an inspector went out and there was still noncompliance.*

*Townsend: I'm on medication and the Doctor told me I can't drive. The medication requires me to be off 3 months before I can be able to drive. I'm not off of it. It is going to take longer than I thought to be able to drive. I can't drive and you're telling me to move them, I can't just leave them in the street. I don't have a license I don't have plates on it.*

*Moermond: are they still there?*

*Townsend: they are, the only thing gone is I got the trailer dumped and put back. I can't move them because I can't drive due to my medication.*

*Moermond: did you talk to the inspector at all about your situation?*

*Townsend: yes, I talked to David Smith last year.*

*Moermond: did you try calling a tow company to bring to scrap yard?*

*Townsend: you want me to scrap my 2017 truck in my backyard? That's what you're telling me?*

Moermond: just asking if you looked into that.

Townsend: I would prefer to put plates on instead of scrapping it.

Moermond: it is costing you a lot of money while you make that decision.

Townsend: I had a brain aneurysm.

Martin: from all the photos taken on reinspection, the trailer is empty, or has different items in it, so clearly someone is helping you. Different things each time photos are taken. The trailer comes and goes so clearly someone could help him move the vehicles.

Townsend: I had one person who comes and help me move the trailer one time. I had to pay for all the stuff in the trailer, including the stuff my neighbor dumped in my yard. My neighbor illegally dumped the stuff in my yard. I had to take it to the dump.

Moermond: tell me what your plan is for the cars.

Townsend: I want to put plates on the car and I want to put down asphalt for the vehicles. A platform for the cars. I just need more time.

Martin: the backyard is not an approved parking surface. He'd need an approved site plan. There is no parking in the backyard in the City of St. Paul.

Moermond: it isn't as simple as putting down asphalt. It is a major change to the property and needs to be reviewed by the City.

Townsend: here's my problem. I went there and it didn't exist. There was nowhere to drop off anything.

Moermond: 375 Jackson?

Townsend: yes, that's where I went. There is nowhere in that building to see anyone. No live person to talk too.

Moermond: on the second floor there's a desk—

Townsend: no, there's not.

Moermond: maybe you weren't on the second floor?

Townsend: I was there. I went down to try and find it. Then I had to go to the post office. The post office is right across the street.

Moermond: its not 395, its 375, was that the problem? It's Between Jackson & Robert and 5th and 6th street and the parking lot off the back on 6th.

Townsend: no, there's no parking lot, just one under the building. I was trying to pay you.

Moermond: I'm trying to clarify so you can go there in the future because the 200 people who work there didn't move. I think there's just some confusion.

*Townsend: like I said, I came up off the back through Jackson, on the bottom floor, ground level. Got to the second floor.*

*Martin: you don't go into the basement. Park in the lot off 6th and the security guard will direct you to the second floor.*

*Townsend: you're saying I went in the wrong side? I came off Jackson.*

*Moermond: regardless, I have these 3 tax assessments and I'm struggling for a reason to decrease them when you'd rather do tabs.*

*Townsend: I can't move them, I can't drive.*

*Moermond: you need to figure out a way to deal with it. They can't be there as they are.*

*Townsend: I'm working on, I'm willing to work on it. I'll get the cars moved and a platform for the cars to be on.*

*Moermond: moving the cars versus driving, I am struggling with. What's the difference?*

*Townsend: I was in the hospital so wasn't able to do a lot. I had the trash hauled away a few months back. I didn't put it there. I had to take the roof off my garage. That's how the trash started, off the roof and into the trailer. The next batch was from the house, some from my neighbor's yard. I had to haul it away. I just need more time to get what you want. We want the same thing. I want plates and tabs on the cars and a platform down.*

*Moermond: these go to Council tomorrow. You missed the December hearing, and you didn't call until recently. We had you on two weeks ago and couldn't leave a Voicemail. I'd like to get a plan from you for how you're going to deal with the vehicles. And that needs to be soon. You need to talk to Department of Safety & Inspections about having a parking area there or get those vehicles removed. They can't be there unless you address the situation.*

*All I can tell you is they aren't ok where they are at now, so you need to figure it out or the City will keep charging you. It is a lot of money if it keeps going on. I would like to help you but you also need to help yourself.*

*Townsend: as I said I tried to find your location so we could get some understanding, I didn't know I needed your approval to put down some asphalt? If you say so.*

