

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Blonigan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Parisian, Wagner, Murphy, Blonigan

Absent:

Staff: Tim Sandvik, City Manager; Chase Peterson-Etem, City Clerk; Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator; Richard McCoy, Public Works Director/City Engineer; Noah Knapp, Mn GreenCorps Member

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Lisa Crocket, 4204 Zenith Ave N., stated she is against the Light Rail extension and that she thinks it will bisect Minneapolis and Robbinsdale and wondered why we would do this in our community. She mentioned business owners and was concerned they would be displaced.

Nick Heid, 3931 Perry Ave. N., stated he is with Robbinsdale Climate Collection and wanted to provide the Council with their ideas towards increased sustainability efforts, including:

- Start a climate commission
- Expand Home Energy audit subsidy
- Upgrade the cities' fleet to electric vehicles
- Ban idling cars, including police cars
- Be more transparent regarding PFAS in water sources
- Increased enforcement on littering and trash in public areas

Mary Ambrose, 3860 Lakeland Ave. N., noted the trash throughout the city and is particularly concerned about the trash in the lakes, especially Crystal Lake, since it's already a high-risk lake. She asked how the city could encourage residents to pick up trash while they walk around and suggested we promote this in our newsletters and provide additional education around this.

Al Graham, 4303 Lakeland Ave. N., asked the council to vote no to the light rail extension and noted his opposition. He stated his concern was about crime and safety and wondered if there would be an increase in the police force. He also stated he worked in the automotive industry and stated he didn't know if electric vehicles would be a good option for the police fleet.

Lauren Ballard, 3928 Quail Ave. N., yielded her time to Nick Heid. He stated he wanted the Council to also consider adding additional staff to help with sustainability efforts.

APPROVAL OF THE JULY 16, 2024 MEETING AGENDA

Peterson-Etem noted the addition of the voucher disbursement report for Other Business Item 11A.

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Parisian to approve the July 16, 2024, meeting agenda. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Blonigan removed Items G and N for further consideration.

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Wagner to approve the Consent Agenda. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- A. Receive Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission meeting minutes of April 4, 2024
- B. Approval of Credit Card Charges and Payment
- C. Deputy Registrar's Monthly Financial Statements
- D. Robbinsdale Wine & Spirits' Monthly Financial Statements
- E. Investment Report
- F. Approval of Licenses
- G. Donation of gift cards from New Hope Church

Mayor Blonigan noted he wanted to remove this item from the consent agenda to recognize the donation and thanked New Hope Church for their generosity.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Wagner to Approve the Donation of Gift Cards From New Hope Church. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- H. Annual Chamber of Commerce Meet and Greet
- I. Second reading of an Ordinance amendment to Section 510.11 Subd. 1 (f) of the Robbinsdale zoning ordinance increasing the minimum setback for detached garages with metal roofs to five feet
- J. Resolution appointing Election Judges for the 2024 State Primary Election
- K. The Gathering Community Church Event
- L. Public Safety Annual Open House
- M. Sacred Heart Church Fun Fest
- N. Police Department – Purchase of Police Vehicle

Mayor Blonigan noted that when the city purchases a vehicle, we should be titling them at the Robbinsdale Deputy Registrar, which we are doing. He also asked what the miles per gallon is for this vehicle. Sandvik stated between 15 and 20 but mentioned there may be a reduction in that as the vehicle will be fitted and have added weight. He also noted it may be idling, which could also reduce this. He noted this vehicle was factored into the Capital Improvement Plan last year and is before the Council tonight as it costs more than \$50,000, which is beyond the City Managers' purchasing authority.

Member Blonigan MOVED, seconded by Murphy to Approve the Purchase Of A Police Vehicle. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

O. Sipe's 100th Anniversary Event

P. Authorize updates to City of Robbinsdale - Employee Handbook

PRESENTATIONS

A. Minnesota GreenStep Cities Step 4 Award

Kirtz noted she is here to present this award to the Council and read a letter the city received from the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Co-Director.

