



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

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Tuesday, July 8, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 1 **RLH TA 25-299** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1181 GALTIER STREET. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Kim

Delete the assessment.

Karen interpreter from Language Line appeared via phone

Eh Say, owner, appeared

Gina Vang, ARMS worker, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: March 27, 2025 a Summary Abatement Order was issued to owner and occupant specifically to remove and dispose of furniture, tree debris, small appliances, and scattered trash from the property by April 3. April 14 the crew went out and Inspector Westenhofer notes: Trip Charge, Upon arrival, spoke with owner who was upset. Need translator on site, Owner stated she is using the tree limbs to build out a backyard garden. A few orders on the property in the past. They are just being charged a trip charge, for a total assessment of \$389.

Moermond: It looks like you bought it August 16, 2024. Is that right Ms. Say?

Say: yes.

Moermond: so the history mentioned was under the previous owner, not Ms. Say. The other thing is I will recommend the assessment is decreased now, it was an overcharge. It should be \$169. Tell me why you are appealing.

Say: at that time I was sick and my daughter cannot help me. March or April when I got the letter there was still snow. I can't clean up by myself. I asked my older son but he wasn't available to help. When school was finished my daughter could help me clean up. They said they would charge me \$400 if they cleaned it up. I cannot read or write English, and the lady told me if I don't do it they would charge me. I didn't know what to do.

Moermond: was that your ARMS worker helping you review the letter?

Say: yes.

Vang: I started working with Ms. Say the beginning of May. Prior to that she was without an ARMS worker or any assistance with her mental needs from March until when I started. She did have a bucket full of mail when I started, bills that didn't get paid etc and this took a toll. I saw the abatement, and we spoke about it. I am a little appalled, when we looked outside the pink furniture was still there. There were no after photos of the cleanup. It just shows the date of when they did the inspection on the 3rd. Did the crew actually clean up? Ms. Say can't recall since there was no interpreter when the crew was there. I think there was a lot of miscommunication.

Martin: this is just a trip charge because on arrival because they just spoke with the owner via interpreter and didn't do any work They told her to file an appeal.

Moermond: the charge is because the crew was deployed since it wasn't done on deadline. This is the cost of the crew going out, they didn't clean up anything. When did

Vang: she's always had one. The prior worker had left, I came on in June after applying. She's had an ARMS worker for 2 years I believe.

Moermond: so a gap in services due to staff lapse. As you reached out and were trying, if you commit to working with the City and your social worker I will recommend this assessment is deleted. Are any of your children 18 or older?

Say: I have one child over 18.

Moermond: that child could also make a call to get an extension on your behalf if you're having trouble connecting with staff.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 2** [RLH TA 25-279](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 534 ST ALBANS STREET NORTH. (File No. J2519R, Assessment No. 258541) (Amend to delete)

Sponsors: Bowie

Delete the assessment.

No one appeared

Moermond: in reviewing the file what we saw was we have before photos but no after photos?

Supervisor Lisa Martin: no contractor photos, correct.

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

- 3** **RLH TA 25-298** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 367 ARBOR STREET. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Noecker

Delete the assessment.

No one appeared

Moermond: recommendation from Department of Safety & Inspections to delete?

Supervisor Lisa Martin: no photos from the contractor so staff recommend deletion.

Moermond: so recommended.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 4 [RLH TA 25-294](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 427 AURORA AVENUE. (File No. J2522R, Assessment No. 258555) (Legislative Hearing July 22, 2025)

Sponsors: Bowie

Continue to LH July 22, 2025 at 9 am (unable to reach PO). CPH 7/23.

Moermond: we have an appeal, and haven't called the person yet. I had staff send an email to Department of Safety & Inspections because in reviewing the photos it wasn't clear to me very much work was actually done at the property so I was wondering what exactly led to the \$505 charge. I can see loose and scattered debris in the recheck photos. The photos were taken April 8 and it wasn't clear what the charge were for.

Voicemail left at 9:54 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Hue Tran for an appealed tax assessment for a cleanup at your property [call disconnected].

Voicemail left at 10:33 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you again about your appeal. We'll continue this case to July 22 and hopefully we can get in touch. This would be the second hearing we've scheduled so hopefully we can connect.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/23/2025

- 5 [RLH TA 25-295](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 926 CENTRAL AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Bowie

Approve the assessment (noting the assessment will be paid by title company).

No one appeared

Moermond: the current owner appealed the assessment. They purchased April 30, 2025. The orders were issued prior to his ownership, April 8, and the work done April 23, under the previous owner. That person is responsible for paying the assessment. After conversations he had with staff it looks like that amount was escrowed and will be paid by the time. I'll recommend denying the appeal noting that the assessment will be paid.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

6 RLH TA 25-300 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 956 EDMUND AVENUE. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Bowie

Approve and make payable over 2 years.

Grace Preston, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: March 21 a Summary Abatement Order was issued to remove/dispose of scrap wood from rear of the property by March 28. Was reinspected and it wasn't done. Crew was sent out and did the work April 14 for a total cost of \$444.

