



MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge called the meeting to order at 7:29 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Member Parisian, Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge, Member Greenberg, Mayor Sutton

Absent: Member Wagner

Staff: Tim Sandvik, City Manager; Richard McCoy, City Engineer/Public Works Director; Matt Bazyk, Recreation Services Manager; Rachel Leen, Communications Coordinator; Heather Rand, Community Development Director

DISCUSSION

A. Review Interactive Technology Attendance Policy

Sandvik shared that, effective July 1, a new statute goes into effect that eliminates the three-meeting limit for remote Council meetings and removes the requirement for a Council member's location to be posted and accessible to the public during a remote meeting. He noted that our policy will need to be updated to reflect changes.

Member Greenberg asked if state statute overrides City policy. Sandvik explained that our policy dictates what we can do. Member Greenberg stated that our own policy could keep the limit on the number of remote meetings to prevent members from attending 100% of meetings remotely, but that we should change the policy to reflect that a public meeting space is no longer required. The rest of the Council agreed.

B. Pedestrian Friendly Infrastructure Network - Discussion

McCoy shared that tonight's goal is to discuss what Council would like to see in the built-out pedestrian infrastructure network after reviewing a rough draft. McCoy highlighted that the upcoming Shoreline Drive project will require some pedestrian infrastructure decisions. McCoy discussed the engineering perspective on sidewalks, and that they only want to have sidewalks where sidewalks will be used. He noted that sidewalks also need to be maintained and replaced over time, so staff want to make sure that new sidewalks will add to the trail system in a beneficial way. He summarized that not every single street needs a sidewalk, but he is open to Council's input on other locations for pedestrian infrastructure.

Mayor Sutton asked how Engineering staff determine which areas have high demand for a sidewalk. McCoy shared that they do not count pedestrian numbers, but assume demand based on surrounding infrastructure such as parks and mixed-use buildings. Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge and McCoy discussed crosswalk infrastructure on West Broadway. McCoy added that West Broadway is currently a county road, and we would like it turned back over to the City eventually.

Mayor Sutton asked if a trail is needed on the north side of Shoreline Drive since we already have trails alongside the lake. McCoy responded that residents in that area raised that concern, and he informed the residents that the trail on the north side would better connect to some other prominent regional bike trails. He explained that some folks are against the trail on the north side due to losing trees, which will need to be

removed anyways due to street reconstruction. Member Greenberg noted that residents would like to see some line differentiation to make the trail usable for walkers and bikers so that there is not fast bike traffic only.

Council and staff discussed options for adding pedestrian infrastructure to the plan in the areas of 42nd Ave, 36th Ave and June Ave, 39th Ave, 36th Ave by Hwy 100, and 38th Ave to Lakeview Terrace Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge also highlighted the desire for some more wayfinding generally. Bazyk added that he is a part of a committee working on a Bike and Pedestrian plan, and they are also focused on improving wayfinding. Member Parisian emphasized that wayfinding should not leave out downtown navigation points.

McCoy concluded that he has good guidance for planning the infrastructure network going forward.

C. Budget Updates

Sandvik shared that a special work session will be scheduled in August to discuss the budget once more internal work is complete. Then in September, Council will need to approve a preliminary not-to-exceed budget, which sets the maximum allowable increase. The final budget is then approved in December. Sandvik highlighted key budget components, including deficit spending, the HRA levy (which includes the EDA), and an estimated monthly tax impact for residents.

Sandvik shared that the 8% increase approved last year was largely driven by personnel costs, the City's biggest expense. He showed the personnel outlook for the upcoming year and noted that COLA and step increases alone will result in a 5% rise in payroll costs. Additionally, health insurance premiums have gone up 11%. Paid FMLA will also be a new expense following recent state legislation. Sandvik noted that LGA and Fiscal Disparities funding numbers are expected in the coming months and will factor into the final budget. Sandvik walked through a few minor staffing adjustments being discussed in RPD, Administration, and Engineering. Sandvik asked Council for any target percentage increases they are comfortable with.

Member Parisian asked for a summary of levy increases over the past several years. Sandvik replied that they've ranged from 5.5% to 10% over the last 4–5 years. Member Greenberg said it's difficult to commit to a number now, but he hopes to see more consistency in levy increases over time, ideally trending down. Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge echoed the desire for more predictable levy increases.

Mayor Sutton said he's heard LGA may decrease by 2–3% and asked what items, from staff's perspective, could be put on pause to avoid a sharp levy increase. Sandvik responded that holding the levy flat would require cuts, and it would be up to staff to determine what gets reduced. Sandvik supported the idea of maintaining consistency in the levy, noting that the City does a two-year internal forecast. However, big variables like LGA make long-term consistency challenging.

