

**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 5, 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 (arrived at 6:14 p.m.)
Councilmember Jason Tossey (arrived at 5:42 p.m.)

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Finance Director Diana Lund
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
City Attorney William Goodrich
Development Manager Darren Lazan

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Strommen called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Consider Bury & Carlson Request to Terminate Lease Agreement

City Attorney Goodrich reviewed the staff report and request of Bury & Carlson (B&C) to terminate its lease on March 31, 2013, without having given the required 18 month notice. He reviewed the City's receipts for this property and described the lease terms for both parties to terminate the lease early. The request is to terminate the lease on the southern portion, which had been previously asked and denied by a previous Council.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated this spot is designated for a future Public Works site. They now have 9.1 acres with one-third taken by soil piles, sealcoat rock, asphalt millings, black dirt, and street sweepings. They would like to move to the south half of this property to clean the site and get it ready for marketing. It is now assessed at \$5.9 million and sales will be close to a future land swap. He stated they would like, eventually, to move the salt shed over there.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the urgency of Public Works' need for the site is short term. The City's concern is that this property is now taxable so if the City takes it now, it would be liable for taxes on the south ten acres. The City would need the property tax exempt, which may not be possible until payable 2014.

Greg Corsted stated he represents B&C who is asking the Council's approval of their request to terminate the lease on the property that the City acquired from B&C. The concern the company has is that since the time this lease transaction was entered into, the business of recycling has changed significantly within Ramsey to the point where the business model the City asked the company to have no longer works. He stated this business has operated since established in 1992 with a highly-developed, well-operated facility with significant curb, gutter, berming, and screening, a significant and permanent facility. However, this is no longer the business model for this industry in Ramsey. They believe the model for this industry in Ramsey now has much less in the way of permanence and infrastructure. As a consequence, it is difficult for this company's business to continue. Based on that, the company is asking the City to allow the lease to be terminated as of the end of March 2013. Mr. Corsted stated it is their belief that it would be in the City's best interest to terminate the lease right away since their business model does not work and based on the fact that a number of competitors have been allowed to operate with much less overhead, regulation, and a lower investment. Failing termination of the lease, the proposal from the Public Works Development is of interest to the company. In addition, the company has some resources at the property that could be beneficial to the City as Public Works takes over that site.

Councilmember Backous asked Mr. Corsted to be more specific relating to the types of regulatory requirements making the business model change.

Mr. Corsted explained the difficulty is that it is a commodity business and every time you handle the product or have equipment on site on a permanent basis, or make site improvements, you change your cost of the commodity and purchases are done on the basis of competitive bids. He stated their business model is to have the lowest possible cost of doing business; however, competitors are being allowed to conduct a permanent business on a temporary basis and get permits after-the-fact. This makes it difficult to compete as a permanent business.

Councilmember Riley arrived at 5:42 p.m.

Mr. Corsted stated competitors have come into Ramsey, started a recycling business and got contracts without first getting a City permit. In addition, they received permits with less standards than required of B&C, have fewer employees, and conduct business on a job specific basis.

Councilmember Backous stated Mr. Corsted is indicating there is not an "even playing field" and asked staff to comment.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the City has issued violations and taken action when brought to their attention to assure the business comes into compliance. None the less, businesses have

ability to operate in Ramsey with its rules or in other communities where there may be less regulation. He explained that Ramsey has more of an urban environment and the City tries to consistently enforce its standards across-the-board for businesses operating in town.

Mayor Strommen asked if anything in the permit standards have changed since B&C got its permit.

Development Services Manager Gladhill advised there have been no change to standards under the Solid Waste Ordinance or Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process. He stated within the last year or so, the City has issued a CUP and Interim Use Permit (IUP) following those standards. Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff has not seen anything that drastically changed and the permit holder was asked to follow the standards in the Code relating to screening and berming but there was still some work to be completed as the winter season started. Staff is tracking compliance for that recently issued CUP/IUP.

Councilmember Backous recalled an issue with a competitor of B&C who was performing a grinding operation after certain hours.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated that is the same project in the Industrial District, just west of Bunker Lake Boulevard. He indicated there are three users with a CUP as it relates to this type of operation: B&C, Sauter & Sons, and Commercial Asphalt. Development Services Manager Gladhill stated the City receives a request, from time-to-time, from Commercial Asphalt relating to hours of operation but that is within the bounds of the ordinance and terms of their CUP. He noted the focus of Commercial Asphalt is asphalt and road projects, which is different than the other two users. Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff has reacted, as it becomes aware, to get noncompliant uses to cease operation and those processes have been followed on any complaint received.