Preston: we got the letter and I guess I didn't understand. The photo mainly showed the wood in front of the garage, so we moved it to the back yard. I was incorrect in thinking it was ok in the yard. I don't know exactly how it works. I thought we'd complied by moving it to the back driveway area from in front of the yard, not knowing it was meant to be picked up. It was wood from redoing our house. We bought it without an inspection, which I do not recommend, and had to remove wood from back porch and had to move it because we have 3 special needs kids and 2 dogs so I moved it there out of the way. I wasn't aware it had to be out of eyesight, that was my misunderstanding. We've always complied with previous orders. Had I known I would have made sure it was completely gone because we don't have \$400.

Moermond: you're questioning rear of property and how that is defined.

Preston: yes.

Moermond: I would interpret it to include the area besides the garage.

Martin: usually the rear of the property is anything behind the home. This is the 6th order and no appeal was filed. If you have a question you can always call the Inspector as well. If there are open permits, you can't just have construction debris laying around.

Preston: I thought it was ok where we moved it. It was stacked nicely at one point, I'm not sure what happened. I'm not denying that. We've always complied with letters in the past. Again, this was completely my misunderstanding of alley verses inside the gate. We were waiting for a dumpster, we got one 2 weeks after. My kid has a CADI waiver so we worked with the County to get one and it was literally 2 weeks after that we got one.

Moermond: I'm not loving the after photos in the documentation. At the same time I do have invoicing and photos of what was done. I'll reflect on whether the after photo was sufficient to document the work was complete. A Fair bit of scrap wood was removed, it just didn't cover the entire back yard. On balance, I'm going to recommend approval keeping in mind there were previous orders and would have been aware of the process for appealing. I understand where you are coming from in doing the work but it was in pretty bad shape. You can definitely talk to Council and see if they look at it differently. Would it be helpful to have it be over a couple of years?

Preston: yes, a couple years. I can provide proof we waited 4 months for the alley. We did clear it from the alley. I don't understand how someone can come into the property without permission, but apparently that's how that works. We had been waiting for the dumpster and the area had been completely cleared out. Our yard is contaminated with lead and have had lead poisoning from it, so some of the wood is because of that. Our 3 kids are adopted and have appointments three times a day.

Moermond: it does happen people are waiting for dumpsters, and would have been able to work with you in that case for an extension. I notice the surface is dirt?

Martin: June 19 there was another Summary Abatement Order for a mattress and broken toys behind the garage. No exterior storage, but you did bring up the wood in the dirt. That is not an approved parking area; no one can park in the yard. You'd need a site plan for approval and it would need to be paved. You do get 12 bulky item pick ups a year now, so you keep it in the garage until pickup day and call them about it.

Moermond: the area through the middle of the alley is your responsibility. That is part of your property. You pay taxes on what's between sidewalk and alley, but if you look at the deed description you'd see the other parts are yours as well but there's an easement for public right-of-way. I'll recommend this is approved and made payable over 2 years.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

7 RLH TA 25-301 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 77 FRONT AVENUE. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Kim

Approve and make payable over 5 years.

Roxanne Keller, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: Summary Abatement Order was issued April 9, 2025 to remove and dispose of patio blocks from entire property. Reinspected and work wasn't done. Sent to work crew who went out April 25 and the owner stopped the work crew so there was a trip charge, total assessment of \$389. This work was not completed.

Keller: I'm disputing this because I called Sean three times to ask for an extension on cleaning the yard. He never called me back. I was waiting and waiting. He never called back. I finally got it cleaned but before that the guys came out and I stopped them from doing any work because I hadn't heard from Sean. I asked one of the crew leads to have Sean call me, he said yes I will, but he never did. That's my appeal.

Moermond: the inspector was Ethan Wirtz but I know Sean is in charge of the work crew, tell me more?

Martin: the Summary Abatement Order was issued by inspector Wirtz and his number is listed on the orders. We do have a history here. The photograph on the 9th looks exactly like the one in the original Summary Abatement Order.

Keller: that's why I needed him to call me, because I wanted to explain that to him why it wasn't being done.

Martin: the 9th to 25th of April is quite a long time. Looks like there was an extension, a lot of time to get it cleaned up.

Keller: I didn't realize I had an extension. No one called me back.

Moermond: Inspector Westenhofer is the work crew, so that would have been after the fact. Ethan Wirtz's number is clear in the orders, as well as the Department number, and directions on how to file an appeal. I see orders issued April 9, gave you a deadline of April 16, and the crew didn't show up until the 25 so you got another week defacto. I wish the inspector would have called you back. When I look it isn't Sean's name on the order so if you were talking with him it was after the deadline already.

Keller: I called and got his name.

Moermond: he runs the crews after the inspector does the work order. If it is on his desk the deadline came and went.

Keller: I don't know what happened here and why he never called me back to explain I wasn't able to get anything done at that time. I'm fighting lung and breast cancer. I see lots of doctors. At that time, I had back problems due to my medication. That's why I called Sean.

Martin: in the future you can call the inspector, but maybe we can email her the House Calls brochure.

Keller: they helped me before with my gutter leakage. I appreciated it.

Moermond: we'll send that information. Talk to them about your health and there may be things your eligible for in situations like this. As far as this assessment I don't have a lot of flexibility. I can help by making it payable over 5 years.

