

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, August 13, 2013, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Pro tem Randy Backous
Councilmember Jill Johns
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember John LeTourneau
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Jason Tossey

Member Absent: Mayor Sarah Strommen

Also Present: Acting City Administrator Diana Lund
Police Captain Jeff Katers
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Human Resources Manager Colleen Lasher
Development Services Manager Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson
Assistant to the City Administrator Patrick Brama
City Attorney Joe Langel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro tem Backous called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:33 p.m. and welcomed newly elected Councilmember Johns. He also welcomed Environmental Policy Boardmembers.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Discussion Regarding the Economic Development Manager Recruitment

Human Resources Manager Lasher reviewed staff's meeting with Sharon Klumpp of Springsted, Inc. to discuss the search process for the Economic Development Manager. She indicated the recommendation of Springsted, Inc. is to increase the pay range to at least \$90,000. She presented the staff report and recommendation for an 8% increase to bring the range up to \$73,173 to \$91,465, in a range similar to Police Captain or Park Superintendent. The midpoint of the recommended range is \$82,319 and hiring expectations would be around the midpoint if warranted based on the candidate's qualifications and experience. Human Resources Manager Lasher requested City Council consensus on the salary range so the position can be posted

tomorrow, noting the intent is to hire between Step 1 and 3. She explained that since the start date would be in November, there are sufficient funds for this position. It was noted the 2014 wages would increase by whatever is approved by the City Council for COLA.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated his support for staff's recommendation to increase the wage scale. He asked who the Economic Development Director will report to and indicated he would support elevating this position to a Director given the complexity and nature of work tasks. In addition, this position will drive economic development activities. He asked if that will mean a higher pay grade.

Human Resources Manager Lasher stated a Director position means being the director of a department. She explained this position is of high level, but it is shaped as an economic development team. She asked if the City Council would be interested in discussing a reclassification in six to nine months.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated he wants this position to be actively engaged in the Leadership Team with more of an integral part. He stated he would support revising the job classification.

Human Resources Manager Lasher stated this position is definitely an integral part of the Leadership Team and identified as such in the Management Plan with direct reporting to the City Administrator.

Mayor Pro tem Backous asked if it would effect recruitment to adjust the title of this position and if a higher-level talent could be attracted.

Councilmember Tossey stated he finds it intriguing to consider this position as a Police Captain or Park Superintendent; however, this position involves development and that is something he does not support the City being involved in. He stated he does not support increasing the salary range for this position.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated it would make it easier for Springsted to attract an employee with a higher salary range. He noted the City could have taken that action without hiring an expensive consultant.

Human Resources Manager Lasher agreed and stated she has expressed some reluctance to move ahead with a higher pay grade. But, if that is what is needed to attract a quality candidate, then it needs to be done.

Councilmember LeTourneau noted the City has been unsuccessful twice in attracting a qualified candidate for this position and he thinks it is a reasonable assumption that the pay scale needs to be increased given what is occurring in the market place.

Human Resources Manager Lasher stated when the position description was reviewed by the Management Team and Ms. Klumpp of Springsted, all were comfortable with the responsibilities and title but Springsted did point out that a benefit of using a search firm is that candidates can

ask more pointed questions and have more comfort in talking with someone that is not the final decision maker.

Councilmember Riley stated he would agree that increasing the wage scale will make recruitment easier and since experts were hired, he would ask why the City Council would not want to follow their recommendation. He asked Human Resources Manager Lasher about her position.

Human Resources Manager Lasher stated she is reluctant to increase the pay grade but since the City has recruited twice unsuccessfully, she welcomes professional advice. However, she would recommend being conservative in the wage offered.

Councilmember Kuzma stated the City has a large project and to move it, someone with contacts and skill sets is needed, which would be a senior level employee rather than an employee at the bottom of the pay scale. He stated support for the recommendation to attract that senior level applicant.

Councilmember Kuzma stated this recommendation moves up the scale, but keeps the bottom about the same so he is not sure whether it will attract a higher-level candidate.

Councilmember Johns stated support for Springsted's recommendation. She stated if this position is an integral part of the plan going forward and the City has not been successful in several recruitment events, this may be the "magic bullet" to get it done so she supports moving forward.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated he is torn with this decision and would rather post "For Sale" signs on the property. He stated the only reason he would support hiring for this position is to address the rest of Ramsey. Mayor Pro tem Backous stated it bothers him that Springsted was hired and paid \$6,500 and their recommendation is to pay a higher wage scale but he would support it as long as the position is paid at the lower range of the scale. He stated if recruitment is not successful this time, he would no longer support filling this position.

Human Resources Manager Lasher stated Springsted referenced the City of Moorhead who had just recruited so she contacted them. The City of Moorhead offered a salary range of \$70,093 to \$75,768 and found and hired an excellent candidate from the private sector at \$73,000.

