



## **MINUTES**

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### **CITY COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

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

### **ROLL CALL**

Present: Blackledge, Greenberg, Parisian, Wagner, Sutton

Absent:

Staff: Tim Sandvik, City Manager; Matt Bazyk, Recreation Services Manager; Chase Peterson-Etem, City Clerk; Diaa Tahoun, Finance Director; Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator

### **MICROPHONE CHECK**

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

None.

### **APPROVAL OF THE JULY 15, 2025, MEETING AGENDA**

City Clerk Peterson-Etem noted the addition of Other Business Item 11A, Voucher Disbursement Request.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Greenberg, to approve the July 15, 2025, City Council agenda as amended and moving Old Business Item 9A, Second Reading of an Ordinance related to Camping on City Property, to after Item 6, Consent Agenda. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Sutton removed Item C for further consideration.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to approve the consent agenda, as revised. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

- A. Approve City Council meeting minutes from July 1, 2025
- B. Approve City Council Work Session meeting minutes of June 10, 2025
- D. Second Reading of an Ordinance Clarifying Zoning Text Code about Cannabis Business Zoning Regulations
- E. Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending the City Charter
- F. Approval of Licenses
- G. Road Closure Request
- H. Robbinsdale Wine & Spirits' Monthly Financial Statement

## I. Deputy Registrar's Monthly Financial Statements

### C. Donation from Jason Greenberg

Mayor Sutton commented that he removed Item C to thank Member Greenberg for his donation and to acknowledge the good work that he does.

Member Wagner shared the sentiments of Mayor Sutton.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to approve the donation from Jason Greenberg. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried. (In Favor: Sutton, Blackledge, Parisian, Wagner Abstained: Greenberg. Opposed: N/A)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### A. Second Reading of an Ordinance related to Camping on City Property

City Manager Sandvik introduced the history and background of the Item. He also noted that the code is not intended to be punitive, and leading with compassion has long been the intent of the Staff, and described the resources commonly utilized.

Member Parisian commented that she felt the Council should allow the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to respond to Sandvik's comments surrounding their letter, apart from the fifteen minutes allotted. Mayor Sutton expressed concern about giving other residents adequate time to speak, but noted that allowing four minutes would be sufficient. Sandvik stated he provided the feedback to the HRC prior, and he assumes the HRC's response will be tied to what they plan to say tonight.

Member Wagner commented that he felt 15 minutes was not a reasonable time to set aside for public comment, given the number of people in attendance. He asked if the Council would allow for a longer public hearing with a four-minute cap per person still in place. Council agreed.

Mayor Sutton asked Peterson-Etem to hold up a red folder at 30 seconds and noted that a timer will go off when the four minutes have completed.

Member Blackledge asked if the purpose of the Ordinance was to criminalize. Sandvik stated that the goal is always to lead with compassion and empathy.

Mayor Sutton asked where an unhoused individual is placed after an embedded social worker engages with them and they are placed with the Police Department. Sandvik stated that the words are vague to allow for the best resources available.

Member Greenberg asked if there is a process if an individual turns down resources, and asked if there are immediate consequences. Sandvik stated it is hard to answer that given hypotheticals, but it does not mean immediate consequences.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Greenberg, to open the public hearing. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried

Courtney Kirkeeng, Vice-Chair of the Human Rights Commission, stated that the HRC did not mean to criticize City Staff, but has concerns about how the language will be interpreted in the future.

Mark Welna, 5120 Parker Circle, stated that his family owns Ace Hardware in Robbinsdale as well as a store in South Minneapolis. He voiced his experience with homeless encampments and increased criminal activity occurring near the South Minneapolis store. He also shared his compassion towards homeless individuals and hopes to find a better way forward.

Naomi Wilson, a Minneapolis resident, voiced concern about camping bans, as they push unhoused people from place to place, and there are not enough shelters or resources to assist them.

Jessica Cameron, 4203 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, voiced confusion regarding the need for this Ordinance.

Kristin Crabtree, a Minneapolis resident, voiced the unintended consequences that have occurred in Minneapolis due to the camping ban in place.