Keller: I don't want to pay any of it. No one called me back.

Moermond: and I'm saying you didn't call in time. Calling Ethan Wirtz would have been on time. If you're talking to Sean that means the deadline has come and gone by the time you're asking for an extension. You can definitely talk to the Council about it.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 8 RLH TA 25-297** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 34 LAWSON AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Kim

Delete the assessment.

Annette Beaulieu, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: April 9, 2025 a Summary Abatement Order was issued to owner and occupant to remove and properly dispose of scattered trash,

furniture, cardboard, scrap wood, and miscellaneous debris from the entire property, especially the back yard and front porch. Compliance date of April 16. Reinspected April 16 and a work order was sent because everything was still there. Trip charge with a total assessment of \$389. Worker and Aide showed up when the crew was there. Inspector Westenhofer explained what needed to be done. No cleanup done, just a trip charge.

Beaulieu: I was in a car accident April 8, 2025 and on the 9th when they came by I was in the hospital 9 days after back surgery. I didn't have the ability to respond to the letters and call. I'm glad you're here, I haven't had a great experience with the City. It was a surprise they showed up. If you look at the history, particularly the last year, I'm doing something that isn't common in the City. I've transitioned to a pollinator state and not everyone who lives or employed to the City knows what it looks like or its benefits. I have responded when I've been sent a Summary Abatement Order and work it out. That didn't happen this time because I wasn't able to do it at all. I'm asking for no cost; once I was made aware everything was taken care of.

I don't know if it's a neighbor who is fed up with something--I'm someone who is never going to use the system as its designed because it is punitive. It is used often, from my experience, to punish others when there's a disagreement between neighbors. I don't know if it was a neighbor who complained. When I walk through my neighborhood I see homes not honoring the ordinances so it makes me think it was a neighbor. But I don't know if it was an inspector who came by and decided to hold me to a standard that isn't being applied to the others on the block, or the next block.

Moermond: if someone calls in the City has to investigate to see if it is a founded complaint and then to take action if it is by writing an order. That appears to be what happened here. We couldn't tell you who it is because the identity of the person is withheld by MN State law.

It looks like we do have a fair bit of items in the yard. I can see cardboard, a lot of branches, coolers.

Beaulieu: there is one cooler. There are cardboard boxes used to make a path. There was a doggie pool that was moved when I had a tree removed in the winter and there were gardening containers that have since been moved. Everything has been—I did call. You should have a record of a telephone call. You should. As soon as I was aware, I checked my mail—what day did they come?

Moermond: April 28th.

Beaulieu: I was in the hospital for 9 days.

Moermond: and at that time you had a conversation with Mr. Westenhofer, clear up what needed to be taken care of. I was looking to just be clear for the record I did see violations of the property maintenance code so that appeared to me to be legitimate. Your argument is you were in the hospital and unable to deal with it and couldn't get to the mail. I get that and that makes perfect sense. I was hoping we could also quick talk about your other issue you brought up around pollinator gardens. There is a great State law that describes quite liberally what constitutes native landscapes and certainly pollinating is a consideration. We can send this to you. That may help you.

Beaulieu: help me with something. The experience I've had so far is when people come out they aren't aware---they don't even know plants. I had a gentleman last year when

they were replacing the lead pipes and in the processes they wanted trees trimmed, which I did. The inspector looks at me and he says he doesn't even know what trees are. He doesn't know a pine tree, a mulberry tree. Help me---if they are supposed to be---is that education happening? I'd love to read the law but I believe what I have been doing is keeping it within the guidelines of 18" and I'm clearer of what is supposed to happen on my boulevard. Are the City employees also being educated? Because the experience I've had so far the people don't feel like they're obligated to know anything about plants.

Moermond: you don't have to be a master gardener to be an inspector. What they're trying to do is to determine whether this is an overgrown turf lawn or garden. When clarity is needed that doesn't happen in the field typically, it happens through an appeals process and we figure out what exactly we can do to make that situation complaint with the law and connect you with any resources and clear things up. They're just looking at garden versus lawn and making a determination. We'll send you that information and without seeing your yard what I can tell you is to review that and those rules and we've had luck with people putting in signs like "Native landscape" and that really helps neighbors understand.

Beaulieu: I do have one sign; I can add another.

Moermond: it is a lot about maintenance. Native plants need to be maintained too. With respect to cleanup, communication, and the trip charge. They do want to charge you for the cost of going out. I hear you didn't have the opportunity to appeal in this instance because you were hospitalized but you still have the responsibility to maintain the property. This is an exceptional circumstance. I see the mail went to you. This is a duplex, do you have someone who can help monitor the mail?

Beaulieu: I don't have anyone living in there. Just myself. The thing is, I would have responded had I not been rearended and have surgery.

Moermond: I understand.

Beaulieu: and that doesn't matter to you?

Moermond: I just said that I'm considering it, so yes.

Beaulieu: I'm sorry, I'm just trying to understand.

Moermond: I just wanted to make sure we were on the same page as far as what I was considering. We've walked through your concerns with the plantings. Ms. Martin, can you comment how to communicate with the Department of Safety & Inspections when it appears there may be a misunderstanding about orders and how to pursue if the inspector can't help?