Mayor Strommen asked whether all operations are now permitted and the conditions of the permit are roughly similar with exception of hours of operation.

Development Services Manager Gladhill answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Corsted clarified they are not saying that the folks who currently have permits are the problem as much as there seems to be a business model that has evolved, which is to conduct the project and undercut the existing businesses and then come in and deal with enforcement after-the-fact. That is where the big problems have come in, after-the-fact differential in the way companies end up doing business. Mr. Corsted stated that is not necessarily all on the City, but the model that exists today and what is happening in the industry. Mr. Corsted stated B&C is asking for some relief because the new business model makes it very difficult to continue to operate with the level of costs they have.

Councilmember Elvig stated he understands that companies like this come in for one project on site rather than shipping at a facility such as B&C and those companies are getting away with it for 30 days and it results in undercutting B&C's operation. He noted B&C needs to "play the same game" to grind on site and relieve themselves of a permanent site.

Mr. Corsted stated that is it, the overhead of a permitted site is no longer tenable for this type of business.

Councilmember Elvig asked if they have another location to store and stockpile materials until they are sold.

Mr. Corsted stated businesses need to consolidate and this site is no longer working for the company so they would like to terminate the lease and turn the property back to the City. He stated the company has the ability to continue to operate.

John Bury, principal of B&C, stated when they came to Ramsey and approached the City about what they wanted to do, build a facility that fits with the surrounding area and has a purpose, they thought it was a service to offer the City. They started the application in 1992, delivered a check to the City for \$60,000 a year later and were then hauling in equipment to process. He stated their improvements included blacktopping the roadway into their site, a landscape architect to draw plans for the facility, a permanent scale, sprinkler systems, planted trees, and installed a sidewalk, creating a first-class facility. Mr. Bury stated he was not able to find one complaint about their operation but the problem he has is with contractors that are allowed to haul in rubble and charge to dump because it takes away their revenue stream. He complimented the efforts of former Assistant Community Development Director Sylvia Frolik, who was always responsive when a violator was found to halt the operation and when the violator said they could not afford to haul out the material, it was processed at their site. Mr. Bury stated this has happened over and over and now they are asking the City to show leniency because it had become cost prohibitive for them to haul out the material so again they would process it. He stated City staff has always wanted to do the right thing and they do put a stop to violators but that process takes away from his business and investment. Mr. Bury stated it has occurred at least three times and the last time they were denied a permit, hauled stuff back in, and was then issued a permit. He noted that initially, there were two processors in Ramsey, which gave the City a good competitive situation, but once the City allowed contactors in, it no longer works for his business. Mr. Bury pointed out that two years ago, when the City approached him with a tentative prospective company looking to come into Ramsey and bring in a lot of jobs, he had cooperated when asked to vacate the front part of the property. However, the cost to move his business to the back of the property exceeded what it would cost to buy him out. Mr. Bury described the equipment and resources currently at the site and explained that after several meetings with former Assistant City Administrator Heidi Nelson, said he would move to the back of the property and that is what happened but after a year, nothing happened. Mr. Bury explained that after the initial conversation, he started winding down his business. He asked the City to entertain what he is bringing to the table, noting he was receptive to do what the City had asked of him because it was good for the City. However, now it is not working for him so he would like the City to consider his request.

Mayor Strommen asked about the timing and why the 18-month notice is a hardship at this point in time.

Mr. Corsted stated the request was made some time ago in a letter but the 18 month period represents a significant amount of overhead for the company and it does not take 18 months to wind down this operation. They would prefer to wind down the operation this construction season.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the tax liability is one issue to consider, which is the reason for the 18-month notification period. He noted that at this point, the City does not really need the property and if acquired earlier than 18 months, the City will need to determine the timing to ask for tax exempt status. He acknowledged that B&C has worked well with the City, been a good tenant and that has helped in many cases with the City's Public Works operation. City Administrator Ulrich suggested additional negotiation on an acceptable time period and what B&C has for resources that could be beneficial to the Public Works operation and transferred to the City. It was noted that with the City's emphasis on road reconstruction, there will be a need for those materials so it is possible that a union would accomplish what B&C wants and meet some needs of the City. However, March 31st is not a date that works for the City because it takes longer to get tax exempt status.

Mr. Corsted stated it would be a good outcome for B&C if the Council would direct staff to work with them to come up with a proposal for termination at the best opportunity.

