

**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 28, 2017, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Sarah Strommen
Councilmember Jill Johns
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember John LeTourneau
Councilmember Chris Riley (arrived at 6:35 p.m.)
Councilmember Melody Shryock
Councilmember Kristine Williams

EPB Members
Present: Chairperson Thomas Stodola
Board Member Colleen Anderson
Board Member Jane Covart
Board Member Michael Hiatt
Board Member Michael Valentine

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
City Planner Chris Anderson
Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Patrick Brama
Information Technology Manager Jason Fredrickson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Strommen called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:35 p.m.

Members of the City Council and Environmental Policy Board and staff introduced themselves.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: EPB Work Plan

City Planner Anderson reviewed the staff report.

Chairperson Stodola stated that the comments summarized by City Planner Anderson provide the position of the Board and the conversations that have recently occurred.

Board Member Valentine noted that the EPB has evolved over the past few years and is excited to be at the point of creating a work plan. He stated that he attended the Steering Committee meeting the previous night and it appeared that the majority would like to keep the rural feeling of the community and reserve the trend of lawn irrigation to better conserve water.

Chairperson Stodola noted that in the past year the Board has been involved in reviewed aspects of certain applications and welcomed any input the Council had on that process.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that it seems that the Council is not receiving a lot of feedback directly but noted that the feedback from staff has been good.

Mayor Strommen noted that although the information is passed to the Planning Commission, the Council does receive the input as well and also receives draft minutes from the EPB meetings.

Councilmember Johns stated that she has enjoyed the involvement of the EPB and has appreciated that additional viewpoint.

City Planner Anderson noted that the recommendation of the EPB is forwarded in the case to the Planning Commission and advised that the Commission has appreciated having that additional input when reviewing the case.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated that he was not in attendance at the last meeting when the brainstorming occurred. He stated that the statement of purpose was developed last year and asked if that changed at all through the discussion. It was confirmed that the statement of purpose has not changed and this would simply be in addition to that work. He stated that as the group matures he appreciates that they are self-directed. He stated that he is in agreement with the items proposed for a work plan, noting that he is excited to see how some of the vaguer items evolve. He suggested that some of the items become measurable.

Board Member Valentine stated that the Board struggled with being able to balance the typical work of the Board, such as reviewing the applications, and wanted to ensure that the workload can be balanced.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated that he appreciated that the Board was more cautious and recognized the need to balance with the typical workload.

Councilmember Kuzma noted that there were grant funds received by the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization the previous year through the Anoka Conservation District (ACD) and advised that perhaps additional funds would be available this year.

Mayor Strommen stated that she likes that the group is looking to be more aspirational. She stated that she has appreciated the involvement of the EPB when reviewing applications as that provides yet another viewpoint and helps the Council to reach the best answer.

City Planner Anderson stated that the funds from the ACD prompted the work on the shoreline inventory, noting that the ACD felt more confident that with that shoreline inventory the City and

the ACD would be more successful in obtaining grant funds. He stated that this work plan is not fully complete and is simply the results of the brainstorming session in order to gauge the input of the City Council. He noted that staff would take the work plan ideas and input from tonight in order to craft a more specific work plan.

Councilmember Kuzma asked if the City has considered the use of gray water tanks in the parks to use for irrigating.

City Planner Anderson stated that is, in essence, what the pond at The Draw currently does.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood further explained how the system at The Draw works as well as a similar system at Elm Crest Park. He noted that the City hopes to do more of that with future park development.

Mayor Strommen noted that she is excited to see the item regarding water resources and the shoreline inventory because of the importance of the rivers within Ramsey. She stated that she is also excited to see the pollinator item as there has been a decrease in pollinators and monarchs.

Councilmember LeTourneau encouraged the Board to be open to the input that comes out of the Steering Committee meetings.

Mayor Strommen confirmed the consensus of the Council to support the work plan ideas brought forward by the EPB for further development into a work plan.

City Planner Anderson stated that he would take the input from tonight to develop a more formal work plan that will be reviewed by the EPB at their March meeting and will then come back before the Council.