*Moermond: you can achieve compliance by putting plates on, getting them running, and on a legal surface in your yard OR removing them. One or the other. That is up to you. We'll talk again April 1 and look at this again.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

**22**     [RLH TA 25-130](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 435 VAN BUREN AVENUE. (File No. J2505E1, Assessment No. 258316) (Refer to April 1, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

**Sponsors:**     Bowie

*Refer back to LH April 1, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion.*

*John Townsend, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: I'm calling about three tax assessment appeals for 435 Van Buren. Looks like we have a lot going on. [Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this is regarding a Vehicle Abatement Order issued February 29, 2024 for multiple vehicles without current tabs, parked in the yard. Issued orders to remove or make code compliant. Two Excessive Consumption fees totaling \$303. That's from May 28 and June 12 for noncompliance. Another \$303 for June 26 and July 10 and one more \$169 from July 25. Again, the vehicles were still in noncompliance at that time.*

*Moermond: every two weeks an inspector went out and there was still noncompliance.*

*Townsend: I'm on medication and the Doctor told me I can't drive. The medication requires me to be off 3 months before I can be able to drive. I'm not off of it. It is going to take longer than I thought to be able to drive. I can't drive and you're telling me to move them, I can't just leave them in the street. I don't have a license I don't have plates on it.*

*Moermond: are they still there?*

*Townsend: they are, the only thing gone is I got the trailer dumped and put back. I can't move them because I can't drive due to my medication.*

*Moermond: did you talk to the inspector at all about your situation?*

*Townsend: yes, I talked to David Smith last year.*

*Moermond: did you try calling a tow company to bring to scrap yard?*

*Townsend: you want me to scrap my 2017 truck in my backyard? That's what you're telling me?*

*Moermond: just asking if you looked into that.*

*Townsend: I would prefer to put plates on instead of scrapping it.*

*Moermond: it is costing you a lot of money while you make that decision.*

*Townsend: I had a brain aneurysm.*

*Martin: from all the photos taken on reinspection, the trailer is empty, or has different items in it, so clearly someone is helping you. Different things each time photos are taken. The trailer comes and goes so clearly someone could help him move the vehicles.*

*Townsend: I had one person who comes and help me move the trailer one time. I had to pay for all the stuff in the trailer, including the stuff my neighbor dumped in my yard. My neighbor illegally dumped the stuff in my yard. I had to take it to the dump.*

*Moermond: tell me what your plan is for the cars.*

*Townsend: I want to put plates on the car and I want to put down asphalt for the*

vehicles. A platform for the cars. I just need more time.

*Martin: the backyard is not an approved parking surface. He'd need an approved site plan. There is no parking in the backyard in the City of St. Paul.*

*Moermond: it isn't as simple as putting down asphalt. It is a major change to the property and needs to be reviewed by the City.*

*Townsend: here's my problem. I went there and it didn't exist. There was nowhere to drop off anything.*

*Moermond: 375 Jackson?*

*Townsend: yes, that's where I went. There is nowhere in that building to see anyone. No live person to talk too.*

*Moermond: on the second floor there's a desk—*

*Townsend: no, there's not.*

*Moermond: maybe you weren't on the second floor?*

*Townsend: I was there. I went down to try and find it. Then I had to go to the post office. The post office is right across the street.*

*Moermond: its not 395, its 375, was that the problem? It's Between Jackson & Robert and 5th and 6th street and the parking lot off the back on 6th.*

*Townsend: no, there's no parking lot, just one under the building. I was trying to pay you.*

*Moermond: I'm trying to clarify so you can go there in the future because the 200 people who work there didn't move. I think there's just some confusion.*

*Townsend: like I said, I came up off the back through Jackson, on the bottom floor, ground level. Got to the second floor.*

*Martin: you don't go into the basement. Park in the lot off 6th and the security guard will direct you to the second floor.*

*Townsend: you're saying I went in the wrong side? I came off Jackson.*

*Moermond: regardless, I have these 3 tax assessments and I'm struggling for a reason to decrease them when you'd rather do tabs.*

*Townsend: I can't move them, I can't drive.*

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*Townsend: I'm working on, I'm willing to work on it. I'll get the cars moved and a platform for the cars to be on.*

*Moermond: moving the cars versus driving, I am struggling with. What's the difference?*