Mayor Strommen asked about the option to terminate an additional ten acres with negotiation on the other issues.

City Administrator Ulrich suggested not taking the entire site off the table if it is not tax exempt. He explained if B&C said today they wanted to terminate the lease, that would be in 18 months and the City would then want the entire property in tax exempt status. He noted another option is to consider a phased approach.

The consensus of the Council was to direct staff to negotiate with B&C for the terms of an early termination and possible use of B&C resources.

2.02: Review 2013 Parks Capital Improvements

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood introduced Park & Recreation Commissioners in attendance. He reviewed the staff report and noted the Park Trust Fund has an approximate balance of \$2.4 million and the Lawful Gambling Fund approximately \$164,000.

Finance Director Lund advised there will be a public hearing on the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) on Tuesday so that Council's packet will include all of the information. The consideration tonight is the 2013 Parks CIP.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood displayed a PowerPoint presentation highlighting proposed projects for 2013 and staff's recommendation related to each. He requested direction relating to the status of the 2013 Park's Capital Improvement projects and next steps.

Councilmember Elvig indicated support to move forward with the McKinley Street Trail Connection that is tied to funding from the City of Anoka.

Councilmember Tossey arrived at 6:14 p.m.

Councilmember Elvig noted extraordinary fountain apparatus is available and could be an attraction to The Draw. He stated support for the Parks & Recreation Commission to consider types of fountains and what it could bring to The Draw.

Councilmember Kuzma noted many residents do not know where The Draw is located so a fountain would bring attention to that location.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood recommended maintaining a fund balance of \$1 million to \$1.5 million to allow the ability for the City to react to grant opportunities to fund the City's park and trail system.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated the Draw Entrance Monument does not need to be Kasota Stone and the price estimate of \$20,000 could be brought down.

Councilmember Tossey noted the City has already spent a lot of money on signs so he wonders why people cannot find The Draw. He felt this was a lot of money to again spend on signs when the City already has signs.

Park & Recreation Commission Vice-Chair Olsen stated when she is at events, she has found that people have no clue where The Draw is because, from a distance, it is not apparent unless an event is going on. She stated she thought there would be formal signage when it was completed.

Park & Recreation Commission Chair Shryock stated she was driving with a friend who had noticed the signs but thought "The Draw" was an architectural firm. She supported having an identifier, such as the fountain, that can be seen from a main road to direct people into the area. Park & Recreation Commission Chair Shryock suggested the City needed to be mindful of that need until residents become more familiar with the area.

Councilmember Tossey agreed that when driving down Highway 10 none of the signage explains what The Draw is so unless an event is occurring, you would not know what it is. However, if you are going to the event there are good HRA-funded signs to get you there. Councilmember Tossey stated he felt that \$20,000 was too much for signage.

Councilmember Backous stated he has no problems with signs, but \$20,000 or \$60,000 is high. He noted the main issue is that this is not for lack of trying because there has been programming and events at The Draw so the people who pay attention know where it is located and those who do not pay attention do not know and a sign will not get them there.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated he thinks signage is important and appreciates the mobile/temporary type of signage that provides direction for farmer's markets. He stated consensus may be reached for signage to The Draw but the consideration tonight is for an

entrance monument that puts value into the brand and is far different than a sign because it creates the image that Ramsey wants to be. He stated he wanted to raise the issue that there is a difference between a sign and a monument.

Mayor Strommen agreed and stated more discussion may be needed on whether additional directional signage is needed to orient people going to The Draw or a monument sign. She noted that in addition, some drivers do not notice The Draw signage along Highway 10 due to the other clutter and miss the turn.

Park & Recreation Commission Chair Shryock stated these are all good comments and the Park & Recreation Commission is mindful of expense. She stated she is confident that staff will work to find something that is economical and attractive, noting there is unique signage at other City parks and this monument sign will be in keeping with the brand and lifestyle the City is trying to create as well as identifiers. Park & Recreation Commission Chair Shryock agreed more discussion is needed.

Councilmember Tossey stated he typed “The Draw” into his Google map application, noting it is easy to find the location.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated staff will put together a pallet of choices for way-finding signage as well as a monument sign that will serve a number of purposes for many decades. In addition, the new reader boards that can be moved around to capture people’s attention, will be used to educate people about programming. He noted people only need way-finding signs the first time they are coming to The Draw. Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood continued presentation of 2013 CIP park projects.

