



MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Blackledge, Greenberg, Parisian, Sutton

Absent:

Staff: Tim Sandvik, City Manager; Heather Rand, Community Development Director; Chase Peterson-Etem, Assistant City Manger/City Clerk

MICROPHONE CHECK

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

Jonathan Wonder, 3811 27th Ave. N., mentioned the possibility of a separation ordinance and noted his support.

Resident, 4609 Chowen Ave. N., asked about the cities response to what guidance is the city providing to residents, how does the city decide whether to share data with federal agencies, what protections exist, and how should residents support suspected legal activity.

Samantha Weick, 3315 Beard Ave. N., noted her thoughts on Federal Immigration Agents in town, noting concern about what is happening in the metro and wanted to know what's being done by the city to help and is advocating for more to be done.

Clair, 4273 46th Ave. N., noted concern over the federal agents in the city and wanted to know what the city could do to help protect the residents of Robbinsdale and wanted to see more action being taken.

Julie Ralston Aoki, 3615 Abbott Ave. N., noted she is speaking on behalf of herself. She reiterated what had been previously said, she encouraged the Council to think about policy around after care from interactions with federal agents and what support is available to folks.

Angela Carpio, 3922 Abbott Ave. N., noted that she is deeply concerned about her family and other citizens and hoped more action could be taken with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents in the city.

Kyle Reeves, 3540 Noble Ave. N., echoed what has been said previously, noting his concern about how the federal agents are acting and asked about the protections of folks in the city and surrounding areas.

Kat Mcquarter, 3636 Regent Ave. N., noted she feels the community is under attack and asked what more the city can do about the federal immigration officers in the city. She noted the community feels as though it's coming together and asked how the Police can support the community.

Member Parisian asked about what communication is being provided to the community.

City Manager Sandvik noted the discussion the Council had related to this at the Work Session last week, which included the Police Department. He indicated the cities website has information and resources on what the city can and cannot do, and stated this information is being updated often.

Mayor Sutton noted community voices are being heard and taken into consideration.

Member Greenberg noted an ordinance is not being voted on tonight.

Member Parisian asked that a topic about after care be added to the next Work Session and recognized the courage of her constituents and appreciated all that showed up tonight.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 20, 2026, MEETING AGENDA

City Clerk Peterson-Etem noted two updates to the agenda for tonight.

1. Update to Consent Item G, Approval of Licenses
2. Addition to Other Business Item 11A, Voucher Requests Pending Approval for Disbursement

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to approve the January 20, 2026, City Council agenda, with the addition of Old Business Item 9A, to Discuss a Joint Council Statement Related to Increased Presence of Federal Immigration Operations. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sutton removed Item H for further consideration.

Member Greenberg removed Item F for further consideration.

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

- A. Approve City Council meeting minutes from January 6, 2026
- B. Sanborn Playground RFP
- C. Second Reading and adoption of an Ordinance Updating Various Sections of the City Charter
- D. Resolution of Support for 4orty 2wo Development, LLC Grant Application to MN Brownfields & Hennepin County
- E. Mayor Pro Tem and Staff Appointments
- G. Approval of Licenses
- F. Accept Annual Planning Commission Report (2025)

Member Greenberg expressed gratitude towards the Planning Commission for their service.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to accept the Annual Planning Commission Report (2025). The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

- H. Robbinsdale Lions Premises Permit Application

Mayor Sutton recused himself from the vote due to being a Lions member.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Parisian, to approve the Robbinsdale Lions Premises Permit Application. The motion carried (3-0-1, Sutton).

PRESENTATIONS

A. None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Discuss a Joint Council Statement Related to Increased Presence of Federal Immigration Operations

Member Parisian thanked members of the public who participated in the prior work session. She noted that while draft Ordinance language has not yet been prepared for the City of Robbinsdale, she wished to bring forward a joint Council statement for consideration. As the item was not on the agenda, Member Parisian asked for Council support to read the statement aloud. The Council agreed.