*Townsend: I was in the hospital so wasn't able to do a lot. I had the trash hauled away a few months back. I didn't put it there. I had to take the roof off my garage. That's how the trash started, off the roof and into the trailer. The next batch was from the house, some from my neighbor's yard. I had to haul it away. I just need more time to get what you want. We want the same thing. I want plates and tabs on the cars and a platform down.*

*Moermond: these go to Council tomorrow. You missed the December hearing, and you didn't call until recently. We had you on two weeks ago and couldn't leave a Voicemail. I'd like to get a plan from you for how you're going to deal with the vehicles. And that needs to be soon. You need to talk to Department of Safety & Inspections about having a parking area there or get those vehicles removed. They can't be there unless you address the situation.*

*All I can tell you is they aren't ok where they are at now, so you need to figure it out or the City will keep charging you. It is a lot of money if it keeps going on. I would like to help you but you also need to help yourself.*

*Townsend: as I said I tried to find your location so we could get some understanding, I didn't know I needed your approval to put down some asphalt? If you say so.*

*Moermond: you can achieve compliance by putting plates on, getting them running, and on a legal surface in your yard OR removing them. One or the other. That is up to you. We'll talk again April 1 and look at this again.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

**23**     [RLH TA 25-131](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 435 VAN BUREN AVENUE. (File No. J2506E, Assessment No. 258305) (Refer to April 1, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

**Sponsors:**     Bowie

*Refer back to LH April 1, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion.*

*John Townsend, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: I'm calling about three tax assessment appeals for 435 Van Buren. Looks like we have a lot going on. [Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this is regarding a Vehicle Abatement Order issued February 29, 2024 for multiple vehicles without current tabs, parked in the yard. Issued orders to remove or make code compliant. Two Excessive Consumption fees totaling \$303. That's from May 28 and June 12 for noncompliance. Another \$303 for June 26 and July 10 and one more \$169 from July 25. Again, the vehicles were still in noncompliance at that time.*

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*Moermond: are they still there?*

*Townsend: they are, the only thing gone is I got the trailer dumped and put back. I can't move them because I can't drive due to my medication.*

*Moermond: did you talk to the inspector at all about your situation?*

*Townsend: yes, I talked to David Smith last year.*

*Moermond: did you try calling a tow company to bring to scrap yard?*

*Townsend: you want me to scrap my 2017 truck in my backyard? That's what you're telling me?*

*Moermond: just asking if you looked into that.*

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*Moermond: it is costing you a lot of money while you make that decision.*

*Townsend: I had a brain aneurysm.*

*Martin: from all the photos taken on reinspection, the trailer is empty, or has different items in it, so clearly someone is helping you. Different things each time photos are taken. The trailer comes and goes so clearly someone could help him move the vehicles.*

*Townsend: I had one person who comes and help me move the trailer one time. I had to pay for all the stuff in the trailer, including the stuff my neighbor dumped in my yard. My neighbor illegally dumped the stuff in my yard. I had to take it to the dump.*

*Moermond: tell me what your plan is for the cars.*

*Townsend: I want to put plates on the car and I want to put down asphalt for the vehicles. A platform for the cars. I just need more time.*

*Martin: the backyard is not an approved parking surface. He'd need an approved site plan. There is no parking in the backyard in the City of St. Paul.*

*Moermond: it isn't as simple as putting down asphalt. It is a major change to the property and needs to be reviewed by the City.*

*Townsend: here's my problem. I went there and it didn't exist. There was nowhere to drop off anything.*

*Moermond: 375 Jackson?*

*Townsend: yes, that's where I went. There is nowhere in that building to see anyone. No live person to talk too.*

*Moermond: on the second floor there's a desk—*

*Townsend: no, there's not.*

*Moermond: maybe you weren't on the second floor?*

*Townsend: I was there. I went down to try and find it. Then I had to go to the post office. The post office is right across the street.*

*Moermond: its not 395, its 375, was that the problem? It's Between Jackson & Robert and 5th and 6th street and the parking lot off the back on 6th.*

*Townsend: no, there's no parking lot, just one under the building. I was trying to pay you.*

*Moermond: I'm trying to clarify so you can go there in the future because the 200 people who work there didn't move. I think there's just some confusion.*

*Townsend: like I said, I came up off the back through Jackson, on the bottom floor, ground level. Got to the second floor.*

*Martin: you don't go into the basement. Park in the lot off 6th and the security guard will direct you to the second floor.*