Councilmember Elvig asked if there is a camera on the Elmcrest Park underpass.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood answered in the affirmative and stated it works well and the only vandalism incidents are similar to that at the ramp with a broken light and painting.

Councilmember Backous asked if resident complaints have diminished.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood explained there are peaks and valleys with complaints but the big and continuous issue is with litter.

Councilmember Elvig stated his concern with parking and flow problems at Central Park and danger for children and pedestrians coming to and from the playing fields. He supported moving that project forward.

Councilmember Backous asked about the plan for the future road alignment.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood displayed a site plan of Central Park, noting the location of two chokers, which had been used successfully at Elmcrest Park, and one-way traffic pattern that may address some of the concerns raised by Councilmember Elvig.

He also noted location of curb and gutter and indicated the pavement width, other than location of chokers, would remain the same.

Councilmember Backous agreed there is danger with children running across the road and that creating a one-way traffic pattern should increase safety. He stated late arrivals drop off their children and they run across the road, through traffic, creating a dangerous situation. Councilmember Backous noted an option would be an under road culvert for pedestrians; however, it would probably be cost prohibitive.

Councilmember Tossey agreed with the concerns expressed relating to pedestrian and traffic conflicts and asked if the \$275,000 cost estimate is only construction costs without acquisition.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed it is only construction costs. He reviewed negotiations with St. Katherine Drexel and indicated those negotiations are on going.

Councilmember Elvig raised the option of having built-in barbeque grills.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that is not included in the project but those grills are low cost, popular, and could be added.

Councilmember Backous asked if there will be an electronic lock at Riverdale Park.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the shelter door will have a panic bar and the park itself will have an electronic lock for after hours. He noted even the roof of the shelter is concrete to limit vandalism, maintenance, and the need for portable restrooms. In addition, it provides shelter during a storm.

Park & Recreation Commission Vice Chair Olsen stated she lives by Emerald Pond Park and knows that residents love the shelters and restroom facilities. She stated it is a great resource and increases the time that residents spend in the parks.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood provided an update on the Mississippi Regional Trail Park, noting its alignment, location of shelter, existing conditions, and additional trail up to Armstrong Boulevard. He indicated that \$536,449 includes about \$190,000 of Federal funding and engineering to get the trail done. Staff is also working on a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with Anoka County Parks and the City of Anoka to pay back money for some of the trail and bridge shared on Kings Island.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood presented the community building and playground project at Elmcrest Park, noting the Anoka Ramsey Athletic Association is funding \$40,000. He reviewed the process the City had used for past building projects and recommended a change in approach to a Construction Manager At Risk Model where the City hires an architect and once 75% of the plans are completed, a Construction Manager At Risk would work for the City to review the plans to find areas of value engineering. The final plans would then be modified and the Construction Manager At Risk would find subcontractors

through a competitive bid process. The City would mandate the Construction Manager At Risk to assure that Ramsey businesses for all of the trades have the ability to submit competitive subcontractor bids. He noted this will allow the City's money to cycle back into the community by using Ramsey businesses. Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated a preconstruction meeting can be held so they understand the work and can be asked to donate something of value to the project. He presented the Elmcrest Park playground component.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood then presented the North Commons project for play equipment and recommendation of the Park & Recreation Commission to move forward with this project at \$48,000 to be funded from the Lawful Gambling Fund.

Councilmember Elvig asked about the difference in the play equipment.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood explained a thematic program is more costly and without that element, more play value could be added.

Park & Recreation Commission Vice Chair Olsen noted the North Commons play equipment also has a lower number of play options.

Councilmember Riley stated his concern that children may try to get on top of the play structure roof elements.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the projects recommended to move forward in 2013 related to the Lawful Gambling Fund would take that balance down to \$116,000 and those projects recommended in 2013 related to the Park Trust Fund would take that balance down to \$1,035,552.

Councilmember LeTourneau asked how low that fund can go.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood advised there is no stipulation on fund balance but he has recommended maintaining a balance of \$1 million to \$1.5 million so the City is still able to respond to grant opportunities or unique circumstances that may arise.

Councilmember Backous asked whether the Lions have been approached to help with park buildings.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated he has not had that conversation, noting lawful gambling proceeds have been declining. He stated he will make that contact but does not think they have \$300,000 to \$400,000 left to donate.

Councilmember Backous noted the Soccer Association had indicated they would handle building maintenance.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed they have agreed to that while using it for soccer purposes and they have an abundance of people who will serve. He explained that the youth association requires \$100 per participant, which is refunded when they volunteer to help.