Member Parisian read a draft letter expressing concern regarding the tragic death of Renee Good and the impact of ICE activity within the community and region. The letter noted that Robbinsdale residents, businesses, and organizations have expressed concern; outlined the purpose and intent of a potential separation Ordinance; described how the discussion originated; thanked the Human Rights Commission for fostering community dialogue; invited residents to provide input at a future public meeting; and reaffirmed the City's commitment to being a welcoming community for all, standing with residents shaken by recent events.

Member Blackledge thanked Member Parisian for drafting the letter, agreed with its content, and stated it was important for the City to issue such a statement.

Member Greenberg thanked Member Parisian for the draft and suggested a grammatical change to replace "anyone who lives, works, or attends school in Robbinsdale" with "anyone who is in Robbinsdale" to be more inclusive. He expressed concern that the letter may go beyond what is appropriate before the Staff has drafted Ordinance language, noting discomfort with stating what the City will do before reviewing formal Ordinance language.

Mayor Sutton stated he supported the spirit of the letter but also requested edits. He expressed concern about forecasting or committing to actions before Ordinance language, legal review, costs, and potential risks were known, noting this could create issues in the future. He suggested rewording the letter and adding specificity about recent events in Robbinsdale.

Member Parisian agreed with the inclusive language change suggested by Member Greenberg. She noted that during the work session, significant time was spent reviewing the Minneapolis draft Ordinance line by line, and that the bullet points in the letter reflected that discussion in spirit. She stated that residents deserve a level of specificity given the concern expressed by the community and that the Ordinance would be based on those adopted by other Minnesota cities.

Member Blackledge asked which specific bullet points were considered premature, stating that he viewed them as intentional in outlining the direction the city is heading and as a recommitment to the community.

Member Greenberg shared that since the work session, he had spoken with other elected officials, community leaders, businesses, and residents, and received feedback that not everyone is comfortable with the approach. He expressed concern that the letter could create risks for the people it seeks to support and may not result in actionable outcomes or new protections.

Mayor Sutton asked whether the City Attorney had completed a review, what litigation risks might exist, and what cost implications there could be for the city. He reiterated that while he supported issuing a letter, he was not comfortable with language that promises or commits the City to specific actions before formal adoption.

City Manager Sandvik stated that the Council could either table the item for further discussion at a future work session or proceed with edits. He suggested changing language such as “will” and “shall” to “may,” and revising wording to state that the City “intends to consider” rather than “intends to adopt” an Ordinance, acknowledging the real-time and unprecedented nature of events.

Member Parisian acknowledged the importance of compromise and consensus and expressed openness to the suggested wording changes, while emphasizing the desire to focus Council time on Ordinance development rather than prolonged discussion of a letter of intent.

Mayor Sutton stated that the proposed edits addressed his concerns.

Member Greenberg indicated support for the revised language and encouraged residents to continue providing feedback.

Member Blackledge again thanked Member Parisian for drafting the statement and emphasized the importance of residents feeling heard, echoing the desire to prioritize Ordinance development.

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to approve the draft joint Council statement with discussed edits, and requested Staff to make the letter publicly available in meeting minutes and communication channels. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Letter of Support for Velair Development's Consolidated Affordable Housing Grant Application to Hennepin County for a Potential Affordable Housing Project at 3839 Lakeland Avenue North

Community Development Director Rand provided an overview of the item, including detailed information on the site, Staff recommendations, and anticipated next steps for both the Council and the developer.

Member Greenberg asked whether Staff had discussed future projections with the Metropolitan Council and whether the City’s planning assumptions align with those projections. Rand responded that the city receives those projections annually and could bring that information forward at a future work session.

Mayor Sutton asked whether, as development increases along Highway 81, the city has addressed potential light pollution impacts on nearby lake residents, referencing lessons learned from the Birdtown Flats development. Sandvik responded that lighting impacts were discussed during the design phase and will continue to be considered in future developments.

Mayor Sutton expressed support for the project and stated he was excited to see this type of development occurring in Robbinsdale.

Member Blackledge thanked Director Rand for the information and preparation and also acknowledged Mayor Sutton’s thoughtful question.