Steve Carlyle, 4165 West Broadway, voiced support for the Ordinance and expressed concern surrounding sexual assaults that occur in homeless tent encampments.

Kate Richardson, Robbinsdale resident, stated the Ordinance is overly vague and appears to criminalize poverty. She also commented on the lack of shelters available.

Brady O'Rourke, Crystal resident, voiced his opposition towards this Ordinance.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to close the public hearing. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

Member Greenberg asked Sandvik if there are punitive measures attached to this Ordinance. Sandvik stated there are no monetary penalties associated, and before this, there was no rule to indicate that camping is not permitted.

Member Wagner asked if an individual would get a misdemeanor if they did not comply with the Ordinance. Sandvik stated there would be an opportunity for interpretation between an administrative penalty or misdemeanor.

Member Blackledge thanked everyone who shared their thoughts with Council. Member Blackledge asked if Council is concerned with future interpretation of the language chosen and asked if Council can change the Ordinance at a later date. Sandvik stated that the vague language gives room for interpretation and stated that the Code can be repealed later.

Member Greenberg asked if there was language in the Public Safety Code regarding how law enforcement is to interact with individuals experiencing homelessness. Sandvik stated that it was an established policy of the police department.

Member Parisian thanked Staff for the work they have put into this Ordinance and thanked the public for their thoughtful comments. Member Parisian stated she would be voting no on this second reading of the Ordinance and believes it was rushed and formed in response to isolated incidents. Going forward, she would like to put together a working group and incorporate language that ensures the non-criminalization of homelessness during a work session.

Member Greenberg stated they have had several work sessions related to this topic, and Member Parisian has never noted concerns regarding the process they used to create the Ordinance till now. He commented that he plans to vote yes, and many City resources have been utilized through this process.

Member Parisian responded to Member Greenberg and stated she works with policy in her outside job and sees the consequences of when policy is too vague. She also noted that the time between the public giving feedback and when Council votes is too short.

Mayor Sutton asked what the process is surrounding property removal by the Police Department. Sandvik read Policy 428.4.

Mayor Sutton stated it feels like there is an assumption that the Police Department is not going to be empathetic, but he stated the Officers of the Robbinsdale Police Department are some of the most compassionate leaders he has ever met. Mayor Sutton stated the City cannot allow camping in its parks and does not have Staff to manage that. He stated he will be voting yes.

Member Wagner expressed his thanks to the Mayor, Council Members, Staff, and the public for their valuable insights. He noted how views can change as feedback comes in. Member Wagner questioned how an unhoused person can exist if they aren't allowed to be in a tent and therefore feels this Ordinance criminalizes homelessness. He agrees with Member Parisian that more thorough discussion is needed and that repealing an Ordinance that has already passed is rare. Member Wagner also voiced concern over Staff and Police Department turnover, with words open to interpretation. He doesn't see how this Policy leads with compassion and will not support this Policy in any state.

Member Blackledge asked what it looks like going forward if Council feels the conversation needs to be continued. He also stated that Council cares about this community and they are trying to be intentional about what that looks like. Sandvik noted that Council can vote tonight, and if the Ordinance passes, it will be effective immediately; if the Ordinance does not pass, there will be a six-month waiting period, with potential exception if wording is changed significantly, but that would need to be discussed with Legal.

Member Greenberg asked if Council can table this item or if they need to vote on the Ordinance tonight. Sandvik recommends approval or denial.

Member Blackledge stated that this Policy is not about harming people, and they are capable of changing the Ordinance. He wants to be clear that he aims to take care of people, and criminalization is not the intent.

Member Greenberg stated that through this process, he asked many questions regarding the vagueness of the language and the treatment of individuals who did not follow the Policy, and feels comfortable with the feedback received from City Staff, who repeatedly have stated the goal is to lead with empathy and treat people humanely. He clarified this is not a homeless ban, but a camping ban that applies equally to all. Member Greenberg noted that this Policy isn't changing or replacing the existing Police Department Policy, but is designed as a backstop so things don't get out of hand in the City. He commented that other cities have similar Ordinances in place. Member Greenberg stated he doesn't feel this Ordinance would need a future repeal, but instead, Council could add clarifying language. He also voiced concern over wasting City resources when they have already utilized many in the course of this discussion.