Councilmember Backous asked staff to determine the cost value of that partnership and what it would cost City staff to do that work.

Councilmember Elvig asked if the Ramsey Foundation may have some interest.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the February 12, 2013, Consent Agenda will include a Park Facility and Tournament Use Policy to address the order of use for concession. It will update the policy and fee structure and address concessions for large tournaments, which are a profit center for the tournament host.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the Council's comments on signage will be helpful in formulating that recommendation. He stated it would be useful to get the Council's consensus on the Elmcrest Park improvement and process to select an architect so the community planning process can begin to form the Elmcrest Park building design. He suggested selecting the same architect that did the Eden Prairie park buildings. Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated he had analyzed the costs and found the proposal was just as good or better and since the architect owns the plans, the City will get a good product without reinventing the "wheel." He stated he would like to work with the construction manager that was the low bidder on the Eden Prairie park building, had worked well with the architect, and was also the low bidder for Sunfish Lake Park, which came in under bid.

Councilmember Elvig asked if this is a proprietary package that the City has identified and likes.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that is correct, noting it is not in the community's interest to go through the RFP process and this architect and project manager are already proven and demonstrated in Eden Prairie.

Mayor Strommen thanked Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood for this thorough presentation and the Park & Recreation Commission for their work on the Park CIP.

Park & Recreation Commission Chair Shryock thanked the Council for carefully considering their recommendations and stated they look forward to continuing work on the CIP.

2.03: Discussion Regarding the Economic Development Manager Position

Human Resources Manager Lasher reviewed the staff report, noting the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to approve a resolution directing staff to conduct recruitment for an Economic Development Manager. She requested feedback on the position's description, especially with regard to HRA related duties.

City Administrator Ulrich explained this is a team approach so the Development Manager has to be a team player to work with Community Development, Administration, the business community, and the public to put together a unified economic development approach. He noted that by combining HRA and EDA activities, the City can provide a “one stop shop” for developers coming to Ramsey. City Administrator Ulrich stated this position will be primarily involved with commercial/industrial with Development Services Manager Gladhill having a key role in housing policy and developing housing programs and projects. He noted that Development Services Manager Gladhill is now serving as the HRA Deputy Executive Director and he expects him to continue with an active role. City Administrator Ulrich stated the EDA Economic Manager supports the commercial/industrial effort and Administrative Analyst Brama would continue to work under his direction with administration.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated support for Option 1 and to supplement the housing component with the Planning Division and consulting planner who has that type of expertise. He reviewed tasks of the Planning Division to identify housing funding, resources, and coordination with the Metropolitan Council and Livable Communities. Development Services Manager Gladhill supported the HRA role as it relates to housing and belief it makes sense to bring this position under that umbrella.

Management Analyst Brama stated the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program is expected to be an ongoing City economic development effort under the new position. He presented the 2012 Executive Report for the BRE Program, noting it has been a successful initiative and well received by the business community. Management Analyst Brama described their efforts to develop relationships and trust in the business community and presented the 2012 results and findings.

Mayor Strommen noted the EDA will also be looking at the BRE Program and asked the Councilmembers to focus on the case before it (Economic Development Manager Position).

Councilmember Riley stated with the turnover in Economic Development, he felt the City had dropped the ball and that Administrative Analyst Brama has opened doors by addressing miscommunications, which helped raise the City in the eyes of businesses. He found this position to be a priority.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated the 2012 Executive Report brings to light that the Economic Development position plays a critical role and asked how much should be dedicated towards housing activity and towards economic development activity. He noted the statistic on the two salable lots is critical when determining the revenue stream available to the City so he thinks this position will be putting a lot of energy into that area.

Councilmember Backous asked if businesses that relocated to other cities were contacted, noting that would be a good resource from which to learn.

Administrative Analyst Brama stated they were not but that could be done in 2013. He stated staff will develop an overview of suggestions to address concerns with non-responses and other improvements. He agreed there is more work to be done.

Councilmember Backous asked that it be part of next year's report.

Councilmember Elvig agreed the Economic Development position is an ambassador as much as everything else but it needs to be done on an on-going basis. With the land, when businesses look to move to Ramsey, he felt it was an issue of timing and having something available to seize the opportunity. Councilmember Elvig suggested also finding out what they think is positive about Ramsey.

