



## City of Robbinsdale

### MINUTES

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#### CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m.

#### ROLL CALL

Present: Murphy, Parisian, Mayor Blonigan, Mayor Pro Tem Wagner

Absent: None

Staff: Tim Sandvik, City Manager; Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator; Rachel Leen, Communications Coordinator

#### DISCUSSION

##### A. Water Meter Capabilities

Mayor Pro Tem Wagner introduced the discussion. Sandvik discussed the capabilities of the city's water meters and explained the processes for alerting residents when water meters are reading high consumption levels. Sandvik shared that staff looked into software that would allow residents to log in and view their water consumption in real time and set alerts when their water consumption levels are high. Sandvik noted that staff do not recommend pursuing the software due to cost, anticipated participation levels, and confusion for current residents.

Member Murphy clarified that residents can sign up for online utility billing so that staff have access to their email addresses and can notify them via email in the case of high consumption. Sandvik noted that staff will get creative to contact residents, sometimes looking into property records or past permits issued.

Mayor Blonigan asked how many billing users the city has. Sandvik said there are around 6,000 utility accounts. Mayor Blonigan is in agreement with staff that they should not pursue the software.

Staff and Council discussed communicating with residents about the benefits of signing up for online utility billing.

Mayor Blonigan suggested transitioning to online utility billing as the default and adding a minimal extra charge for residents who want to continue to get physical bills in the mail.

##### B. Parks Naming Policy

Sandvik recounted to the Council that the Human Rights Commission (HRC) met with the Council in October to discuss considerations for renaming Sanborn Park. The HRC shared a draft policy with the Council in February and further revisions in March. Sandvik shared the current red-lined version of the policy and provided additional feedback on behalf of the Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Commission.

Member Murphy stated that he did not want to hinder any future City Council's ability to name or rename a park. Member Murphy suggested requiring a petition with five signatures from each ward in order to apply to rename a park. The Council expressed agreement about removing the clause that would preclude elected officials from having parks named after them.

The Council discussed the clause about donated or purchased assets carrying no power of direction or implied power of direction. Sandvik explained that the City's ability to accept donations is dictated by statute. Sandvik clarified that current policy allows the Council to decide how to or whether to accept a donation. Council agreed to edit the clause to enable the City to consider the donation or purchase of assets in naming a park.

Member Murphy suggested requiring applicants receive five signatures when they submit an application to rename a park.

Mayor Pro Tem Wagner commended all staff, Commissioners, and Council Members that contributed work to the draft policy.

Sandvik confirmed that staff will make the discussed adjustments to the policy and will provide an updated draft at an upcoming City Council meeting.

### C. Performance Measurement Program Annual Survey

Leen explained the Performance Measurement Program annual survey.

Member Parisian expressed support for using the same survey questions that were used in 2023. Member Parisian asked if any questions are open-ended or are answered on a scale, Kirtz clarified that the questions are not open-ended. Member Murphy asked if it is possible to add an option to provide open-ended feedback at the end of the survey. Sandvik explained the city could conduct a more elaborate community survey with statistical significance which usually cost around \$30,000-\$40,000. Member Murphy noted the city conducted a similar community-wide survey a few years ago.

Member Murphy asked how staff use the data. Sandvik noted that staff compare performance year to year and assess how different departments are doing.

Mayor Blonigan clarified that the survey respondents are self-selected.

Member Parisian suggested removing question #13 and the Council confirmed support for this.

## **STAFF UPDATES**

### A. Fuel Purchasing Agreement

Sandvik informed the Council that the city currently buys a majority of gas and diesel from Sipes to fuel the city fleet and equipment. Sandvik explained that the city of Crystal bulk purchases fuel and Robbinsdale could enter into an agreement to purchase fuel from Crystal which would result in an estimated cost savings of \$35,000-\$40,000 annually. Sandvik confirmed that the city has been receiving a reduced rate at Sipes. The Council expressed support for negotiating with Sipes before pursuing the option with the city of Crystal. Staff and Council considered that the Crystal Public Works facility is conveniently located near the Robbinsdale Public Works facility.

## B. Parks Commissioner Nominations

Sandvik explained the current policy for filling a vacancy in the Parks, Recreation, & Forestry (PRF) Commission, noting that there is a vacancy in the Ward 2 Commission seat. Since the Ward 2 City Council seat is vacant, they cannot currently appoint anyone. Sandvik received the Council's permission to nominate a Ward 2 PRF Commissioner.

## C. Commission Make-up Updates

Sandvik explained that the make-up of the city's commissions can be inconsistent. Sandvik stated that he would like to propose City Code updates that would limit commissioners to serving on one commission and make other updates to make the language more clear and concise. Mayor Pro Tem Wagner clarified that Sandvik is suggesting updating the code so that city employees are restricted from serving on commissions moving forward. Member Parisian asked for an example of conflict that would arise from this situation. Sandvik noted budgetary concerns. Council discussed allowing Robbinsdale firefighters to serve on a city commission. Sandvik received support from the Council to propose City Code changes pertaining to commission make-up.

## D. Water Tower Lighting Updates

Sandvik informed the Council that the water tower lighting has been turned off for the time being and staff are looking into options to customize the timing and dimming of the lights.

## E. City Manager Annual Review - May 2024

Sandvik notified the Council that the City Manager is due for an annual review in May. Sandvik confirmed that the Council would go into executive session to hold the manager's review at the second City Council meeting in May. Mayor Blonigan requested City Manager salaries from cities that are similar in size and geography.

# **COUNCIL UPDATES**

## A. Discussion on Crysal and Twin Lake Regulation(s) Enforcement

Mayor Blonigan shared with the Council his opinion that City Code language should be updated to classify Lower Twin Lake as a "no wake lake" all the time. Mayor Blonigan explained issues with enforcement of this policy. The City Code as it is written currently places enforcement responsibility with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department. Sandvik stated that staff could make this a priority and discuss it with the Police Chief. Council agreed that they support changing the code language to classify Lower Twin Lake as "no wake" all the time, and shifting primary enforcement responsibilities from Hennepin County to the Robbinsdale Police Department.

# **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Pro Tem Wagner adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.



Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator



Aaron Wagner, Mayor Pro Tem