



# 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*  
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*651-266-8585*

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Thursday, July 25, 2024

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

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#### 9:00 a.m. Hearings (none)

Special Tax Assessments

#### 10:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 1     **RLH TA 24-278**     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 818 CHARLES AVENUE. (File No. CG2402A2, Assessment No. 240114)

Sponsors:     Bowie

*Approve the assessment, noting it has already been paid.*

*Daniel McNellis, owner, appeared via phone*

*McNellis: we paid it because we realized we were in the wrong.*

*Moermond: we will close the file and wish you a good rest of the day.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 8/14/2024**

- 2     **RLH TA 24-280**     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 159 GRANITE STREET. (File No. CG2402A2, Assessment No. 240114)

Sponsors:     Bowie

*Reduce assessment from \$154 to \$77.22.*

*Bruce Scott Johnson, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Jillian Barden: property owner states it is currently vacant and has been for a number of years under the City's Vacant Building program. The hauler has verified every balance on this account since October 2018 has been sent to the City for certification. An Unoccupied Dwelling Registration Form is currently on file with Waste Management with a start date of July 1, 2024. The property owner believes*

assessment should be reduced.

Moermond: so a new Unoccupied Dwelling Registration Form is in saying no one lives there and we don't need service. That applies to the third quarter, which just started. Mr. Johnson, why are you appealing?

Johnson: I notified Waste Management, in writing, a year ago in May that the property was vacant and not to provide service. I got this bill in June so I called and talked to Sarah and said "Sarah I'm getting a Code Compliance and I keep getting these bills." She said let me put a stop to that. I haven't been using the service at all. My neighbor at 157 has been using it, I think, because he doesn't have service. He purchased in 2023 and still doesn't have service at his house.

Moermond: was this looked into?

Barden: it was recommended we send a letter to owner at 157 to set up an account, so he doesn't have an account.

Moermond: so Waste Management would report they are picking up at 159. With no account it means there's no can at 157?

Barden: that's correct. No name on file means no container.

Moermond: you've been in the Vacant Building program since May of 2022. Has this been a problem this entire time? Did you not know the service continued?

Johnson: I sent a note right away to Waste Management in 2022. I assumed it stopped service. The neighbor next door I don't think ever had service. They're connected townhomes but we have no association. Looks like one building but it is really too. She's always just used it and never paid for service. August 2023 is when the new owner took over at 157, Mr. Post. When I talked to Sarah about it, I said I'm finding garbage in the can but we don't have service but we are still getting billed.

Moermond: so you thought the can there was actually 157?

Johnson: yes.

Moermond: the bills went to Ansel Johnson on Mound, but you live there too?

Johnson: yes, that's my dad.

Moermond: there must have been notices of nonpayment that went out.

Campbell: notice of non-payments go out every month until it goes to assessment.

Moermond: so for July, third quarter, they'd get one August 5 and September 5 but not October 5?

Campbell: they do send one the third month saying this is a final notice, it has been sent to the City. An additional letter comes out from the City saying now you owe us.

Moermond: so notices from the hauler as well as the City for nonpayment. Have all of these gone to assessment?

*Barden: since 2018.*

*Moermond: is your father not opening the mail? That sounds like a lot.*

*Johnson: we aren't asking for all of them, just from January.*

*Moermond: you want what ?*

*Johnson: the last one to be waived. I think you should bill the guy next door.*

*Moermond: that's kind of a private matter between you folks. The City did its part in terms of providing a can. I hear you sent a letter to Waste Management, but if a letter goes into Waste Management saying they don't need service, how is that handled?*

*Campbell: they should be contacting the property owner saying if they've done that. If it is just a letter I'm not sure they'd do it without further communication. Waste Management has notes saying they have had no communication. I will say anecdotally Waste Management is a huge corporation and they don't handle mail well. We can't ask them to produce a letter they say they don't have.*