Councilmember Tossey stated he would like to know how many that complained about taxes received TIF. He indicated he does not have concern about EDA versus HRA because he wants to move the Personnel Committee recommendation forward, noting the EDA has been active since 1992. However, the HRA is in its infancy and could be discontinued to separate The COR from the rest of Ramsey. Councilmember Tossey supported staff's recommendation and also eliminating the HRA.

Mayor Strommen stated the divergence of the economic development activities has been a frustration of hers. She felt there was value to bringing together the HRA with respect to The COR and traditional EDA role to create a unified vision for the community that includes housing. She noted that during the last strategic planning session, there had been discussion of the function of HRA and EDA and whether both are needed. Mayor Strommen stated she likes that this allows flexibility depending on the direction the Council wants to go but the issue is how to define this job. She noted that housing is still supported by Economic Development staff and she liked the idea of a unified approach since it allows flexibility and the Council can address the structure of the EDA and HRA in the future.

Mayor Strommen requested the EDA's feedback, when available.

The consensus of the Council was to approve the job description and recommendation of the Personnel Committee, as presented, and direct staff to move forward with recruitment of the Economic Development Manager position based on staff's recommendation.

2.04: Discussion Regarding 2013 Union Contract Negotiations for AFSCME, LELS-Patrol and LELS-Sergeants (Discussion closed to the public)

Human Resources Manager Colleen Lasher reviewed the staff report to discuss the three union contracts. She advised that under Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.03, the meeting can move into closed session to discuss labor negotiations strategy for the City's union contracts. She indicated closed session discussion will relate to 2013 negotiations for AFSCME, LELS-Patrol and LELS-Sergeant union contracts. The closed session will be tape recorded and that tape will be maintained for a period of eight years.

Motion by Councilmember Tossey, seconded by Councilmember Kuzma, to move to Closed Session to discuss acquisition negotiations.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Strommen, Councilmembers Tossey, Kuzma, Backous, Elvig, LeTourneau, and Riley. Voting No: None.

The City Council meeting moved into a Closed Session at 7:39 p.m.

The City Council reconvened in Open Session at 8:18 p.m.

Mayor Strommen stated the Council held discussion on union negotiations and gave direction to staff.

2.05: Review Proposal from Elwyn Tinklenberg re: Legislative Consulting Services

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report and the City's past contracts with The Tinklenberg Group for federal assistance on rail and highway transportation projects. He stated consideration is whether to approve The Tinklenberg Group consulting proposal for services related to the pursuit of funding for the Highway 10 and Armstrong Boulevard Interchange in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 and billed on an hourly basis.

Elwyn Tinklenberg, The Tinklenberg Group, presented a proposal to provide consulting services related to the pursuit of funding for the Trunk Highway 10 and Armstrong Boulevard interchange. It was noted the proposed work elements of the contract include Federal, State, and local community efforts associated with securing funding for the Armstrong Boulevard interchange project. He noted there is currently a good environment for this funding to occur, good relationships established with Anoka County, the project is a priority at the Anoka County level, and potential for interchanges is strong in terms of the market for retail space and other development space that is interested in the area but waiting for an interchange over the railroad tracks to assure delivery of products in a just-in-time manner. He described the roadwork within Ramsey that has been completed to create a "shovel ready project" including a preliminary design being in place that has been agreed with, connection of infrastructure, and The COR environment. Mr. Tinklenberg stated from all of those perspectives, the time is right to move forward for funding in this Session. He encouraged the Council to look positively at doing that whether with his firm or someone else. Mr. Tinklenberg stated his proposal is straightforward, noting there is already a coordinating group involved from the community, the business community and Chambers are involved, and there is a partnership with Anoka County, which will help bring a larger effort to bear and give this project the kind of support needed to move forward effectively. He noted another part of the proposal that is unique is getting BNSF involved in supporting the crossing since it will benefit them as well as the public.

Councilmember Tossey stated the meeting mentioned was positive about the Armstrong project and what can be accomplished over the next few years. He stated Mr. Tinklenberg had been straight forward in saying it does not need to be him to "quarterback" this effort but there is a political reality and he would ask if it helps or hurts Ramsey's effort to hire Mr. Tinklenberg when there is a Republican controlled Congress and DFL controlled State houses and Governor. He asked Mr. Tinklenberg if he can fit in with that environment, noting Representative Bachmann has expressed a willingness to support the Highway 10 effort.

