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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Monday, August 10, 2020, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor John LeTourneau
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Jeff Menth
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor LeTourneau called the regular meeting of the Ramsey City Council to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor LeTourneau.

2. PRESENTATION

2.01: Present Certificate of Appreciation to Myhers Construction, LLC, and Home Depot for Accessible Entrance Project at Local Ramsey Residence

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill advised of a recent home improvement by Myhers Construction to provide an accessible access for a home of a resident that was injured in a motor vehicle accident and required wheelchair access for their home. He noted that staff and the contractor were able to work together to get around the challenges. He commented on the number of volunteers that participated in the program. He stated that Home Depot provided some of the materials for the project for free once they were alerted to the project. He stated that this is an example of a Ramsey resident that received help through a Ramsey business with donations of materials from Home Depot and their suppliers. He recognized the different companies and suppliers that participated and donated to make this project a reality. He asked Myhers Construction to come forward.

Myhers Construction, thanked the City of Ramsey building department. She stated that for this project everyone was responsive and cooperative to bring this to fruition. She stated that it has been a privilege to work with the community on this project to allow this Ramsey resident to

come back to their home. She commented that the resident's family also participated and were very active.

Jason Berglund, Home Depot, stated that it is an honor and humbling to participate in this process. He stated that this project included great partners and great residents and he appreciated being able to be a part of the project.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that this is a great example of bringing people in the community together in a way that is meaningful for everyone. He read aloud a plaque of appreciation and presented one to Myhers Construction and one to Home Depot.

John Stockhausen stated that three months ago he was injured in an accident on his motorcycle. He stated that an employee at Myhers Construction was the person that discovered him in the ditch. He stated that during his time in the hospital he was reviewing small ramp options that would allow him access into his home. He stated that the ramp that was constructed was above what he could have imagined. He stated that great people have been involved in this project and he has made lifelong friends throughout this process.

Mayor LeTourneau thanked everyone involved and thanked staff for bringing this forward for recognition.

2.02: Receive Update on Anoka County Highway Projects

Deputy City Administrator introduced Anoka County Commissioner Matt Look.

County Commissioner Matt Look stated that the County was awarded an infragant. He congratulated Ramsey and everyone involved, noting that Congressman Emmer did an excellent job obtaining this grant. He stated that this plan would include the improvements at both Sunfish Lake and Ramsey boulevards at Highway 10. He stated that the grant identifies that both intersections would be completed in the same project with both intersections having grade separation. He introduced Anoka County Engineer Joe MacPherson, Assistant County Engineer Jerry Auge, and Project Manager Jason Orcutt. He explained that this team has been involved in all the phases of the Highway 10 improvements beginning with Armstrong Boulevard, to be followed by Thurston and Fairoak improvements, and finishing with Sunfish Lake and Ramsey Boulevards.

County Engineer Joe MacPherson stated that they are very excited about this project and the direction it is heading. He stated that they will continue to update the Council as things move forward. He noted that the Federal funding is the first step forward.

Project Manager Jason Orcutt stated that he was also the Project Manager for the Armstrong interchange project. He stated that the most important aspect is how people are treated to get to the end result and that will be his number one priority. He stated that he will provide his contact information to the Council and constituent concerns could be forwarded to him. He stated that they can provide updates as frequently as desired by the Council. He stated that these projects are difficult and involve different types of challenges that they are familiar with. He estimated

that about 850 postcards would be mailed for each public meeting held. He stated that the primary goal is to create a situation where people get home safely through the best and most cost-effective project. He provided details on the timeline moving forward.

Councilmember Specht thanked the County for the work it has done to get this project moving forward. He asked if there is a website available to provide residents with additional information.

Mr. Orcutt stated that there will information on the Anoka County Highway Department website within the next two weeks.

Councilmember Menth asked for details on the project timeline.

Mr. Orcutt stated that they will have bidding information prepared in 2023 with the primary construction occurring in 2024 and 2025.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that hopefully this funding will help to bring forward additional funding partners. She thanked Anoka County staff for providing an update to the City.

Mr. MacPherson stated that they are also working on preparatory projects for the Anoka Solution portion of Highway 10. He advised of projects that will be completed in 2021 to prepare those roads as detour routes for the Highway 10 projects in Anoka.

Assistant County Engineer Jerry Auge stated that Anoka County has a great staff and he looks forward to working on some of these larger projects that involve funding from multiple sources. He commented that these projects are great opportunities and they will work closely with Ramsey City staff to ensure the project meets the required timelines of the infragrant funds.

Mayor LeTourneau commented that there has been concern from the businesses along the corridor as to the timing of the project and scope of improvements. He encouraged everyone to ensure that the questions of the businesses are answered so that they can make the best decisions going forward.

Mr. Auge confirmed that they will be working with the businesses in that corridor.

Mayor LeTourneau commented that Ramsey is a place where people work together and communicate with each other. He appreciated the willingness of the County to support what the residents in Ramsey need along that corridor, along with all of those that move through the Highway 10 corridor.