*Moermond: I'm trying to balance all these pieces and how they fit together.*

*Johnson: Waste Management said they can't tell me how many times it was picked up during that time.*

*Campbell: we requested it.*

*Moermond: I think there can be some grace here. I'm balancing the fact notices of nonpayment were sent with the fact you weren't using the service and this was complex. That is a lot of mail going out. For these two quarters I'll ask the Council to reduce it, but not eliminate it. This is \$154, I will recommend it is reduced by half, down to \$77.22. Right now, I just have the second quarter bill in front of me, but the City has now received what they need to have assessed for Quarter 2 so I can ask staff to reduce it at that level, otherwise we can process a resolution to do that.*

*Council Public Hearing is coming up if you are asking for more. That's the next stop.*

*Johnson: ok. Is the neighbor's can being resolved?*

*Campbell: yes, and I'll request that pickup information.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 8/14/2024**

**3**      [RLH TA 24-281](#)      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1243 THOMAS AVENUE. (File No. CG2402A2, Assessment No. 240114)

**Sponsors:**      Jalali

*Layover to LH August 6, 2024 at 3 pm for further discussion. Recommendation forthcoming.*

*Ishmael Barry McReynolds*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

Staff report by Jillian Barden: property owner feels like he's being overcharged. He purchased the duplex November 2023 with two 96 gallon carts already on site. The property owner is contesting the Quarter 1, 2024 charge because he is unsure what he is being charged for. Aspen did not share an itemized invoice, however, quarterly service for two 96-gallon carts is \$268.62, with the addition of service for one and a half months in Quarter 4, 2023, and late fees, this amount seems accurate. The property owner has now switched to a smaller service level and placed a unit on hold moving forward.

McReynolds: I received a bill immediately when I moved there. [Someone] was upset with me for calling and asking. I am being punished, I should have closed my mouth and paid the bill. For 3 weeks I didn't get any carts removed from my property. January, February 2024. I don't like paying extra money to anybody. I am still being charged for two cans. I was informed I could put a hold on one of the units, Jillian told me that and has been great on educating me on this. I was there for six or seven weeks total. I shouldn't have to pay a late fee on something I didn't—

Moermond: you're really muffled on and off, so just note that, we're all listening really hard.

McReynolds: I didn't even move in until December.

Moermond: that responsibility switches at closing. I'm a little disappointed that Aspen didn't provide an actual invoice. Staff can explain it, but that isn't the same as an itemized invoice.

McReynolds: I have a friend who uses them too and our bills our totally different. He lives in St. Anthony.

Moermond: St. Paul has an organized system with a contract with a consortium of haulers with set rates. I can only deal with the bill in front of me, which is the first quarter of 2024 which includes some of the last quarter of 2023. They're charging you half that quarter. We can get you the invoice, that's not a problem. What else would you like?

McReynolds: I don't want the late charges. I pay my bills. I paid them something, not sure if you see that. Whatever they sent me a bill for I paid it.

Moermond: I can't see their records. You may have been paying the second quarter bill. We can find that out.

Campbell: our records show you haven't been assessed for Quarter 2, so you did pay that April May June bill. I now you mentioned Aspen said you were undercharged. They started only billing you for one. We're talking today is just the first quarter, the \$400 that has not been paid and how we can help with that. That goes from November through March at this point.

Moermond: where did late payment notices go?

Barden: they were sent to his address.

Campbell: on the most recent bill, Quarter 3, for July they did credit the account because of the mistake and change in Quarter 2. Bill for July was only \$25 due to the credit. If you paid about \$200 in April, it was rectified on your July bill.

*Moermond: overpayment at that time because later he changed his level of service. You were billed the whole amount, and then credit the next bill to get that down.*

*Campbell: exactly.*

*Moermond: so the \$25 was just crediting the account for the overpayment. I'll lay this over to August 6 and if everything is squared away we won't need to talk, but otherwise we can just touch base on that.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 8/6/2024**