Martin: there is the phone number and name of the inspector on the Summary Abatement Order. You can contact them, if you don't get a response you can call the general number and ask for a supervisor. It also clearly states how to file an appeal in the orders. I did review your concerns regarding the previous overhanging vegetation and it was completely blocking the stop sign and over the sidewalk. You've got several orders on that. To not get any orders you have to maintain the property. There are also resources available if you need them through House Calls, otherwise definitely reach out to Department of Safety & Inspections with questions.

Beaulieu: I have done that and communicated when I received previous orders. I will claim this, it wasn't that I was not willing to do the work but I didn't quite understand what was being requested. I just didn't communicate because I wasn't able to. I've never been in the hospital before for 9 days. Had I received the letters, had I known, I would have responded and would have taken care of it.

Moermond: first, whether or not you are hospitalized you are responsible for maintaining your yard, so in the future I would say you need to be clearly aware of that. In this particular case I'm going to recommend the Council deletes the assessment. I want to note you previously commented you aren't going to pay attention to the rules and aren't a rule follower and these are clearly rules and whether you reached out to the inspector in the past or not, I am seeing work orders associated with your property. Let's not have this issue again in the future.

Beaulieu: when did I say I wasn't following rules?

Moermond: earlier in the conversation you said this wasn't your system, you didn't believe in the City's rules, you didn't believe in the inspectors, you wouldn't be following them. That was the nature of your statement.

Beaulieu: wow. Ok. That is really misinterpreting what I was trying to say. It really is. I said I wouldn't use the system because it was punitive. In the same conversation I had said I called and worked with the inspector. That's an unfortunate conclusion you've taken from what I said. It really is.

Moermond: I'm going to beg to differ on that. I have recommended deletion and wish you a good rest of your day.

Beaulieu: I thank you for that.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 9 RLH TA 25-302** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1164 SEVENTH STREET WEST. (File No. J2509P, Assessment No. 258408)

Sponsors: Noecker

Delete the assessment (waiver on file).

No one appeared

Moermond: this is a graffiti assessment and there was a waiver on file as of June 30th.

Supervisor Lisa Martin: yes, there is a waiver on file so we'd recommend deletion.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 10 RLH TA 25-296** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 815 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)

Sponsors: Bowie

Approve the assessment.

Matt Ryan, Ryan Plumbing, appeared via phone

Greg Ryan, owner of G & J Real Estate and Ryan Plumbing, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: April 14, 2025 a Summary Abatement Order was issued to remove dispose of the trailers and their contents, trash bags, and other miscellaneous trash and scattered debris. Compliance date of April 21. Reinspected April 21 and work wasn't done. Total assessment of \$1,194 for the cleanup. No returned mail and no appeal filed. There is a history here at the property.

Matt Ryan: homeless people had taken it over. The cops came and asked if someone had mentioned kicking them out and asked if I wanted them forcibly removed. We said yes. The officer himself said they'd come in, remove them, and then the City will come in and remove their trash. After that the trash was all removed. It was all from the people setting up camp there. With the officer explaining to us it would be taken care of, we were all under the impression we wouldn't get a bill for cleaning up the tents and all of that.

Moermond: the order was sent April 14 and said clearly the City was looking for you to take care of it. I hear you say the police were saying the City would take care of it, not that there would be no charge. I can see if there is a police report.

Matt Ryan: he didn't give me a card. When he came and talked to me, I didn't see the letters personally. Greg Ryan is the owner, I'm his nephew. Maybe I'll have to get him involved in this conversation.

Moermond: that's fine. It was sent to occupant and G & J Real Estate LLC, 811 University Ave, St Paul MN 55104. The City typically will clean up public land, not private.

Ryan: it is pretty well known the homeless had taken over that area. We didn't invite these people in. Maybe I'll get my uncle involved here. That's G & J, that's Greg and John real estate. I'll hand you over to him.

[Greg Ryan joins call]

Greg Ryan: the police came in—

Moermond: can I get your full name for the record?

Greg Ryan: Greg Ryan.

[Moermond gives background of appeals process again]

[Lisa Martin gives Staff report again]

Moermond: and I was hearing from Matt Ryan you'd talked to the police?

Greg Ryan: first off, there was a homeless encampment there, do you realize that?

Moermond: yes, it looks like that kind of thing.

Greg Ryan: it was there for about a year. I was appalled at the City letting that happen.

We do have video of that there for a year, okay? Then the police came and said they would clean it up. I said GOOD, it is about time. You'll get it all cleaned up right? He said yup! No charge right? I have run a business for 40 years. I know how you guys work. I did get the notice to clean up and then a short window because our mail wasn't received. There was about a day notice. I thought the St. Paul Police Department was taking care of it. An Asian police officer came and we had a long discussion and they will clean it out. It is about time the St. Paul Police Department or City does something. Thought it was getting cleaned up compliments of the City since they created this homeless mess. That's my story, then I got a bill for \$1,000.

Moermond: I was going to look into seeing if there was a police report and then continue the conversation.

Greg Ryan: I do have video of the police officer visit and his badge number somewhere.

