

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Sarah Strommen
Councilmember Randy Backous
Councilmember David Elvig
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember John LeTourneau
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Jason Tossey (arrived at 6:27 p.m.)

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Finance Director Diana Lund
Fire Chief Dean Kapler
Police Chief James Way
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Human Resources Manager Colleen Lasher
Development Services Manager Timothy Gladhill
Management Analyst Patrick Brama

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Strommen called the City Council Work Session to order at 6:19 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Discuss 2013 Municipal Center Policy and Room Rental Fee Adjustments

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed the staff report, discussion by the Personnel Committee, and recommendation to change the Municipal Center Policy and associated adjustment to meeting room rental fees, finding that the increases and reductions closed the gap in funding for the part-time building maintenance position. He noted the revisions made to the proposed rate schedule for meeting rooms at the Municipal Center as part of the general Facility Use Policy revisions. He noted there would be a new Minimum Maintenance Fee proposed for those users whose room rental is waived (non-profits and business networking groups). In addition, general resident meeting room rates are proposed to be lower. Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated staff is recommending Council approval of the proposed Facility Use Policy and rates changes and that future revenue

from these rents be considered as a funding source for the part-time building maintenance position.

The Council raised no questions and acknowledged that the Municipal Center Facility Use and Rental Policy are to be adopted under the February 26, 2013, Council consent agenda.

2.02: Discuss the Use of LCD TVs / Monitors in the Ramsey Municipal Center

Management Analyst Brama reviewed the staff report and reintroduced the discussion of using LCD TVs/monitors in the Municipal Center for programming and private advertising. He reviewed the Council's past consideration of this request, noting revenues from private advertisers had been slated to give to the Ramsey Foundation with the goal of developing a consistent annual funding source and the Ramsey Foundation had originally brought this initiative forward to the Council. Management Analyst Patrick Brama explained that with the changes in staff and Council members, staff would like to reintroduce this topic and receive direction on how to move forward. Management Analyst Brama reviewed the Council's past discussion of this item and direction to staff to draft a policy, which was adopted by the Council in 2011. He explained the difference between an LCD TV and monitor and asked the Council to provide comment on three questions: 1. Generally, is there an appetite for this project? 2. If the Council is interested, what is the purpose of the TVs/monitors (QCTV or programming or advertising)? 3. What will the project look like specifically? Management Analyst Brama noted prices for each have been provided.

City Administrator Ulrich stated staff believes monitors in the hallways would increase visibility even if just the QCTV events bulletin board is displayed. However, staff finds the initial investment is not worth it in terms of revenue generator and the \$40,000 of QCTV funding is dedicated for replacement of Council Chambers and/or meeting room equipment.

Councilmember Kuzma, speaking as the President of the Ramsey Foundation, stated they have no one on staff to do programming and due to the minimal revenue generation, he thinks it is probably not worth the time it would take. He stated he would support having monitors in the Municipal Center that the Foundation may also use on occasion.

Councilmember Backous stated this option has been discussed before. He noted there is a captive audience in the Municipal Center while people wait to be served at the License Center. He asked whether the License Center's number being served could be displayed so people waiting in the lobby, watching programming/private business advertisement/Foundation information, can see it. Councilmember Backous questioned a cost of \$7,000 for a TV and what type of programming would entail a cost of \$9,700. He supported using the existing monitor(s) and working with the License Center to also show its customer number.

Councilmember Riley stated people do not come to the Municipal Center to be advertised to so he does not support spending money on that option.

Councilmember Elvig stated he thinks it is a good idea because the City does not have a regular method to communicate with its residents even though it has tried through newsletters and school

flyers. He stated he has a dream of developing more of a community spirit by this method. Councilmember Elvig stated he liked the idea of a display monitor on Highway 10 that is large enough to read and attached to programming to advertise City functions/special events. He noted that Colburn's has one as does the Medical Center and maybe all can be tied together to create an opportunity to get resident's attention and inform them of what is going on.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated he appreciates that dream but for now, does not see a return on the investment and has no appetite to consider this option. He stated he appreciates the suggestion of Councilmember Backous, which may provide opportunity.