Mayor Pro tem Backous polled the City Council, noting six were in support and one opposed.

The majority consensus of the City Council was to support Option 1 to increase the wage scale by eight percent to bring the range up to \$73,173 to \$91,465.

2.02: Review Environmental Policy Board's 2013-2014 Proposed Work Plan

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson described the activity of the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) during 2013 and presented its 2013-2014 proposed Work Plan as detailed in the staff report.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated he is the City Council liaison to the EPB, found it a pleasure, and supported that the group has become self directed. He stated this is valuable work, he supports the Work Plan, and thinks it will mean a lot to the community.

Mayor Pro tem Backous concurred and stated he had also served as EPB liaison. He stated he knows they are devoted members and provide an excellent service. He stated the Environmental Expo will be a good platform to present this information.

Councilmember Kuzma stated he is also in support of the Work Plan and had enjoyed sitting in at an EPB meeting.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson requested feedback on the draft Work Plan and if there was support to direct staff to schedule the Work Plan for formal action at a future City Council meeting.

EPB Member Larry Lewis asked if this format works well, noting it is also to address future actions going forward. He asked if this framework is satisfactory to the City Council.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated if it is efficient for the EPB, he would support it.

Councilmember Johns thanked the EPB for their work and stated she likes how the categories are sorted, making it easy to read and work with. She stated she supports this Work Plan and moving it forward.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated the EPB will be discussing whether there is merit to continue the tree sale program. This year it was incorporated into the spring recycling day event, which was more efficient for staffing but resulted in longer waits for residents to pick up trees. He stated the EPB will be discussing whether it makes sense to continue with that program.

Councilmember LeTourneau agreed that the Work Plan's organization with bulleted points is easy to follow and efficient to keep updated.

The consensus of the City Council was to direct staff to add the EPB's 2013-2014 draft Work Plan to a future City Council agenda for formal action.

2.03: Receive Update on Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Rulemaking for Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA)

Development Services Manager Gladhill provided an update on the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) rulemaking activities related to the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA). The intent is to update existing regulations found in Minnesota Statute Chapter 116G. It was noted the Critical Area extends from Ramsey's western border south down to Hastings, nearly 72 miles and encompasses approximately 30 governmental subdivisions across the metro area. Development Services Manager Gladhill presented the development standards and described the anticipated impact. He also addressed how these standards compare and

conflict with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Development Services Manager Gladhill explained the purpose of the rulemaking process, noting the DNR is committed to allowing local communities to have a voice and consider nonconforming uses that may come about as a result of the new rules.

Mayor Pro tem Backous asked why Elk River is not included.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated this is geared toward the metro area and the Wild and Scenic Designation applies to Elk River. He stated he received an e-mailed update, noting the previously drafted rules are being used as a baseline for discussion. The process is currently in Phase I with the DNR scheduling meetings with local governments. Phase II involves public outreach and rule revision and Phase III involves rule adoption. Development Services Manager Gladhill displayed and described a map depicting proposed districts. He explained this is still early in the preliminary analysis process and there is time to analyze impacts and policy directive from the Planning Commission and City Council. A local community meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2013 and this will be considered by the Planning Commission on October 3, 2013. Development Services Manager Gladhill asked whether the City Council supports participation of Board Chairs in the September 25 local community meeting, if it supports participation of the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization and Anoka Conservation District, and does it desire any public outreach and dialogue prior to or in addition to the DNR sponsored Public Comment Period, public meetings and/or open house.

Mayor Pro tem Backous supported engaging residents prior to the September 25, 2013, meeting.

Councilmember Tossey stated he would support that as well as advertising the September 25, 2013, meeting so all are aware.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated if he can find a meeting date prior to September 25, he will bring forward that option or staff can at least advertise the September 25, 2013 meeting so stakeholders are aware.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated it is critical to include the stakeholders and inform them of the September 25 meeting. He expressed concern about a facilitated meeting because it may present assumptions that are not really there, upsetting residents who are impacted about something that may not even happen. He asked if the meeting can be informational with residents being participatory.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated the information will be presented by staff and staff can also answer questions raised.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated the intent is to disseminate the information and assure transparency in the process.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff can formulate a meeting process and accept questions and concerns for presentation to the group on September 25, 2013.

The consensus of the City Council was to direct staff to advertise and formulate a meeting process, invite Mayor Strommen, Planning Commission Chairperson Levine, and EPB Chairperson Max to the initial meeting of the DNR related to the Critical Area rulemaking, and to report back following that meeting on the policy implications.