Member Greenberg said he would not be comfortable with any increase over 10%. Member Parisian said she supports staying consistent and feels comfortable in the 8–10% range. Mayor Sutton said he is currently comfortable in the 5–7% range. Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge also expressed support for the 8–10% range. Mayor Sutton asked what kind of increase might be expected if there are not any additional items added to this year's budget. Sandvik estimated that an 8–9% increase would be reasonable and noted that there's some flexibility in how to manage the deficit. Sandvik concluded that based on the feedback, he will prepare materials for further discussion in the coming months.

Mayor Sutton suggested holding a town hall or community meeting to further discuss the budget and answer questions about taxes in Robbinsdale.

D. Parks and Facilities Naming Resolution and Policy Updates

Sandvik shared that following the previous conversation, a resolution stating the intention to rename Sanborn Park was created. The new policy still needs refinement, and staff are looking for Council direction on its parameters and guidelines. Sandvik proposed issuing the resolution, establishing a timeline for submissions, and then collecting resident ideas. Those name recommendations would then go to the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission (PRFC), followed by Council review based on PRFC's suggestions.

Member Parisian echoed support for PRFC involvement. Sandvik noted that if Council is comfortable, staff can add language to the resolution about opening name submissions for 30 days. Staff and Council discussed timing the name submission window around events like the Meet and Greet in September.

Member Greenberg asked what the final name decision-making process will look like, and whether Council will decide or if the community will vote on the final choice. Mayor Sutton said he would like to see the community involved in narrowing down a final name. Council agreed. Sandvik recommended gathering community feedback but clarified that Council should make the final say on a name and own that decision.

Member Parisian recalled that the first time around, Council was unable to reach consensus on a name when voting at a Council meeting, and she'd like a process in place if that happens again. She suggested narrowing down the pool to two name options in a future work session so that there will not be an opportunity for a tie vote at the Council meeting.

Council confirmed they are comfortable with the resolution moving forward to the Council meeting next week.

STAFF UPDATES

A. Organics Collection Update

Sandvik shared that logistically, things are currently going well with Republic Services. Republic Services started in April and the first bill arrived to the City in May. Right now, Republic collects around 1,000 organics bins in the city out of 5,100 households each week. Based on that percentage of organics customers, we charge all residents \$4.50 equally per month for organics based on state statute. Going into the contract, we were under the impression that the City would bill all residents, and then Republic would charge us only for the 1,000 households that they service. Sandvik explained that when we received the first bill in May, we learned that Republic charged the City \$4.50 for all 5,100 households, not just the 1,000 households that are serviced. This has led to ongoing conversations between the City and Republic. Sandvik shared that over the next few months, decisions are going to need to be made about organics, and he wanted to give Council a heads-up on the issue.

B. Upcoming LRT Discussions

Sandvik noted that LRT representatives may attend the August work session to provide an update. Staff are currently waiting for 60% engineered plans and more details on available funding. There are also plans to organize a fall bus tour with surrounding communities to visit an existing light rail site. The goal is to gather ideas for development and see how other areas have integrated light rail. Hopkins was suggested as a potential tour site. Rand encouraged Council to begin thinking about what they'd like to see on the tour and who should be invited. Council supported inviting staff from Crystal and Brooklyn Park.

Rand provided an update on anti-displacement funds. She said \$10 million is available, but recipients must provide a funding match. The advisory board created strong guidelines in the RFP, which focuses the funds primarily on nonprofits who would distribute funds directly to residents already impacted by light rail, mainly in Minneapolis. Cities are eligible to apply but must also provide matching funds. Rand expects the RFP to be released within 60 days.

Member Greenberg asked if individual businesses could apply for the funds. Rand explained that the RFP includes specific criteria, and the hope is that a nonprofit will apply with a plan to distribute dollars to businesses and individuals. The board cannot directly award funds to businesses, and an intermediary is needed to manage the distribution.

Member Greenberg asked if the Robbinsdale Chamber of Commerce could apply. Sandvik and Rand suggested that the EDA might be a better entity to apply.

COUNCIL UPDATES

Mayor Sutton asked about the public input portion of the upcoming July 15 Council meeting. Considering recent online responses, he suggested inviting Captain Elder or another RPD representative to speak about their approach to engaging with unhoused individuals and how they connect them to resources. Sandvik encouraged Council to let him know if there are specific points they'd like included in the Council memo or individuals they'd like to hear from as well.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge said the examples of RPD's approach have been helpful and asked how that information could be shared to better educate the public on City processes. Member Greenberg added that there's significant misinformation circulating about the ordinance. He stressed that the compassion and care aspects of the discussion should be highlighted.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge mentioned he may need to attend the August 4 Council meeting remotely due to being out of state.

A. Leadership Compass Self-Assessment (Blackledge)

Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge suggested moving this topic to a future meeting due to Member Wagner being absent tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Blackledge adjourned the meeting at 10:06 PM.

Signed by:

Rachel Leen

282672EBDED34F8...

Rachel Leen, Communications Coordinator

Signed by:

Raymond Blackledge

A91A6ED185224A6...

Raymond Blackledge, Mayor Pro Tem