*Townsend: you're saying I went in the wrong side? I came off Jackson.*

*Moermond: regardless, I have these 3 tax assessments and I'm struggling for a reason to decrease them when you'd rather do tabs.*

*Townsend: I can't move them, I can't drive.*

*Moermond: you need to figure out a way to deal with it. They can't be there as they are.*

*Townsend: I'm working on, I'm willing to work on it. I'll get the cars moved and a platform for the cars to be on.*

*Moermond: moving the cars versus driving, I am struggling with. What's the difference?*

*Townsend: I was in the hospital so wasn't able to do a lot. I had the trash hauled away a few months back. I didn't put it there. I had to take the roof off my garage. That's how the trash started, off the roof and into the trailer. The next batch was from the house, some from my neighbor's yard. I had to haul it away. I just need more time to get what you want. We want the same thing. I want plates and tabs on the cars and a platform down.*

*Moermond: these go to Council tomorrow. You missed the December hearing, and you didn't call until recently. We had you on two weeks ago and couldn't leave a Voicemail. I'd like to get a plan from you for how you're going to deal with the vehicles. And that needs to be soon. You need to talk to Department of Safety & Inspections about having a parking area there or get those vehicles removed. They can't be there unless you address the situation.*

*All I can tell you is they aren't ok where they are at now, so you need to figure it out or the City will keep charging you. It is a lot of money if it keeps going on. I would like to help you but you also need to help yourself.*

*Townsend: as I said I tried to find your location so we could get some understanding, I didn't know I needed your approval to put down some asphalt? If you say so.*

*Moermond: you can achieve compliance by putting plates on, getting them running, and on a legal surface in your yard OR removing them. One or the other. That is up to you. We'll talk again April 1 and look at this again.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

### Special Tax Assessments - Rolls

- 24 RLH AR 25-30** Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during November 11 to 20, 2024. (File No. J2513R, Assessment No. 258524)
- Sponsors: Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**
- 25 RLH AR 25-31** Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during November 25 to December 6, 2024. (File No. J2514R, Assessment No. 258525)
- Sponsors: Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**
- 26 RLH AR 25-32** Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during December 4 to 20, 2024. (File No. J2515R, Assessment No. 258526)
- Sponsors: Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**
- 27 RLH AR 25-33** Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during December 30 to January 10, 2025. (File No. J2516R, Assessment No. 258527)
- Sponsors: Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 5/7/2025**

### 11:00 a.m. Hearings

#### Summary & Vehicle Abatement Orders

- 28 RLH SAO 25-24** Appeal of Matthew Ellenberger to a Summary Abatement Order at 983 AVON STREET NORTH.
- Sponsors: Kim
- Grant the appeal.*

*Matthew Ellenberger, owner, appeared via phone*

*Moermond: I just reviewed this with Department of Safety & Inspections staff and I'll recommend that the Council grants your appeal.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025**

### **3:00 p.m. Hearings**

#### **Water Bill Appeals**

**29 RLH WB 25-1** Appeal of Patrick Kasper, Intech Inc., to a Water Service Bill at 1055 GERVAIS AVENUE.

*Grant the appeal.*

*Kate Kluxdal, o/b/o Intech Inc, appeared*

*Moermond: this is hydrant usage fee for 1055 Gervais. [Moermond gives background of appeals process on behalf of Board of Water Commissioners]*

*Staff report by Richard Rowland, St. Paul Regional Water: the two fees being disputed are the inspection fee of \$50 in addition to the permit fee of \$200. The total bill at this point was \$295.75. There is no dispute of the recovery fee, the base fee for the additional taxes applied to that. The two fees being disputed on the conditions of the hydrant permit are \$10 plus all sales taxes per month should be applied to each permit for a 30-day period to cover the inspection and ordinary wear and tear of the hydrant. In addition to that charge \$40 plus sales tax shall be applied for each permit for a 30-day period to cover the cost of administration of the hydrant permit.*

*Moermond: the \$50 charge entails what exactly?*

*Rowland: the intent is to cover the wear and tear and inspection staff has to ensure the hydrant permit is up to our standards.*

*Moermond: the hydrant permit fee is a use fee?*

*Rowland: the intent is upon execution of the permit that the fee becomes active and remains that way until the hydrometer is brought back to us.*

*Moermond: the hydrant wasn't functioning correctly at that point, tell me about that situation.*