Moermond: let's lay this over to July 22 and do a Staff report on it. We'll send a follow up letter to Ryan Plumbing and we are happy to accept any materials they want to provide.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

10:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 11 [RLH TA 25-275](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1762 ENGLEWOOD AVENUE. (File No. VB2510, Assessment No. 258810)
- Sponsors:** Privratsky
- Recommendation forthcoming pending review of PO work plan.*
- Update 7/14: continue CPH to 8/13 and recommend reduction from \$5,077 to \$2,539 if CC certificate is issued by 8/13 (per LHO).*
- Mike & Lana Mortimer, owners, appeared via phone
Brad Eggen, attorney, appeared via phone*
- Moermond: when we last spoke June 10th it was clear that we needed a plan, and follow up communication indicating that. I wanted an end game on how that will be done. We haven't received anything.*
- Eggen: I've been playing catch up on this issue. I know the Court is fatigued with this. There was a significant health setback. Mike got back out of the hospital a week ago. He's 80 years old. When we spoke yesterday I said I will try to connect with the inspector's office. Mike is impressed with Clint Zane, I wasn't successful reaching him. I also spoke with Matt Dornfeld, I could argue this doesn't fit the description of a Vacant Building and I don't know how productive it would be. Matt was very professional but couldn't discuss because it is in the hands of the Legislative Hearing officer. I was able to get Mike to go out yesterday and he's reported back that the plumbing is ready to go, ready to be done in a week. Electrical is adding fixtures, a one-day project. Heating is done and had a meeting with Xcel to make sure the meter is reading but they never showed. I also got some cooperation from Mai Vang to get a*

copy of the file, she was helpful but almost all of it was from 2018 which is nearly 3 years prior to the fire.

I'd hoped the work plan would be filed but with Mike's health. We're wondering what a realistic time frame to get meaningful information in your hands. Mike would tell you by early August it should be done. Lana may say that's overly optimistic.

Moermond: I don't know how I could have been clearer about the expectation. The letter from my office says I needed that plan, not we'd be discussing it today. If Mr. Mortimer needs to hire a contractor then that's what should be done, because it is costing more in Vacant Building fees and attorney's costs. Regarding it being a Vacant Building the Council voted on that already and said it was, I can't engage in that. I need a solid plan and need to be done with this.

The City just did a Building Deficiency inspection on July 1. I don't see any follow up on that yet. Typically, they will send a letter in a couple of weeks so you'd be staring down something even more serious. This needs to get done. You don't want to be involved in a nuisance abatement procedure. That's looking at demo. We don't want to do that. You got to get it done because they're raising the stakes on this. Hire someone, time is of the essence. If it is done it short-circuits the whole conversation. I'm disappointed I don't have a plan in front of me now. The request was for a record of all the appeals associated with the property, which is a very large pile. That is what was sent. All that is in front of us today is the Vacant Building fee assessment. Hopefully we can get it pro-rated. We're kind of in a bind with you coming forward with an end-game. A verbal report isn't going to cut it. An actual plan. A simple worksheet was sent a month ago. When can you have it to me? I'm looking for it in a couple days.

Eggen: I will work with them to get something there as quickly as possible. It should be a matter of documentation.

Moermond: your Council Public Hearing is July 16, and I was hoping for a work plan IN MY HANDS and ask them to continue it a couple weeks to hopefully prorate it. I don't have that. We've been running into the same issues for years. You need to expedite it is worth the money at this point.

Eggen: I will work hard with Mike and try to get a document to you by the end of this week.

Moermond: every month that passes makes it harder for me to prorate. I look forward to getting that information from you.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/16/2025

12 [RLH TA 25-303](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1030 FREMONT AVENUE. (File No. CRT2510, Assessment No. 258209)

Sponsors: Johnson

Layover to LH July 22, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion.

Rebecca Nguyen, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Der Vue: this is a fire Certificate of Occupancy renewal

inspection. The first invoice with a bill was sent, no payment. Final invoice sent; with no payment it was sent to assessment. Total assessment of \$398.00.

Moermond: the Department of Safety & Inspections has no record of receiving payment, so it was sent to assessment.

Vue: correct.

Nguyen: I resided in Minneapolis and the City didn't have my correct address so when they have sent out---this is way before---I didn't want to pay the late fee because I was not aware. May 9 I received a letter saying I have an inspection but it had the wrong address. I never got the one before that. I was really out of the loop on when these inspections were. I do have the email I sent to the City to please fix my address on May 21. Since then, they didn't do that. I received 2 more letters about Fire inspections but it was days or weeks later. I am appealing due to the late fees which I don't agree with. I did pay the Fire Certificate of Occupancy fee May 21 for \$239.

Moermond: do you have any confirmation that payment cleared your account?

Nguyen: I do.

Moermond: I'd like to see that. With respect to the address, if you called in May it was after all these other things happened. Your address in Edina is still the address with Ramsey County taxation as well. They sent the assessment letter, which you must have received, to that address to. Why don't you send me proof payment was sent and cleared and we can continue this. We'll talk again in 2 weeks, July 22.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 7/22/2025

13 [RLH TA 25-310](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1323 PAYNE AVENUE. (File No. CRT2509, Assessment No. 258208)

Sponsors: Kim

Reduce the assessment from \$615 to \$387.