2.04: Receive Update on Rum River Shores, a Proposed 44-Lot Single Family Development on the Rum River in the City of Anoka

Development Services Manager Gladhill provided an update on Rum River Shores, a proposed 44-lot single-family development on 22.5 acres along the Rum River, north of Bunker Lake Boulevard, in the City of Anoka. He explained the project received approval from the Anoka City Council on August 5, 2013, and there are two general topics of feedback from Ramsey residents who live on the Rum River relating to bank stabilization, its compliance with Wild and Scenic Rivers standards, and the public dock. It was noted the City Council had reviewed the public notification and did not object to the proposed development but had requested the two communities work together to solve regional transportation issues as growth occurs.

Development Services Manager Gladhill displayed a site plan of the subject development and explained the difficulty in stabilizing the riverbank. He stated this project has been approved by the Anoka Conservation District (ACD), reviewed by the DNR, and approved by the City of Anoka under its current ordinances. He displayed pictures of the style of homes to be constructed, noting the location of the trail, vegetative restoration plan, and photos of the existing conditions of erosion necessitating bank stabilization. Development Services Manager Gladhill explained that it may take up to ten years for the riverbank to be visually restored after the bank stabilization project.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated it seems there is only one Ramsey home in view of this project.

Development Services Manager Gladhill pointed out the location of Ramsey's Rivers Bend Park that is in view of this project. He explained that the buckthorn removal project was conducted by the ACD under a conservation easement, which is being confused with this project. He indicated this project will not impact the flow of the River. Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff checked with the ACD and DNR to assure Anoka is following proper procedures.

Mayor Pro tem Backous congratulated the City of Anoka on a beautiful plan.

Informational; no action required.

2.05: Review Draft Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson described the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), an exotic invasive insect that has been discovered in areas of St. Paul and Minneapolis but not yet in Ramsey. He stated the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) has developed a draft Management Plan outlining steps that the City can take to manage the inevitable discovery of this pest. Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the EAB Management Plan, as detailed in the staff report. It was noted the intent is not to prevent or

eliminate EAB, which is impractical based on results in other States, but to spread the potential cost of management over multiple budget cycles. Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the projected budget impact. He requested that the City Council provide feedback on the draft EAB Management Plan, noting it satisfies a requirement of the Community Forest Bonding Grant that was awarded to the City in 2012 to complete the landscaping in North Commons.

Councilmember Riley stated he supports the approach of not treating and replacing, as necessary, however, a recent *StarTribune* article was contrary to that recommendation.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated the City of Burnsville is looking at regularly treating trees instead of removal/replacement. He stated he is making a recommendation of removal/replacement due to the age of Ramsey's street trees, which are smaller (6-8 inches) and not as large as longer established communities that have trees 20 inches in width.

Councilmember Tossey asked if builders are being asked to no longer plant Ash Trees in boulevards.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson answered in the affirmative and stated the City no longer allows, on public property, the planting of Ash Trees and also discourages, when asked, on private property.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood noted Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson is a Certified Arborist so the City is ahead of the curve on this threat by removing diseased trees and addressing preemptive actions. He stated if a private property owner has a large Ash Tree they want to save, the City would provide information on how it can be treated.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated a tree inventory will be conducted as time and budgets permit. He explained having that information will allow the City to determine the level of threat from EAB. He noted that when Dutch Elm was a threat, many communities replanted with Ash Trees.

Mayor Pro tem Backous asked if the City should prohibit planting Ash Trees on private properties to protect the rest of the City's trees.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that is a policy decision for the City Council but over time, there may be a treatment that is successful. He explained that in other impacted States, it has been found that once the initial wave of EAB gets through, treatment of remaining Ash Trees can be scaled back.

Councilmember Tossey stated he would object to the City telling private property owners what kind of tree they can plant; however, he does support the City not planting Ash Trees on public property.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated he also supports private property rights but the City has rules about conserving water and quality of top soil and if Ash Trees threaten the City's tree inventory, he would consider such an option.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated if you force a specific species to be planted that the property owner does not like, they may be less inclined to care for that tree. From that perspective, if someone has their heart set on some cultivar of an Ash Tree, the City would be hard pressed to prohibit it.

Mayor Pro tem Backous stated it would be effective to educate the public about the threat of EAB.

Councilmember Riley supported education and also to discourage planting of Ash Trees.

The consensus of the City Council was to support the draft EAB Management Plan and direct staff to place it on a future City Council agenda for formal action.

3. FUTURE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Noted.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

Acting City Administrator Lund read an email from Elwyn Tinklenberg, The Tinklenberg Group, providing an update on Mn/DOT's consideration of innovative funding options for the Armstrong Boulevard interchange.

Councilmember Kuzma stated he will attend the August 15, 2013, LRRWMO meeting.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood indicated that City Council Agenda Item 7.04, Adopt Resolution #13-08-136 Approving the Joint Powers Agreement and Accepting Bids for the Mississippi River Trail, was pulled from tonight's agenda because the funding relationship and JPA disbursements are not accurate. It will be rescheduled for consideration at the City Council meeting of September 10, 2013.

5. ADJOURNMENT

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

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Lund
Acting City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.