*Rowland: there was a work order on that hydrant on July 12, 2024 approximately. It wouldn't open and close and when that does happen generally a rod is broken that requires a full replacement which requires digging down about 8 feet to the "hydrant branch". It is a significant repair and replacement. Generally during the summer crews are busy installing water mains throughout the City and then once the larger projects are done they shift to this type of work. So yes, it was issued to a hydrant that was inactive. We do authorize the ability to move the meter on the permit. You just need to call to inform us. That's also listed on the hydrant permit itself. We do not track active use of the hydrant at this point. Once we issue that hydrant permit adapter it is being used for that associated purpose at that point.*

*Moermond: is the hydrant fixed now?*

Rowland: it was just fixed March 7.

Moermond: any specific language in here about a specific hydrant being applied for?

Rowland: yes, on the hydrant permit there is hydrant number 005973.

Moermond: how would someone know they had the ability to access other hydrants?

Rowland: it is at the bottom of the hydrant permit, which I have highlighted. According to hydrant permit records this may be the first time they've utilized a permit through SPRW.

Kluxdal: correct.

Rowland: at the time of issuing the adapter there should have been verbal instruction as well in addition to the signed version. Given they are a first-time customer I can understand that it may be institutional knowledge the customer may not have.

Moermond: no meter was installed on the hydrant in question until after it was repaired March 7?

Rowland: I don't believe the hydrant meter was every actually used.

Kluxdal: correct.

Moermond: if the hydrant doesn't work you'd be putting a meter on nothing.

Rowland: correct. The alternative is there are additional hydrants you can use or you can return the meter back to us because you can't use it and we would end the permit and bill just based on how long the permit was issued. It was issued June 27 and returned November 20th.

Kluxdal: I don't have the date for sure.

Rowland: the current date with the current reading this bill was issued at was November 20, 2024.

Moermond: how did you come up with the time-period in question. The 5 months gives you \$200?

Rowland: yes, there is a charge of \$10 for each 30 day period or fraction thereof. That is the \$50 charge. Then the additional \$40 admin charges.

Moermond: so how do you arrive at 5 months?

Rowland: that was from issuance of the hydrant permit and receiving the adapter back that the permit was issued for. June 27 to November 20th when it had the same reading which indicated no consumption, 146 days.

Moermond: why is November 20th the date?

Rowland: that is when the meter was physically returned to us. If brought earlier we would have only charged for that duration, but it does state the City inspector came out and said there was an issue with the hydrant and said someone would be out to service

*it soon. That may be why it didn't get returned, because they were told the hydrant would be in service in a short period. That's when I went out and used our ADL report which does track location. This is in the City of Maplewood, so I wasn't sure if it was Maplewood staff who told the customer when the hydrant would be back in service.*

*Kluxdal: we are appealing the fact the hydrant never worked for the duration we had the meter. We called several times and we were told someone was going to come out and no one ever did. There were several calls and we were never told or instructed we could use another hydrant with our meter, so we didn't. But they did replace the hydrant last week.*

*Rowland: the reason for the hearing at this point is it states the City inspector came out and said there was an issue with the hydrant and someone would be out soon. Do you know who actually came out to the hydrant and told Intech staff?*

*Kluxdal: I am not sure, I was just asked to come represent Intech today and I have some knowledge of what was happening, and I used to handle these things and then it was given to another employee who is on medical leave so now it is back on my plate. I do know Chad had taken over for the employee that had gone on medical leave and the one who had called in.*

*Moermond: because it never hooked up got it. I go to water utility code we operate under and hydrants are under SPLC chapter 90.01, use of hydrants. What I see is the second sentence says "no person shall, without authority, use or interfere with any fire hydrant. The water utility may permit water to be used temporarily from any fire hydrant for other than domestic purposes." What I'm spinning on here is "may permit water to be used". But a permit was issued for use of water from a hydrant which did not operate. I'm struggling how this permit was issued correctly if it was impossible to access water from that particular site. It does have a footnote under the signature section in the application "in order to move the hydrant meter to another location you must notify dispatch." It doesn't say, hey if your hydrant doesn't work here are the steps to take. What I'm stuck on is "may permit water to be used" and there is nothing to be used from the hydrant for which an application was made. For that reason I'm going to recommend the Water Board grant your appeal.*

**Referred to the Board of Water Commissioners due back on 4/8/2025**