Member Wagner stated he doesn't share concern related to City resources because changing the language versus repealing the Ordinance would take just as much Staff time.

Member Greenberg voiced that there has already been intention in creating the language currently, and redoing this whole process versus changing the language is different.

Member Wagner noted the language would still exist even if they vote no tonight.

Member Blackledge commented that when they are talking about people, there can never be too much time dedicated.

Member Greenberg stated that if Council hadn't been intentional in creating the language, he wouldn't have an issue spending more time on the Policy, but resources aren't unlimited, and much time has been spent by Council on this issue.

Member Wagner asked Council to track incidents related to the Ordinance if it passes, so they have data to inform future decisions.

Mayor Sutton asked if the Police Department could add tracking these incidents into their Policy. Sandvik stated they could have this conversation in a future work session, but it may be difficult due to data privacy laws.

Member Wagner voiced concern over having no data to support this Ordinance.

Mayor Sutton stated it is not a crime to be unhoused, which is why the Police Department does not have the data.

Member Wagner stated the Police Department would still have access to the name of whose tent it was.

Sandvik asked for a list of what Council would like tracked.

Member Greenberg asked if there will be data if the Ordinance is violated going forward. Sandvik noted that is correct.

Member Blackledge asked Member Parisian how she would have gone about this process differently. Member Parisian stated she later realized she wished Council had involved groups like the HRC sooner and taken more of a proactive versus reactive approach. She noted there is a reason so many people are here tonight and doesn't want to rush to pass this Ordinance, but instead strengthen clarity in the language.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Sutton, to approve the second reading and adopt Ordinance No. 25-09, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 930 OF THE ROBBINSDALE CITY CODE RELATING TO CAMPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY.

A roll call was taken:

Ayes: Greenberg, Sutton

Nays: Wagner, Parisian, Blackledge

The motion failed.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. 2025 GreenStep Award**

Sandvik introduced Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator.

Sustainability Coordinator Kirtz discussed what the GreenStep Award is, what the City has been doing to achieve the Award, and presented the Award.

Sandvik thanked Staff who worked hard on this achievement.

### **B. City of Robbinsdale Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for 2025**

Finance Director Tahoun introduced Aaron Nielson, CPA, of LB Carlson.

LB Carlson Auditor, Aaron Nielson CPA, discussed the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the Special Purpose Report, and the Management Report.

Member Parisian asked what the purple bars labeled "Transfers Out" mean. Nielson stated that those are profitable level operations that are transferred to funds designated by Council.

Member Parisian asked why there was a significant decrease in "Transfers Out" in 2024 despite consistency in past years. Sandvik stated the dip is largely a result of lower revenue at the liquor store.

Member Wagner asked if Nielson could reiterate the purpose of these reports. Nielson stated that his role as the independent auditor is to verify that the financial statements are accurate according to submitted Staff summaries, but his role is not to tell Council how they have utilized their resources.

Member Wagner asked if an auditor would allow City Staff to work with them before publishing an opinion, or if rectifications would be included in the final analysis. Nielson stated that there are varying degrees of discrepancies, and it would depend on the degree.

Mayor Sutton congratulated the Finance Department for their hard work.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to acknowledge the receipt of the City's Audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the year ended December 31, 2024, Auditor's Management Report, and Special Purpose Audit Reports, as submitted by LB Carlson, LLP, and direct staff to distribute the report to other agencies as required. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

### C. Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Finance Director Tahoun introduced the background and history of the Certificate and noted this is the 45<sup>th</sup> consecutive year the City of Robbinsdale has received this award.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### A. Resolution adopting Street Reconstruction Plan and authorizing preliminary Bond

Sandvik introduced the Item.

Finance Director Tahoun discussed the background of the Item and financing details.

Elizabeth Bergman, of Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, gave an overview of the proposed bond sales.

Member Parisian expressed her appreciation for the overview.

Member Wagner asked who buys the bonds. Bergman stated that Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors sells them in a competitive sale that goes out to their investor community through an online bid.