Mr. Tinklenberg stated that is an important question, how to best position the politics to get this project funded. He believed he can work well across the aisle and has done so with projects like the Brockton Interchange in Hennepin County. In this case, it is working with Representative Bachmann's office and while he welcomes and encourages that support, Ramsey also needs members of the House Transportation Commission, and Congressmen Tim Walls and Rick Nolan. For funding, grant requests related to specific programs are administered through Administration and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) and need support of key Congress members for affirmative consideration. Mr. Tinklenberg explained there is need to work on a combination of those to get everyone on board including Anoka County, Representative Bachman, Senators, and Minnesota House and Senate, and the Governor's bonding bill. If that does not occur, Ramsey will need to be involved in the Legislator's additions to the bonding bill. All of that will require being able to work all of the pieces together. Mr. Tinklenberg stated it is beneficial to have a coordinating group like the committee that met the other day because it helps bring things together and assure no instances where politics get in the way. He reviewed his professional background that included working with the US/Department of Transportation under the Bush administrations. Mr. Tinklenberg stated he feels good about his record of working across the aisle.

Councilmember Tossey asked who will be the new Transportation Secretary.

Mr. Tinklenberg advised of candidates under consideration.

Councilmember Tossey asked Mr. Tinklenberg whether he has competing interest, should the City spend \$30,000 on a lobbyist, within the six congressional districts that would compete for transportation funds.

Mr. Tinklenberg assured the Council that this would be the only project they would have in front of the Legislature.

Councilmember Tossey asked if Anoka County is seeking \$330 million in funding.

Mr. Tinklenberg stated that is his understanding, but he has never been successful with that kind of approach. He noted he had spent a lot of time working on Highway 610 in Blaine but the first thing funded with that project was a retention pond along the highway; however, support built as they were able to secure funding. Mr. Tinklenberg stated this is a difficult road funding piece, noting the Governor put in an additional one-quarter cent sales tax for transit but there is no new State money for roads and bonding is typically for small amounts for actual highway construction, mostly related to bridges. Mr. Tinklenberg stated he thinks expecting the State to come up with a large amount of money to do Highway 10 is not realistic.

Councilmember Tossey left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Councilmember Riley stated the City and different groups seems positive, Ramsey is already working with people at the City of Anoka, Anoka County, the State Legislature, and federal level. He asked why Ramsey needs Mr. Tinklenberg and if so, how he would build on it.

Mr. Tinklenberg stated there are many pieces and details that need to be taken care of immediately, a hearing is coming up, a bill needs to be introduced and submitted to committees, and a schedule to keep all of the pieces moving forward. He felt part of the strength is the number of players involved but someone is still needed to keep them moving in a coordinated way. Mr. Tinklenberg commented on the importance of Representative Jim Abeler's commitment since he is able to "build a bridge" to the DFL due to his vote on the Transportation Bill a few years ago. However, he thinks Representative Abeler will also tell the City that it needs someone to keep it moving forward, especially since it is a very compressed time frame of four months and there is a lot to do in terms of legislation and the Governor's bonding bill.

Councilmember LeTourneau thanked Mr. Tinklenberg for attending and stating he is on board with this effort. He agreed this is good timing and asked what the next four months will look like, if the Council acts favorable on this proposal.

Mr. Tinklenberg stated there is clear understanding of the cost breakdown because there will be a local share, \$10-\$15 million in terms of bonding at the State level, and a Federal grant or Rail Safety Grant that will come later but needs to be in place at the end of four months. He stated in the next four months, he thinks it is doable to have all elected Federal officials behind it and moving it forward with the new Transportation Secretary. Mr. Tinklenberg noted the proposal mentions his sense that because of relationships built and familiarity of key staff people in congressional offices with this project and the City, it is not as necessary to have a Washington, D.C., delegation and it can be handled effectively locally.

Councilmember Elvig stated he has had the opportunity to work with Mr. Tinklenberg previously when issues needed to be "pushed over the top." He stated in this case the "gun is loaded" and Mr. Tinklenberg is in a key position because of his history with Ramsey, Highway 10, RALF, the overpass, and the train station. He noted Mr. Tinklenberg is a known personality, has been effective, and he can look towards Mr. Tinklenberg to "carry the ball." Councilmember Elvig noted a team probably needs to be developed of business owners and City representatives and a timeframe organized to get things moving forward. He stated he supports this proposal.

Councilmember Kuzma stated he thinks with the overpass being located in Ramsey, the City needs to be the lead organization to spearhead with someone that has the experience, like Mr. Tinklenberg.