Member Greenberg MOVED, seconded by Blackledge, to approve a Letter of Support for Velair Development's Consolidated Affordable Housing Grant Application to Hennepin County for a Potential Affordable Housing Project at 3839 Lakeland Avenue North. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

B. Resolution Supporting the Authority to Impose a Local Sales Tax

Sandvik provided an overview of the item and reviewed the City's history of establishing legislative priorities and researching alternative revenue streams. He discussed the local sales tax option, related statutory requirements, the City's application for funding, the current resolution, and next steps in the process.

Member Parisian stated her support for this as an important first step.

Member Greenberg echoed that sentiment and expressed support.

Mayor Sutton stated the action is intended to offset the tax burden on residents more creatively and expressed his support.

Member Parisian moved, seconded by Member Greenberg, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 8207, "A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE A LOCAL SALES TAX TO FUND SPECIFIC CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROVIDING REGIONAL BENEFIT, ESTABLISHING THE DURATION OF THE TAX AND THE REVENUE TO BE RAISED BY THE TAX, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ISSUE BONDS SUPPORTED BY THE SALES TAX REVENUE." The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Set Special Work Session for February 4th, 2026

Sandvik provided an overview of the item and reviewed the history of scheduling a special work session to advance the conversation. He explained that a February 4 meeting would allow the discussion to move forward sooner, while a February 10 meeting would provide staff additional time to review separation ordinances from other cities and allow time for the appointment of a new Council Member.

Mayor Sutton stated he has a conflict on February 4 and expressed a strong desire to participate in the discussion. He indicated he did not feel the conversation would be effective in a virtual format and supported allowing time for the new Council Member to become oriented.

Member Greenberg asked whether the meeting could be scheduled before February 4. Sandvik responded that February 4 is the next standing meeting date and noted varying Council availability. Mayor Sutton noted he would not be able to participate in a meeting before February 4.

Member Greenberg stated that it is important to hold the discussion given current events, while also acknowledging the importance of Mayor Sutton's participation.

Member Blackledge stated that, based on the discussion, the upcoming appointment of a new Council Member, and the value of additional time for community conversations, he supported scheduling the work session for February 10.

Mayor Sutton noted that Council Members are already engaging with community members on the issue.

Member Parisian expressed a strong sense of urgency but stated that, given the absence of a full Council, she supported scheduling the work session for February 10 and emphasized the importance of community feedback.

Council consensus was reached that no special work session will be added and to hold discussion at the regularly scheduled work session on February 10, 2026.

B. Voucher Requests Pending Approval for Disbursement

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Greenberg, to approve voucher disbursement requests for the period ending January 20, 2026. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Peterson-Etem highlighted data provided by Republic Services related to improvements in recycling efforts and described Republic's initiatives to reuse recycling materials multiple times. He also discussed the "Track My Truck" program. Peterson-Etem announced that interviews for the Ward Four Council vacancy will be held on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and noted that the Human Rights Commission meeting has been rescheduled to the following Thursday.

Sandvik thanked community members who attended the ice fishing demonstration. He announced that Will Cardenas received the Emerging Leader Award and highlighted his contributions to the city. Sandvik noted a job opening in Public Works maintenance and shared that Home Energy Squad visits have begun and are currently underway, with additional information available on the city website. He also stated that the City is increasing its presence on the website, social media, and in the newsletter to provide information regarding knowing one's rights and frequently asked questions. Residents were encouraged to reach out to him or the Chief of Police with additional questions or if information is missing.

Mayor Sutton asked whether the Ward 4 appointment interviews would be 30 minutes in length and noted that the Council had not received guidance regarding the number or type of questions. Peterson-Etem responded that packets containing additional information would be distributed to Council Members following the meeting.

Mayor Sutton discussed his approach to the interview process and planned questions. Sandvik reviewed the vacancy timeline and stated that the Staff prepared five high-level questions intended to address key topics of interest. He noted he would assist with timekeeping during the interviews and that follow-up questions would be permitted. Sandvik also noted that an open-ended question regarding candidates' interest was included to provide additional insight beforehand.

COUNCIL GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

Member Parisian thanked residents who attended the meeting and participated in recent events, meetings, and Commission activities. She noted increased community engagement both within and beyond Robbinsdale and highlighted the success of the MLK Jr. Breakfast. Member Parisian expressed hope after witnessing neighbors supporting one another and encouraged residents to continue showing up for their community and for themselves.