Jim Barnard, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Der Vue: this is a commercial property with 2 separate building on the lots. They have separate Fire Certificate of Occupancy files per ordinance. An inspection was done of both buildings and 2 separate bills were sent with the same amount, which is typical. One for the main building, invoiced March 31 and paid by check. The billing for garage was invoiced February 28 and it was unpaid and sent to assessment after the final notice March 31, 2025.

Barnard: we were inspected the end of February I believe. He looked at the building, went outside and didn't even go in the garage, said it was a separate building. I told him we were going to be out of town for a month beginning March 1. He said that was fine. I'm not sure when we were invoiced the second time, my thought was I had no idea that it was a separate bill. It says, "per statute" and I've asked where it is stated and called around because a house and garage isn't a separate address. This has no water, electricity, it is just storage. Why would it be any different for commercial. Someone said if it was connected to the actual building it would be one building. I'm

just wondering where this separate fee, I pay taxes on the building and I am paying another \$225 for just a garage. That's what I don't understand. That's where my appeal comes from. I need clarification that this just isn't something that was just done at some point because it was easier in the software. That's what it seems like. It wasn't a separate inspection, it was one inspection.

Vue: chapter 40 of the code, which covers the Fire Certificate of Occupancy, this is where it covers that all separate buildings on the same commercial lot require a separate Fire Certificate of Occupancy.

Barnard: I did look that up. I called the Minnesota Fire Association based in St. Paul, is that Certificate of Occupancy just in St. Paul? Because that isn't a Minnesota thing.

Moermond: yes. The City does have a Fire Certificate of Occupancy for commercial buildings. Ms. Vue is correct that it is in the definition of existing building. Two other points, I would say it is arguable about whether it is a separate use. I do know separate standards are applied in inspections, unlike a residential property. This is two different buildings both being used for commercial purposes. I would say that needs to be examined closer. When you purchased the building, and I'm not sure of the disclosures, the storage building itself I can see it had a Certificate of Occupancy in 2010, again in 2013, 2016, and 2020, now again today. It does have a significant history of being defined as a distinct building and Certificate of Occupancy. I'm happy to look at those definitions closer, but my initial interpretation is it is appropriately classified as a separate building. I will review Code one more time and see if it changes my interpretation.

Barnard: can I find out when the statute originated? Is there literature showing it was voted and agreed upon? Where does it come from?

Moermond: you're asking when it was grandfathered in?

Barnard: I guess it seems because we cannot point to where it says specifically it was brought up and statute voted on on specifically. Is this a case where someone said in the 1970's they just added to a statute. When did we decide we were doing this?

Moermond: it is in the Code so it was adopted by the Council. In terms of doing Legislative research for you but you are welcome to look up Chapter 40 but yes it was voted on by Council. There's no other way to do that.

Barnard: it is our first commercial building and I certainly don't want to be a thorn I'm just curious about it. It is a lot of money for something we never even had an inspection on. That's where I'm coming from.

Moermond: with respect to the inspection of the garage, Ms. Vue, can you get more information from the inspector on that?

Vue: I can, I would be happy to.

Moermond: we'll do that and follow up for you. Your appeal is next Wednesday.

Follow up: Moermond: the assessment is \$456 plus service charge. After doing some digging, Mai found out the \$456 charge was double what it should have been because both the building and garage had Certificates and he'd already paid one. That's \$228 for a total assessment of \$387 which will still be reviewed for Code.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/16/2025

Special Tax Assessments-ROLLS

- 14 **RLH AR 25-63** Ratifying the assessment for Rubbish and Garbage Clean Up services during April 9 to 28, 2025. (File No. J2523R, Assessment No. 258557)
Sponsors: Noecker
Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025
- 15 **RLH AR 25-64** Ratifying the assessment for Collection of Fire Certificate of Occupancy fees billed during March 5 to 31, 2025. (File No. CRT2510, Assessment No. 258209)
Sponsors: Noecker
Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025
- 16 **RLH AR 25-65** Ratifying the assessment for Excessive Use of Inspection or Abatement services billed during December 23 to January 22, 2025. (File No. J2511E, Assessment No. 258318)
Sponsors: Noecker
Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025
- 17 **RLH AR 25-66** Ratifying the assessment for Graffiti Removal services during August 2, 2024 to February 25, 2025. (File No. J2509P, Assessment No. 258408)
Sponsors: Noecker
Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025
- 18 **RLH AR 25-67** Ratifying the assessment for Removal of Diseased and/or Dangerous Tree(s) service during April 2025. (File No. 2505T, Assessment No. 259006)
Sponsors: Noecker
Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

11:00 a.m. Hearings

Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements

- 19 [RLH SAO 25-10](#) Making finding on the appealed of Michael E. Corcoran to a nuisance abatement ordered for 1478 AMES AVENUE in Council File RLH SAO 24-51.
Sponsors: Yang

Nuisance is not abated, authorize DSI to take action to abate the nuisance related to SAO. CN for vehicles to have new orders issued as VAO. Building permit concerns regarding the home and attachments thereto are referred to DSI for further enforcement.

Michael Corcoran, owner, appeared

Moermond: I think our expectation was everything would be taken care of by now?