Member Wagner thanked Kirtz and asked about the metrics on manholes and what the benefits would be to replacing those. Kirtz noted the quality and reliability of the infrastructure. Sandvik further explained that this metric relates to the improvement of Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) related to manholes.

Kirtz further noted that step four is awarded when you continue to report certain metrics, and step five is reached when you improve on those metrics. Mayor Blonigan asked if Robbinsdale would reach step five next year. Kirtz noted that it is likely.

Member Parisian thanked Kirtz for her work on this as well as the Energy Action Plan participants and other community members. She stated she was glad to see a push towards purchasing electric vehicles for our fleet.

B. Minnesota GreenCorps Presentation

Knapp provided an overview of what he worked on during his time with Robbinsdale throughout the past 10 months. He started by giving the Council background information on the sustainability efforts of the city thus far, and highlighted areas of focus, including the Energy Action Plan, Charging Smart, Education and Outreach, Training, General Highlights, and Looking Ahead.

Member Wagner thanked Knapp for his work and asked how the city would maintain relationships and engagement with business owners once he is gone. Knapp noted he would create a plan to continue those relationships, which could be through volunteer members of the Energy Action Plan or future Sustainability Committee. He also indicated our Sustainability Coordinator would help to maintain those relationships.

Member Parisian also thanked Knapp for all his work and stated she was part of the initial planning for the Energy Action Plan. She noted that it is exciting to see how Knapp has continued to increase the efforts and impact these programs provide.

Mayor Blonigan thanked Knapp and noted he also wonders how this work will continue once Knapp is no longer with the city. He noted the importance of Benchmarking energy use and stated working with businesses on this is a high priority.

Mayor Blonigan asked Kirtz to provide more information about an upcoming project. Kirtz noted the city issued a request for proposal for installation of solar panels on City Hall. She continued that the city is eligible to move forward with the grant process to help pay for the installation.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Permit-Chickens-4040 Regent Avenue North

Sandvik provided a brief overview and noted the applicant is requesting approval for four chickens. He noted the proper requirements have been met and staff is recommending approval of the permit with the conditions listed.

Mayor Blonigan opened the public hearing.

Lisa Crocket, 4204 Zenith Ave N., stated her neighbor has chickens, and she is in favor of the applicant.

Al Graham, 4303 Lakeland Ave. N., stated he wants to make sure the chickens would be protected from wildlife.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Murphy to close the public hearing. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Murphy to Approve Permit-Chickens-4040 Regent Avenue North. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Second reading of an Ordinance amending sections 120, 210, 815, and 2040 of the Robbinsdale City Code Relating to Lower Twin Lake

Sandvik noted there were a few sections of the ordinance that had been updated since the first reading, including enforcement and hours to operate a watercraft.

Member Wagner asked about the order of procedure and if the city needed to first hold a hearing to request a change in hours. Sandvik stated the DNR would host an open comment period first, and then the city would bring another ordinance back to Council for consideration of changing the hours.

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Parisian to Approve Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending Sections 120, 210, 815, And 2040 Of The Robbinsdale City Code Relating To Lower Twin Lake.

A roll call was taken.

Ayes: Parisian, Wagner, Murphy, Blonigan.

Nays: None.

The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. An Ordinance amending Section 310 of the Robbinsdale City Code related to the City Managers Purchasing Authority

Peterson-Item provided an overview of the item and noted the Council previously approved a charter amendment to update the City Manager's purchasing authority to \$50,000. However, the change was not made in the City Code and this ordinance will serve as a housekeeping item related to that change.

Member Wagner questioned when the Charter Commission originally discussed updating this. Sandvik noted this was a recommendation from the Charter Commission and that it was first brought up in winter 2022 and a formal request was brought to the Council in the spring of 2023.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Parisian to Approve an Ordinance Amending Section 310 Of The Robbinsdale City Code Related To The City Manager's Purchasing Authority. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

B. Council Salary Review Committee Recommendation

Peterson-Etem introduced the item and noted a Salary Review Committee is convened every even year to discuss the salaries of the Mayor and Council members. He stated the recommendation from the Salary Review Committee was for a one-time increase of 5% which would go into effect January 1, 2025.

