

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Bob Ramsey (arrived 6:06 p.m.)  
Councilmember Randy Backous  
Councilmember David Elvig  
Councilmember Colin McGlone  
Councilmember Jason Tossey  
Councilmember Jeffrey Wise

Members Absent: Councilmember David Jeffrey

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich (arrived 6:08 p.m.)  
Deputy City Administrator Heidi A. Nelson  
IT Developer Dean Busch  
Public Works Director Brian Olson  
Fire Chief Dean Kapler  
Police Chief James Way  
Assistant City Engineer Tim Himmer  
Senior Planner Tim Gladhill  
Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson  
Human Resources Director Colleen Lasher  
Development Manager Darren Lazan

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pro Tem Wise called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:33 p.m.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as submitted.

**COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

**1) Emergency Operations Plan**

Fire Chief Kapler reviewed the staff report. He clarified the Mayor or Mayor's designee is the only personnel that can declare an emergency disaster. Once an emergency is declared, it starts a 3-day clock. The declaration cannot go longer than 3 days. If it is necessary for it to be in effect longer, it takes a quorum of the City Council to extend it.

Councilmember Elvig questioned when the most recent disaster was claimed.

Police Chief Way responded there was an explosion on Highway 10 a couple of years ago, and prior to that, it was the flooding in 1997 or 1998. There was outside and federal help for the flooding.

Fire Chief Kapler reviewed the steps to take in the event of a disaster.

Councilmember Elvig raised the issue of when the sirens are sounded. Since Ramsey is the farthest west in Anoka County, it is the first City to sound the sirens in the County. This gives other cities time to prepare, but doesn't give the Ramsey residents much notice.

Police Chief Way noted the recent hires in the City are trained spotters. He explained the regulations have changed, and the County no longer mandates when the sirens sound. Ramsey can sound them whenever there is a need. Rather than the notification by sirens being sectioned by County, they are now by geographical sections.

Fire Chief Kapler walked through a possible scenario of an emergency. He pointed out there are solid mutual aid agreements in the cities around Ramsey. All levels and departments are aware of the chain of command and events that need to be put in place.

Councilmember Wise asked if there is a certain amount of time after an event that the Mayor or Council has to act for financial reimbursement.

Fire Chief Kapler replied there is not. The departments keep track of all personnel called in and vehicles that are used. Any staff or vehicles already in use at the time of the disaster cannot be claimed.

Councilmember Backous inquired what has been done to help educate the public on emergencies. He suggested having a video on the web site, or having the ability to sign up for mobile alerts in the event of a disaster.

Discussion took place regarding various ways to alert the public to emergencies and disasters.

Councilmember Elvig stated the source should be easily identified since on some social networking such as Twitter, there are enough conversations that the source could be lost. He suggested looking into a dedicated program.

**2) Discussion Regarding 2011 Contract Negotiations with LELS Patrol and LELS Sergeants – *Portions of this discussion may be closed to the public***

City Administrator Ulrich noted that this meeting can move into closed session to discuss labor negotiations.

Motion by Councilmember Tossey, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to move to closed session.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Ramsey, Councilmembers Tossey, Elvig, Backous, McGlone, and Wise. Absent: Councilmember Jeffrey. Voting No: None.

The Special Council meeting moved into a closed session at 6:12 p.m.

The closed session ended at 6:38 p.m.

### **3) Review Code Enforcement and Abatement Level of Service**

Deputy City Administrator Nelson reviewed the staff report.

Senior Planner Gladhill indicated some internal work has been done to make sure all areas are covered.

Deputy City Administrator Nelson said their goal is to get policy direction. The City has a desire to meet the expectations of the community, and the question is how to accomplish that with the current staffing issue.

Assistant City Engineer Himmer explained the zoning issues are typically handled by Planners.

Deputy City Administrator Nelson noted Community Service Officers have been handling most other complaints. She clarified help is needed in both CSO and Planning departments. The summer season is very active with code enforcements.

Police Chief Way clarified there are some situations with multiple violations. In these cases, the CSOs handle their part, and the Planning Department handles their part. He stated he would want to be conscious of the limited funding available for this position, and possibly an internal notice could be posted first to open up the position to on call positions.