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: September 10, 2024 Mr. Corcoran was issued the orders from Department of Safety & Inspections. We had some deadlines in place: August 1, 2025 for some roof items; April 1 and now July 1 for the balance of the orders. As of today I did receive a new complaint on the property regarding wood pallets, tires, plywood and miscellaneous debris, metal and scrapping. I did go out this morning. The St. Paul Police Department did chalk some vehicles parked on the street that belong to Mr. Corcoran. Those vehicles are now back on the property. There's a lot of wood and construction debris. The one vehicle is on a trailer in the driveway he was going to get rid of. I asked Jason Brash for an update on the permits, he said he was onsite November 27 and went over project with property owner and he hasn't been contacted to return. As far as he is concerned there's been no forward movement on the project. Photos in the file. He's made progress but there are still a lot of items out there.

Moermond: we made deadlines in thirds to try and make it easier. I'm hearing it isn't done yet and still an open permit.

Corcoran: I'm kind of losing my mind on this thing. I talked to Jason, left him a Voicemail telling him I don't want to complete the roof project, the porch. I want to just take it down. That was 2 weeks ago. I didn't hear back from him about that. I have a phone number change, not sure if you tried to call me, starting in May and had a terrible time with the service. Finally got that figured out the second week in June.

We've had numerous problems. [multiple health problems explained between wife, himself, and daughter]. I work 50 hours a week and sometimes I get home and just can't move anymore. I made myself a mess with this property, I just can't believe it. I know I should just hire someone. I've come to my senses. I built it 25 years ago and have accumulated since then.

I really hope you can let me finish my mission. I get excited when I'm getting this stuff done. I built my house for a reason there and people come by and say I have a beautiful home, and I think what have a done here with this mess? I am working on it really hard. I'm excited to finish things up if you are considering giving me more time. It doesn't bother me if you have to charge me but give me a chance to finish things up the way you want. I appreciate what you guys are doing and when I'm doing something wrong, and you have to tell me or charge me, I'm ok with that. Whatever it is. I would like to be able to finish. I just need the time to do it after everything that's happened. Unforeseen circumstances just keep coming at us. I'm junking parts off the car and then I can get rid of that one. I did talk with this woman, Melissa Doody regarding car ports and I just can't seem to get a clear understanding of those and how they work along with the driveway and proper parking surface, sizing. But I haven't talked to her for months, before all the crazy stuff started happening. I don't know if you're ok with what I talked to Jason about, but I thought maybe I should call Willie Williams about my porch roof. I want to take it down. You wanted it down last time we spoke. I just came to the point of saying I can't do it right now. I'll just take it down. I had a huge

cottonwood tree, now there is no shade and that's why I put that thing up illegally. It was dropping all those things down on us. I can see why I did so many things while I'm cleaning up my mess.

Martin: I did send a message to Jason Brash with your new phone number so he can reach you. I let him know that you called a couple weeks ago and want to scratch the whole roof thing and then remove. Not sure if you need a demo permit or not, that's something you'd want to ask him about.

Corcoran: that's more materials too, and they're good materials. I want to talk to him about the best way to do this.

Moermond: he has limited ability to design a project for you. You're coming in for a permit.

Corcoran: I understand.

Moermond: we have a mess with several pieces. A mess in the yard. In complete stairs, decking, and then the vehicle situation. What I will say is you had a July 1 deadline, a year from the original orders. A generous extension to deal with this. The Summary Abatement Order cleanup items would be the storage in the trailers, the storage throughout the yard that wasn't specifically exterior items like a picnic table. Then the original vehicle order was a Correction Order, so next step would be a Summary Abatement Order.

Martin: we will issue new orders.

Moermond: I'm going to put this in front of Council July 23. I'll get a staff update July 22. There's an order out there on yard cleanup. No compliance with getting it all done. I'm going to say it isn't done, authorize the Department of Safety & Inspections to clean it up.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/23/2025

1:00 p.m. Hearings

Vacant Building Registrations

- 20 [RLH VBR 25-27](#) Appeal of Stacy Roxberg, Cottage Investments, to a Vacant Building Registration Fee Warning Letter at 1083 SIXTH STREET EAST.

Sponsors: Johnson

Deny the appeal and waive the VB fee for 90 days (to August 5, 2025). Property to remain a Cat 2 VB and require CCI.

Stacy Roxberg, Cottage Investments, appeared via phone

Staff update by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: Inspector Hoffman was out June 30th, took some photos, and believes this should be a Category 2 Vacant Building. He did find many code violations.

Moermond: staff recommendation is that this be a registered Vacant Building, Category 2.

Roxberg: I've already stated I have plumbers, heating, electricians lined up. I still don't feel it even meets the criteria to be a Vacant Building to start with. By making it a Category 2 we're just delaying getting it occupied again.

Moermond: I don't agree with you on that, I think it does meet the definition of a registered Vacant Building. It is unoccupied and has multiple housing and code violations. That means you need that Code Compliance inspection to create that punch list. Sounds like you may know that process. What I can do is recommend the Council give a waiver for 90 days from when this went into the Vacant Building program. If it takes longer it can be appealed as a special tax assessment and talk about prorating it.