Member Wagner thanked the Commission chairs for their time and wanted the public to know that there is community thought that goes into these recommendations, and it's important to provide a stipend for elected officials so that it's more accessible to everyone. He also asked about childcare for elected officials.

Mayor Blonigan noted his support for this and that he believes people would be more likely to run for office if there is a stipend for them.

Member Blonigan MOVED, seconded by Parisian to Approve Council Salary Review Committee Recommendation.

A roll call was taken.

Ayes: Parisian, Wagner, Murphy, Blonigan.

Nays: None.

The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

C. First reading of an ordinance amending the City Charter

Peterson-Etem introduced the item and noted the Charter Commission has had thoughtful discussions about the sections being brought to the Council and these conversations have been ongoing throughout the past year. He stated the Charter Commission is making recommendations to four sections of the Robbinsdale City Charter, including sections 2.07, 3.06, 5.13, and 5.15. He indicated the potential timeline for charter amendments and that any changes could prolong the updates.

Mayor Blonigan noted recent vacancies on the Council and indicated this change would help to eliminate those prolonged vacancies. He asked about language in the ordinance and noted possible problems he sees related to commission of a crime versus conviction of a crime.

Member Murphy stated he thinks this might be related to a specific situation that happened in the past and noted he is okay with how the ordinance is written. Sandvik noted this language isn't related to a specific circumstance and that it has been vetted by the City Attorney.

Mayor Blonigan stated he would like more information on why the language "commission of a serious crime" was used and if that section could be altered. He noted he would like to have a conversation with the City Attorney about this.

Member Wagner stated he doesn't share the concerns about a commission of a serious crime and stated he thinks that it fits into nonfeasance and malfeasance. He also wanted to make sure that if someone had a prior felony they could still run for office. Sandvik stated that would be a discussion about eligibility for office.

Mayor Blonigan reiterated his concern about section 5.13 of this ordinance and that he would like to have a meeting between the City Attorney and himself. Member Murphy noted "breach of trust" is a broad statement and that a petition doesn't need to specifically call out how they did that.

Sandvik stated he has confidence in the City Attorney, but it is ultimately up to the Council to make the

decision.

Mayor Blonigan noted he would support the first reading but wants to talk with the City Attorney and see if changes need to be made before the second reading.

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Wagner to Approve First Reading Of An Ordinance Amending The City Charter.

A roll call was taken.

Ayes: Parisian, Wagner, Murphy, Blonigan.

Nays: None.

The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- D. Award Bid for 41st Avenue Reconstruction between Railroad Avenue and Regent Avenue - City Project 44123

McCoy gave an overview of the item and noted the special assessment process for this project has not been finalized and that tonight the Council is being asked to consider having the work commence without the special assessment policy in place. He stated the work itself is to reconstruct above and below ground infrastructure as well as provide critical connective water infrastructure. He noted 7 bids were received and opened, and the low bidder was GMH Asphalt Corporation of Chaska, MN. He noted this company has done work for the city in the past and staff is asking the Council to adopt the resolution and award the contract to GMH Asphalt Corporation.

Mayor Blonigan asked if this would be paid for through bonding. Sandvik stated there is a bond package that will be decided on later this fall.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Parisian to Approve Award Bid For 41St Avenue Reconstruction Between Railroad Avenue and Regent Avenue - City Project 44123.

Mayor Blonigan noted this bid is coming later than expected in the year and is wondering if the project is still on track to be completed on time. McCoy stated yes, as this is a short stretch of road and there are not a lot of sanitary sewer or water services involved.

The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

- E. Award Bid for Construction of Extended Parking Lot at the Public Safety Building - City Project 101324

McCoy stated this project is in the Capital Works program and would expand the parking lot for the public safety building. He noted police and fire have indicated a need for more space and this would improve services as well as restrict access from the public being able to enter into the area. He stated two bids were received and staff is recommending the council award the contract to New Look Contracting, Inc. of Rogers, MN.