Member Wagner asked for clarification regarding the interest amounts. Bergman stated that Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors expects the true interest cost to be 3.897 percent, but they also need to be responsive to the market.

Member Wagner asked if there is a limit or ceiling where Baker Tilly would not sell or would come back and discuss with Staff before selling. Bergman stated she will discuss with clients if there is a number that is unaffordable or if there is a disruption in the market. She stated the main discussion point is if the project is something that needs cash flow now.

Member Wagner stated his support for this funding initiative.

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Greenberg, to receive comments on the City's Proposed Street Reconstruction Plan 2025-2034. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

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

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to receive comments on the City's Proposed Capital Improvement Plan 2025-2034. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to close the public hearing. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Wagner, to receive comments on Property Tax Abatement Bonds. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

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

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to waive the reading and order the adoption of Resolution No. 8161, A RESOLUTION APPROVING PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO SANBORN PARK IN THE CITY OF ROBBINSDALE, AND TAKING OTHER ACTIONS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to waive the reading and order the adoption of Resolution No. 8162, A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A STREET RECONSTRUCTION PLAN, PROVIDING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS THEREUNDER, AND TAKING OTHER ACTIONS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Wagner, to waive the reading and order the adoption of Resolution No. 8163, A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, PROVIDING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS THEREUNDER, AND TAKING OTHER ACTIONS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Member Blackledge MOVED, seconded by Greenberg, to waive the reading and order the adoption of Resolution No. 8164, A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, SERIES 2025A, IN THE PROPOSED AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$8,650,000. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Sanborn Building Architecture Firm**

Sandvik provided an overview of the item, detailed the history of need, and plan going forward. He stated Staff recommends the City enter into a contract with Alliance to lead the design process for a new building in Sanborn Park.

Member Greenberg stated he appreciates that Alliance is recognized as a leader in sustainable architecture.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Greenberg, to approve authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement with Alliance. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**B. A Resolution Confirming the Desire to Rename Sanborn Park**

Sandvik provided an overview of the item and detailed the history of renaming the Park.

Member Wagner stated he believes this is important to talk about, and Council is being intentional in the process.

Mayor Sutton asked if Sandvik was looking for Council to give feedback on the process. Sandvik stated the formal action Staff is looking for is approval of the Resolution.

Member Parisian is happy to support the Resolution, highlighted the importance of equity, and encouraged residents to learn more about why Council is moving to rename Sanborn Park.

Member Greenberg is also happy to support this Resolution, but wanted to clarify that he doesn't believe Parks should be named after people.

Member Blackledge thanked the previous Council for their work on this.

Mayor Sutton asked if there was a petition process. Sandvik stated they were going to make the process as easy as possible.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to adopt Resolution No. 8165, A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE DESIRE TO RENAME SANBORN PARK IN THE CITY OF ROBBINSDALE. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Voucher Requests Pending Approval for Disbursement**

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Wagner, to approve disbursement requests for the period ending July 15, 2025. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**B. Special Work Session – August 19, 6:00 p.m.**

Sandvik provided an overview of the item and detailed the work session discussion to set the 2026 budget.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Wagner, to approve setting a Special Work Session for August 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., at City Hall. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Sandvik noted the City has an opening in the Finance Department, fun summer events coming up, and highlighted the excitement of Whizbang Days.

**COUNCIL GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Member Wagner thanked the Public for coming to speak tonight, thanked Council for civil conversations, and thanked everyone who contributed to Whizbang Days.

Member Parisian echoed Member Wagner's sentiments.

Member Greenberg thanked everyone who came to speak tonight, thanked fellow Council Members, and thanked everyone who was involved in Whizbang Days.

Member Blackledge thanked Whizbang volunteers. He also noted his change in voting tonight came upon reflection in real time, along with Member Parisian's tenure and comments. Member Blackledge thanked the City Staff for the time they spent putting the Resolution together and Council Members for their discussion.

Mayor Sutton thanked Staff for their work on the camping Resolution and thanked all who volunteered and donated to Whizbang Days.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Member Wagner MOVED, seconded by Parisian to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 p.m. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Signed by:



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Chase Peterson-Em, City Clerk

Signed by:



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Bradley Sutton, Mayor