Mayor Strommen stated she thinks someone is needed to help staff coordinate and her question relates to appropriate scale, noting Highway 10 is Anoka County's number one transportation priority and specifically the Armstrong interchange. Mayor Strommen stated she is not sure the City's role needs to be coordinating all of the entities and asked if this proposal reconciles with Anoka County's role and other agencies. She explained she would like to assure Ramsey is not duplicating efforts and most effectively using its resources because it is critical to look at community support issues and relationships the City wants to maintain within staff to business and community members.

Councilmember Elvig stated he does not see it as scope or the City taking the lead, but more in how it is coordinated. He agreed Anoka County should take the lead on some issues but the City

needs to stay involved and Mr. Tinklenberg already has strong relationships in Ramsey. Councilmember Elvig noted Mr. Tinklenberg can take a secondary seat in a County issue.

Mayor Strommen suggested staff run this proposal by Anoka County, about whether Mr. Tinklenberg needs to be involved in some of the issues. She stated she does not want the City to pay for the same set of services for which that Anoka County is also paying. Mayor Strommen supported Ramsey working in cooperation with Anoka County and the City of Anoka so all are on the same page but she is concerned that if each starts hiring their own resources, it may defeat the purpose to coalesce around this issue.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed that Anoka County has this project as its number one priority, has a coordinator, a lobbyist in former Representative Kathy Tingelstad, as well as Federal lobbyists. He noted that he and Mayor Strommen will be meeting with those lobbyists while in Washington, D.C. He stated he hopes The Tinklenberg Group proposal will pull together the local steering group, business people, Anoka County, the City of Anoka, Chambers of Commerce, and other interested stakeholders to put pressure on the State and Federal governments. City Administrator Ulrich agreed it may be possible to cut back this proposal and he is interested in talking with Anoka County about that possibility.

Mayor Strommen stated she does not want to duplicate efforts.

City Administrator Ulrich stated this is an opportunity for Ramsey to put forth its best effort so it will take some discussion.

Mayor Strommen stated she would like staff to hold conversations with Anoka County to assure this proposal is scaled appropriately before it is considered by the Council.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated when he asked Mr. Tinklenberg about how it will look in four months and form of delivery, Mr. Tinklenberg had been very clear and indicated the majority focus on what he will deliver: the State funding piece, the Federal funding piece specific to this project, and relationships that reside in other bodies with decision makers.

Mayor Strommen asked how much of that Anoka County is already doing that Ramsey can “piggyback on” without duplicating that effort. She wanted to assure the City moved in concert and compliment their efforts.

Councilmember Backous agreed, noting the entities could end up working against each other so he thinks it is prudent to touch base with Anoka County and make sure efforts are coordinated.

Councilmember Elvig stated he does not want Ramsey to fall just short of being successful and for \$5,000, he would prefer to “push.” He noted that Anoka County has a bigger picture in mind than Ramsey and it may be a question of how it is managed.

City Administrator Ulrich agreed that Ramsey has its own interests that are independent of Anoka County and the City of Anoka, and that is Armstrong Boulevard.

The consensus of the Council was to direct staff to hold conversations with Anoka County relating to the scope of the consulting proposal from The Tinklenberg Group related to the pursuit of funding for the Highway 10 and Armstrong Boulevard Interchange.

City Administrator Ulrich stated this topic will be on the City Council's February 12, 2013, meeting agenda for further discussion.

2.06: Discuss Dates for Joint City Council Meeting with City of Anoka

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report, noting the City of Anoka has proposed different meeting dates since one of their Councilmembers is out of town on March 11, 2013.

Following discussion of availability, the consensus of the Council was to direct staff to schedule a joint City Council meeting with the City of Anoka on Tuesday, April 30, 2013.

Mayor Strommen advised that City of Dayton Mayor McNeil is also interested in a joint meeting and asked staff to follow up with him.

3. FUTURE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Noted.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff has been approached by a potential senior housing developer that has zoning concerns so the Planning Commission, at its February 21, 2013, Work Session, will focus on those issues. He invited Councilmembers to attend that meeting, which will start at 5:30 p.m.

At the suggestion of Councilmember Elvig, the Council agreed to consider the topics of leasing certification and the use of recreational vehicles on public roads, both being safety related issues.

Development Services Manager Gladhill requested adequate time for staff to prepare that information and recommendation on a rental licensing program.

Councilmembers Riley and Kuzma reported on the League of Cities Training for Newly Elected Officials.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Strommen adjourned the Work Session of the City Council at 9:07 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.