Member Wagner noted projects like this are expensive, but it's important that our public safety workers have the adequate needs to be responsive, and he thanked the Robbinsdale police and fire staff for their efforts.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Wagner to Approve Award Bid for Construction Of Extended Parking Lot At The Public Safety Building - City Project 101324. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

F. Authorize City Manager to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Organized Collection

Sandvik provided an overview and stated a similar process to solicit bids for organized collection was done in 2019. He noted the city currently has a different hauler for organics collection and that we are asking that proposals include organics collection, along with refuse, recycling, and yard waste. Sandvik noted the Council did discuss this at a previous work session and is now formally being asked to request proposals for organized collection services.

Mayor Blonigan asked when our current contract ends. Sandvik noted it was in April 2025 and doesn't preclude our current contractor from bidding on the project.

Mayor Blonigan asked if the RFP allows the bidder to exclude organics recycling or other services. Sandvik provided some background on organics recycling in the state and noted that the RFP would not exclude a hauler that does not provide all the services.

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Wagner to Approve Authorize City Manager to Issue a Request For Proposals (RFP) For Organized Collection. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Mayor Blonigan suggested the Council move Other Business Item A before New Business Item G. The Council agreed and took action on that Item before entering into a closed session.

G. Consider a closed session to discuss the purchase of real property

Sandvik stated the Council is allowed to enter into a closed session pursuant to MN State Statute 13D.05 subd. 3(c)(1) to discuss the purchase of real property and staff recommend a motion to move into a closed session.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Wagner to move into a closed session to discuss the purchase of real property. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed. The council moved into a closed session at 9:27 p.m.

The Council reconvened at 9:50 p.m.

Mayor Blonigan noted the Council has directed staff.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Voucher Requests Pending Approval for Disbursement

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Parisian to Approve Voucher Requests Pending Approval for Disbursement. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Peterson-Item noted early voting is still happening at City Hall and will continue until August 12 at 5 p.m. and encouraged folks to vote. He also noted Ward 4 residents who vote on election day will vote at Manor Park Building, which was changed for this election only.

McCoy stated the city received the APWA National Project of the Year and noted the plaque came in the mail today. Sandvik gave his thanks to the Council for the many years that went into the Water Treatment Plant planning and execution.

Sandvik noted several other updates, including:

- The City received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from GFOA and recognized the staff and Council effort that goes into financial reporting.
- He thanked everyone who made Whiz Bang Days a success, including public works, public safety, and the countless volunteers.

- Feedback is being accepted for the Blue Line Extension to the Supplemental Draft for the Environmental Impact Statement and that can be provided online through August 6th, or at the next public hearing meeting hosted by the project office.
- On Friday, August 9th, there will be a youth baseball clinic hosted by the Minnesota Twins Community Fund.
- He noted the city is currently accepting applications for Community Service Officers, Cadets, and Youth Soccer Officials.
- He also stated there are openings on the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee and encouraged folks to apply if interested.
- On August 25, there is the Pet and Wheel Parade starting at 5:30 p.m.
- Lastly, he noted the next meeting will be held on Monday, August 5th, as opposed to Tuesday, August 6th, because of National Night Out.

COUNCIL GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

Member Parisian congratulated the staff and city for the awards they have received recently. She also encouraged people to volunteer or donate to Whiz Bang Days.

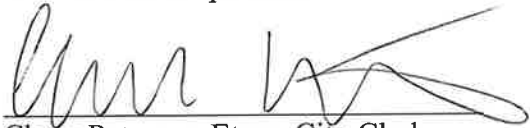
Member Wagner echoed those sentiments.

Member Murphy thanked all the staff and volunteers who helped during Whiz Bang Days.

Mayor Blonigan also recognized everyone who helped to make Whiz Bang Days successful. He also noted our rate of return on investment is good right now and wanted to discuss how we can continue to invest more during the upcoming budget discussions this year.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Murphy MOVED, seconded by Wagner to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 p.m. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.



Chase Peterson-Etem, City Clerk



William A. Blonigan, Mayor