Deputy City Administrator Nelson explained there is a full year intern position that was budgeted for, and is not being used now. Those funds would be used for this season position, and it would be worked in more fully for the next budget season.

Consensus was reached to move forward toward researching consultants and/or an internal position.

### **4) Review Dangerous Dog Ordinance and Signage with Regard to Dog Park**

Deputy City Administrator Nelson reviewed the staff report.

Consensus was reached to leave the ordinance as is and signage is adequate.

## **5) Review Appraisal of Former Municipal Center**

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report. He added Staff has been working informally with a local landowner who owns several properties in the area. This landowner may be interested in combining this parcel with his current holdings. He noted a new station would cost \$2.5 million.

Councilmember Wise inquired what the \$2.5 million would entail and whether there are drawings yet.

Fire Chief Kapler stated there are preliminary drawings from when the department moved to the new Municipal Building. He said he would recommend a space needs analysis be completed. The \$2.5 million figure includes some estimation. He emphasized the preliminary plans are conceptual and not usable for a definitive plan at this point.

City Administrator Ulrich noted the City would work with an architect. He said there is an item in the CIP to begin planning on the architecture of this item.

Consensus was reached to explore the possibility of a land swap with a private owner. In addition, a space needs analysis will be conducted. City Administrator Ulrich stated he will research the legal aspects of a land swap.

## **6) Consider EPB Annual Work Plan**

Environmental Coordinator Anderson reviewed the staff report. He noted the Board is looking to the Council for direction of what they should do in the future.

Councilmember Wise mentioned there has been a lot of discussion regarding stormwater runoff with potential developments in The COR.

Discussion took place regarding potential systems that could be of benefit.

Councilmember Elvig mentioned the TAC Board and stated he was pleased the Development Manager was part of the TAC Board. He asked if any EPB members would like to be part of the TAC Board. He stated he would like the EPB to come up with ideas that would assist the preservation level of what they have done so far. He would like the two Boards to collaborate.

Mayor Ramsey mentioned there are community gardens and he would like to have the EPB start collaborating with the garden clubs.

Councilmember McGlone suggested they collaborate with Scouts, and nurseries. He added the Board should get out in the community and make citizens more aware of what they do.

Councilmember Backous commented the Board could collaborate with the schools and colleges or technical schools in the area. He stated he likes the idea of trail markers and information

pieces along trails. He further suggested working on environmental issues regarding shorelines and pollution along the river.

Mayor Ramsey suggested a kiosk or display to educate the public on what to look for in oak wilt and noxious weed.

Councilmember Tossey noted the fishing and hunting groups may be groups to work with on conservation.

City Administrator Ulrich noted the City is partnering with the Game Fair and offered the EPB a space at the Fair. It could be a good opportunity for the community to be involved.

Councilmember Elvig stated he would prefer to see this item on the Council agenda as opposed to the Consent Agenda.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated the point of the topsoil ordinance the City passed was to reduce the consumption of water. He explained there are soil moisture sensors that can help the homeowner know when to put in irrigation and in what areas. He offered if the Council would like to pursue this program, the EPB Board could explore that option.

Mayor Ramsey commented on the Coon Rapids Dam with the Asian carp. He asked if this would be appropriate for the EPB to consider.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson responded it could be beneficial to have collaboration with State studies on the Asian carp. He also suggested it would be helpful to translate those studies into layman's terms.

## **FUTURE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

Review Future Topics/Calendar

## **MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT**

Mayor Ramsey discussed the EDA appointment. He noted there was one interview the previous week. The candidate had a great background. He said he is undecided which candidate to choose at this point.

Councilmember Backous suggested a term limit be discussed as a matter of policy in the near future.

Deputy City Administrator Nelson noted the Northstar Corridor Transit Development Orientation Tour is this coming Thursday afternoon.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilmember Tossey, seconded by Councilmember Wise, to adjourn the Work Session of the City Council at 8:06 p.m.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Ramsey, Councilmembers Tossey, Wise, Backous, Elvig, and McGlone. Absent: Councilmember Jeffrey. Voting No: None.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kurtis G. Ulrich  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Jo Ann M. Thieling  
City Clerk

Drafted by Chris Moksnes  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*