Mayor Strommen stated another location for a TV/monitor might be by the Alexander Ramsey Room. She indicated she also likes the suggestion to have a place for people to sit while waiting for the Licensing Center service number, but it may not work at all hours of the day. Mayor Strommen suggested staff explore that idea with the License Center.

Councilmember Backous stated the QCTV funds are a tax on residents with cable and should be saved for when equipment needs to be updated in the Council Chambers and meeting rooms.

Councilmember Tossey agreed with the need to save the QCTV funds, which is a tax on cable users, for use when technology needs to be updated.

Councilmember Backous suggested staff explore an opportunity with the License Center, noting the City may have to pay to accommodate that technology but he thinks it would be a nice amenity for residents who are standing in line waiting to be served.

Councilmember Elvig noted the License Center advertises for Anoka County but he would not like the City's monitors to broadcast pictures of the Ramsey Council.

The consensus of the Council was to direct staff to contact the License Center about the opportunity to tie in their numbering system.

2.03: 15153 Nowthen Boulevard: Review Cost Benefit Analysis of Former Municipal Center Site

Management Analyst Brama reviewed the staff report, provided an update on the shovel ready certification program application for using the former municipal center site as a data center. He advised that the EDA recommended, at its last meeting, that the City move ahead with the use for a data center. Management Analyst Brama presented the cost benefit analysis for three development concepts (one data center, two data centers, and residential development).

Councilmember Elvig stated the proposal for a single data center would be very large so it may make more sense to consider two data centers with multiple buildings instead of one large building. In that regard, he would ask if this is the right site for buildings of that scale, even with the required setbacks.

Management Analyst Brama stated based off research, he knows there are data centers in the 280,000 sq. ft. range in the metro area but agreed there is less of a market for the larger user. He stated those researched indicated the scenario with two data centers of 100,000 sq. ft. each is more realistic.

Councilmember Backous noted the buildings will require a lot of cooling, which can include fan noise, and asked how sound will be dampened.

Management Analyst Brama agreed that noise pollution will be a major component that needs to be addressed through the planning process. He stated technology for generators and fans have become quieter and restrictions can be included to address those issues. In addition, some users have internal systems that exhaust to the outside.

City Administrator Ulrich suggested staff conclude the presentation and Fire Chief Kapler make comment prior to additional Council questions and direction.

Management Analyst Brama continued presentation of the cost benefit analysis and annual cash flow. It was noted that from an annual cash flow prospective, data center development scenarios result in a significantly higher general tax revenue stream than does a residential development. A single data center would generate cash flow of \$276,742; two data centers would generate cash flow of \$223,714; and, residential would generate cash flow \$28,263.97 after expenses. From a one-time land transaction perspective, a residential development scenario results in a higher return for the City with data centers equaling \$500,000 and residential generating \$1 million. Considering the City's strategic plan of using revenues from the subject party to pay for a new fire station, staff concluded the data center scenarios provide a stronger and more complete financial solution than does a residential development.

Mayor Strommen noted adjournment will occur in about five minutes and asked staff if this item should be discussed following tonight's Council meeting or continued to the next Work Session.

Councilmember Tossey supported rescheduling this topic to a future meeting.

City Administrator Ulrich stated it is not time sensitive and can be rescheduled to a future Work Session.

Fire Chief Kapler asked the Council what type of detail it needs to make this decision. He stated going forward, the key point is that funding from this use would generate funding for a new fire station. He noted an issue to address is that the City cannot just close the building down since it is part of the service blanket to the community, to have that staff and vehicles, so there would have to be a merge in and out. Fire Chief Kapler stated the time the building is started and completed could be shortened to make this property as salable as possible.

Councilmember Elvig asked about the option of a temporary structure.

Fire Chief Kapler agreed that is an option and staff had considered the grocery store at 167th Avenue.

Councilmember Elvig agreed that a data center in this corridor would be timely and advantageous, which would warrant consideration of temporary space.

Fire Chief Kapler stated staff will look into that option.

Mayor Strommen asked staff to provide additional information on a merge in/out, anticipated schedule, and sites that may be available, which would provide a sense of timing.

The consensus of the Council was to direct staff to schedule this topic for a future Work Session.

3. FUTURE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Noted.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember LeTourneau, seconded by Councilmember Backous, to adjourn the Work Session meeting.

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.