Member Greenberg thanked Member Parisian for her remarks regarding the MLK Jr. Breakfast and expressed appreciation to all who helped organize the event. He thanked community members for attending meetings and sharing feedback, and encouraged residents to continue supporting one another and participating in Council meetings. Member Greenberg recognized Golden Age Design for organizing a large food drive and thanked those who donated. He encouraged continued support of local businesses and acknowledged that some residents are feeling fearful, while emphasizing that the Robbinsdale Police Department is listening. He highlighted his focus on action, education, and continued communication.

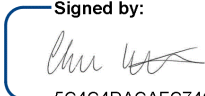
Member Blackledge echoed the sentiments of his colleagues and stated that he is encouraged by the level of community mobilization and neighbors looking out for one another. He also referenced the MLK Jr. Breakfast, noting the message was meaningful and timely. Member Blackledge encouraged residents to continue voicing concerns and affirmed that the Council sees and hears the community and is working to represent residents to the best of its ability.

Mayor Sutton shared that he had listened to a law enforcement press conference earlier that day and expressed concern over the events discussed. He stated that while he seeks to remain calm and avoid escalating situations, he believes it is important to acknowledge what is happening. Mayor Sutton expressed concern for residents, encouraged them to stay safe and continue speaking up for one another, and stated that while he wishes the city could do more, the Council hears the community's concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Parisian MOVED, seconded by Greenberg to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

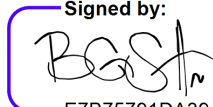
Signed by:



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Chase Peterson-Etem, City Clerk

Signed by:



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Bradley Sutton, Mayor

City of Robbinsdale

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The Robbinsdale City Council expresses deep concern following the tragic death of Renee Nicole Good, a 37-year old mother of three who was fatally shot by a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent in Minneapolis on January 7, 2026. The increased presence of ICE operations, including here in Robbinsdale, has deeply affected families across our community.

The violence that has resulted from these federal immigration operations has reverberated throughout our region, heightening fear, anxiety, and uncertainty among residents, particularly within our immigrant and multi-lingual communities who already face systemic barriers and heightened exposure during federal enforcement actions. The visible and aggressive presence of federal immigration officers conducting operations in our region has contributed to a climate where many feel unsafe reporting crimes, attending school, participating in community life, or simply going about everyday activities.

Robbinsdale's local businesses and community organizations have also signaled concern that fear of immigration enforcement impacts patronage, disrupts staffing and hiring, and harms the economic stability of businesses that are vital to Robbinsdale's prosperity and character.

As city leaders, we recognize that responsibility for federal civil immigration enforcement, including use of force decisions by ICE agents, lies within the federal government. However, we also have a responsibility to protect the public safety, well-being, and civil liberties of all in Robbinsdale.

For these reasons, the Robbinsdale City Council intends to consider an emergency separation ordinance in the coming weeks. This ordinance, based on models adopted by other Minnesota cities may:

- Clarify that Robbinsdale will not use local resources, personnel, or facilities to assist in federal civil immigration enforcement beyond what is required by federal and state law.
- Establish clear internal policies and training for city staff on how to respond to federal requests, including federal agent access to city property and limits on assistance with civil immigration actions.
- Protect the rights of residents to access city services without fear of inquiries into immigration status.
- Enhance public trust by codifying transparent reporting when local public safety personnel interact with federal agents.

This action is not an indictment of federal law enforcement generally, nor is it intended to impede lawful criminal investigations where local cooperation is required. Instead, it is a practical, local measure to strengthen community trust, promote public safety, and protect civil liberties in Robbinsdale.

The Council first discussed an emergency separation ordinance at a Council Work Session on January 13, with thanks to several members of the public who attended. The Council would also like to thank the Robbinsdale Human Rights Commission for hosting a listening session on January 14 and for facilitating a conversation that ultimately helps make Robbinsdale a more connected community during these difficult times. The emergency separation ordinance will be discussed further at an upcoming public meeting, and we encourage community members to participate and share their input.

We stand with residents who have been shaken by recent events and remain committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and welcoming city for all families regardless of national origin or immigration status. To our immigrant neighbors, you are a valued part of Robbinsdale's community.