Roxberg: you're talking the \$2,500 fee? It takes 6 to 8 weeks to even get the Code Compliance.

Moermond: I don't think they're pushed out that far.

Roxberg: what if it takes that long? I've seen them take longer. Maybe Mr. Dornfeld can let us know how far they're out now.

Moermond: he's not on that team, he's not a trades inspector.

Roxberg: doesn't he do the building part of it?

Moermond: no, that's Mr. Clint Zane looking at the building code.

Roxberg: I'm told that the Vacant Building fee has to be paid before we can do the Code Compliance and pull permits.

Moermond: which is why I'm recommending the 90-day waiver to August 5. Council Public Hearing of July 23.

Roxberg: is that when you're calling me back?

Moermond: no, that's when my recommendation goes in front of Council that the appeal be denied and recommend a 90-day waiver.

Roxberg: I will order the Code Compliance inspection, but 90 days isn't a legitimate time frame. We're already 60 days into that.

Moermond: yes, and the Council may look at things differently.

Roxberg: I guess I'm confused. What do I do?

[Moermond gives background of appeals process again]

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/23/2025

- 21** [RLH VBR 25-28](#) Appeal of Jeff Zajac, Kindred Holdings LLC, to a Vacant Building Registration Notice and Summary Abatement Order at 235 CLEVELAND AVENUE SOUTH.

Sponsors: Privratsky

Grant the appeal (property to be a prelim Cat 1 VB and reviewed in a year).

Pat Zajac, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Mitch Imbertson: this is a 1,700 commercial occupancy most recently used as a dry cleaning shop. The Certificate of Occupancy was revoked in August of 2022 due to not being occupied. We were monitoring as revoked unoccupied that would have to be recertified before reoccupancy. We had a building permit issued 10/27/24 for demo of concrete flooring for plumbing work. That is still open with no inspections. That's the only permit I see so far. We also had a couple Code enforcement complaints for graffiti and snow on the sidewalk. Based on that it was referred to the Vacant Building program due to the Code calls for service and receiving a complaint about the awning and dumpster sitting in front for a long time. That's what we found met the definition of a Vacant Building .

Staff report by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: we opened a Category 1 Vacant Building on June 3, 2025 per the Fire inspection Certificate of Occupancy revocation referral. We did issue a Summary Abatement Order June 12 for some junk and debris, but follow up enforcement is on hold due to this appeal.

Zajac: we're asking for mercy and time. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has been working 18 months going back and forth with our plan for the property. Mitigation systems updating. We should have our commercial loan the end of this month. Unfortunately we've been back and forth with banks along with MPCA in the conversations. Trying to shepherd everything through. As business owners, and I live a block and a half away, we are certainly not making money with it being closed but we couldn't proceed until the loan is approved. Everything is demolished and ready for the next phase once we get bank approval. We'd been funding things ourselves, but now there will be six figures worth of concrete and mitigation systems. We should start moving forward the next 3 or 4 weeks.

The awnings were removed 3 weeks ago. The dumpster is on site as we're working through the demolition. It has been slow because we're trying to keep some of the brickwork. It will take approximately six months. We're scheduled to open end of Quarter 1 2026.

Moermond: if you're done then, you'll be in the Vacant Building program long past six months. The finish line is getting that Certificate of Occupancy.

Moermond: having had a chance to review this file and talking with staff, it looks like one of the code violations was snow but by the time the inspector got there they found there wasn't a founded violation. The other order was about debris and an awning and those were taken care of. Sending it to the Vacant Building program and creating this financial burden is maybe not proportionate to the City resources involved. I'll recommend this is made a prelim Vacant Building for a year, if they're done great, otherwise it becomes a registered Category 1 Vacant Building and noting that additional nuisance violations that may change the categorization.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/23/2025

2:00 p.m. Hearings

Fire Certificates of Occupancy

- 22 [RLH FCO 25-41](#) Appeal of Alex Miller, obo Saint Paul Public Schools, to a Fire Certificate of Occupancy Correction Notice at 275 LEXINGTON PARKWAY NORTH (CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL).

Sponsors: Bowie

Grant to October 1, 2025 for approval of alternate means of compliance and grant to February 1, 2026 for compliance with orders.

Alex Miller, facility project manager SPPS, appeared via phone

Darryl Pratte, facility project manager SPPS, appeared via phone

Supervisor Mitch Imbertson: I consulted with Inspector John Caldwell about the situation and we asked if he had any reason to set up an inspection to look at conditions and he said there was no need, was familiar with the existing conditions. He wasn't able to approve or deny based on what was in front of him at the moment. He wanted a formal request for an alternate Code Compliance method, which there is a form for. That request goes directly to the building inspection division and includes some similar information to what you gave in the appeal. You'd also need to check with inspector Caldwell about what credentials are needed for the person submitting that request.

Miller: we just fall back on the materials we submitted. I'm happy to fill out the alternative form with the same materials to move forward.

Moermond: we can forward those materials to you. I will recommend you get an extension for compliance which means approved alternative means of compliance or making the changes to come into compliance. Let's say October 1 to have an approved alternative means of compliance, and then if repairs are needed February 1.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/23/2025