1. MEETING IS CALLED TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL: Bergeron, Gunn, Hull, Meehlhause, Mueller.

   NOT PRESENT: None.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
   A. Monday, December 2, 2019, City Council Agenda.

   MOTION/SECOND: Gunn/Bergeron. To Approve the Monday, December 2, 2019, agenda as presented.

      Ayes – 5  Nays – 0  Motion carried.

5. COUNCIL BUSINESS
   A. Truth in Taxation.

   Finance Director Beer indicated this Special meeting fulfilled the City’s need to hold a Truth in Taxation hearing. He noted this meeting would allow the public a time to voice concerns and the final budget would be approved at the December 9th Council Meeting. He reviewed the proposed 2019 budget in detail indicating it was the City’s mission to provide high quality public services at a fiscally responsible rate. General fund expenditures by purpose were reviewed along with expenditures by function.

   Finance Director Beer noted the 2019 budget did not have a lot of increases. He indicated the 2020 General Fund operating budget would increase by 4.63%. He discussed the City’s revenues noting property taxes account for 67% of the City’s revenues. He reported the City was slated to receive $815,674 in LGA and only 90% of that amount was included in the budget as a precaution.

   Finance Director Beer discussed what tax dollars buy and described how the proposed tax levy would impact the median value homeowner. He reviewed the increases that were being proposed
by Ramsey County and the School District. He compared how Mounds View’s property taxes compared to neighboring cities. He reported the City strives to be a good steward of public resources by being thoughtful with expenditures that were linked to the City’s mission and priorities while also working to properly maintain the City with a commitment to ongoing improvement.

Council Member Meehlhause requested further information to the per capita numbers. Finance Director Beer reported this would be a number (such as the proposed levy) divided by the City population.

Council Member Gunn questioned how long the City would be paying on the Public Works bond. Finance Director Beer stated this would be a 20-year bond.

Mayor Mueller asked how many more years of street improvement projects the City had. Finance Director Beer estimated the City had three or four more years of street improvement projects depending on how the projects were combined.

Council Member Meehlhause inquired how much longer the City would be paying on the Fire Department bonds. Finance Director Beer indicated the City would be paying for three years on one fire truck and four years on the other fire truck. He noted the City would be done paying for Station 3 in 2025.

Council Member Hull asked if there would be any benefit to the City to pay down the Public Works bond early. Finance Director Beer reported there would not be a benefit to the City given the low interest rate that was received for the bond sale.

Further discussion ensued regarding the school district bond referendum.

Mayor Mueller asked if the Council was interested in reducing the levy from 4.63% to 3.63% in order to give residents a slight break in 2020.

Council Member Meehlhause commented he would need to find $50,000 to take out of the budget before he could support this recommendation. Finance Director Beer reported the Council would be discussing the budget at the worksession meeting which would be held after the Truth In Taxation hearing.

Mayor Mueller stated one option would be to reduce the EDA budget by $50,000 for 2020.

Council Member Gunn recommended this be further discussion at the worksession meeting.

Mayor Mueller opened the Truth in Taxation meeting for public comment at 6:31 p.m.

John Wiggins, 5053 Brighton Lane, explained he was a senior in Mounds View. He questioned how many residents in Mounds View were 65 or older living on social security. He reported his total tax bill for 2020 would go up 14% and his social security would only be going up by 1.6%. 
He indicated his utility bill was also increasing. He asked if there were any programs for Mounds View seniors to assist with rising taxes. He stated the City had to stop spending money at some point in time, or at least stop spending as much.

Council Member Gunn stated she understood this concern and commented further on how the City’s expenses were going up yearly due to increases from the Met Council, Xcel Energy and the price of gas. She encouraged Mr. Wiggins to appeal his property value with the County.

Mayor Mueller thanked Mr. Wiggins for coming forward and voicing his concerns. She understood there were other seniors in the community that had the same concerns.

Julie Borris, 5224 Sunnyside Road, agreed with the concerns raised by Mr. Wiggins. She explained she was a senior living on a fixed income. She reported her social security increase could not keep up with the increases being proposed by the City, School District and County. She explained her property tax increase was 12.3% and her home value went up $45,000. She believed this was not in proper alignment. She stated she was happy to see her home value going up, but noted she was not doing any improvements. She indicated she has lived in her home for the past 30 years and has never had this type of increase. She explained she wanted to stay in her home as long as she could and hoped that her taxes would not be the reason she had to leave her home.

Council Member Gunn questioned how often homes were to be reviewed by a County Assessor. Finance Director Beer reported this was supposed to occur once every four years.

Mayor Mueller thanked staff for the thorough report and noted the information presented this evening would be posted on the City’s website.

Mayor Mueller closed the Truth in Taxation meeting at 6:45 p.m.

6. Next Council Work Session: Monday, December 2, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.
   Next Council Meeting: Monday, December 9, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Transcribed by:

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TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.