3. CITIZEN INPUT

Anoka County Commissioner Matt Look stated that he is present to provide details on the Anoka County Business Relief Grant Program. He stated that the County is offering a business relief program to those impacted by COVID-19. He stated that grants of up to \$10,000 will be available.

He stated that applications will be accepted for ten days, beginning today. He stated that the total amount of the grants will be allocated equally between the different districts of the County and based on hardship and need. He reviewed some of the eligibility criteria, ineligibility criteria, and use for funds.

4. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Kuzma, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor LeTourneau, Councilmembers Kuzma, Musgrove, Menth, Riley, and Specht. Voting No: None.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Menth, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- 5.01: Receive Cash and Investments for Period Ending July 31, 2020
- 5.02: Approve the following Meeting Minutes:
 - 1) City Council Work Session dated July 14, 2020
 - 2) City Council Regular dated July 14, 2020
 - 3) City Council Special Work Session dated July 21, 2020
- 5.03: Approve Business Licenses
- 5.04: Approve Rental Licenses
- 5.05: Adopt Resolution #20-166 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of July 23, 2020 through August 5, 2020
- 5.06: Adopt Resolution #20-165 Approving Change Order #1 for Variolite Street Reconstruction, Improvement Project 20-01
- 5.07: Adopt Resolution #20-167 Approving Petition and Waiver Agreement for Municipal Water and Sanitary Sewer Connection to 7600 163rd Lane NW

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor LeTourneau, Councilmembers Riley, Menth, Kuzma, Musgrove, and Specht. Voting No: None.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.01: Adopt Ordinance #20-09: Revisions to Section 117-349 Related to Accessory Uses and Structures

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Ordinance #20-09.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to waive the City Charter requirement to read the Ordinance aloud and Adopt Ordinance #20-09 an Amendment to

Chapter 117 Section 349 Which is Known as the Accessory Uses and Buildings Section of the City Code of Ramsey, Minnesota.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Kuzma	aye
Councilmember Menth	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Mayor LeTourneau	aye

Motion carried.

7.02: Consider Safe Housing, Safe Neighborhoods Policy

Police Chief Katers reviewed the staff report stating that in previous City Council worksessions, the Council asked staff to look into the Crime Free Multi-Housing (CFMH) program or similar programs that other Minnesota cities have. Staff conducted research and provided the Council with an update on how similar cities have implemented CFMH and other programs.

Councilmember Menth stated that he would like to see staff move forward to develop a program. He realized that there may be some controversy but believed the program to be worth the effort.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that he is also fond of the idea of looking into this further. He stated that he would like to see the City expand further into this role.

Councilmember Riley stated that the Council identified this as a need based upon the high-density apartment buildings within The COR. He also believed this program makes sense to pursue.

Councilmember Specht stated that he also likes this idea. He asked if the Police Department feels it has adequate resources to dedicate to this program.

Police Chief Katers stated that there are a lot of community programs and they reassess the needs on an ongoing basis. He stated that there may be a need for staffing in the future but believed that the program could be started with the staff the department has. He noted that this may take away resources from another community program.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that during the worksession earlier tonight the budgeting for the next year were discussed. He stated that in the discussion tonight there was a request for another Officer and Records Technician. He asked the type of staff that would be needed for this program.

Police Chief Katers replied that typically these are Licensed Peace Officer positions that work with the onsite management, resident, and apartment owners. He noted that two Officers are assigned to special community programs in addition to their patrol duties. He stated that to begin with they will work within the current staffing and reassess the staffing level from there.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that this is helpful information in considering the personnel requests for the next year as he would not want to put too much stress on the department.

Councilmember Musgrove asked what would be done differently through the City and Police Department through this program compared to what is being done. She asked how long it would take to ramp up a program of this nature.

Police Chief Katers stated that it would be difficult to estimate the amount of time necessary to ramp up this type of program. He commented that currently they are not educating the management of the buildings related to crime free housing, therefore those would be new duties. He stated that they also are not actively going to residences or rental properties to review lighting, locks, and other security issues in an attempt to prevent crime. He stated that the department conducts those reviews upon request but does not do that proactively. He stated that the third phase would include resident training for neighborhood watch. He stated that this type of program would be proactive rather than reactive.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that some of the apartment management may already complete some of the crime free elements on their own. She stated that she would not want to see duplication. She stated that perhaps information could be posted on the City website to educate all residents. She stated that she would be agreeable to finding out more information about the program but may not support all elements of the program going forward.

Mayor LeTourneau summarized the direction for Police Chief Katers to bring forward direction on how this program could look in Ramsey for additional discussion.

7.03: Adopt Resolution #20-170 Accepting Quotes and Awarding Contract for Municipal Plaza Park Fill, Improvement Project #20-10

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and recommendation to accept quotes and award a construction contract to Reshetar Systems in the amount of \$60,959 for Municipal Plaza Park Fill, Improvement Project #20-10. On June 16, 2020, the Public Works Committee unanimously adopted a motion to recommend City Council approval to solicit quotes to relocate the sand stockpile from the COR Infiltration Basin site to Municipal Plaza Park. Though the Committee provided direction to complete the work after Happy Days events are over, based on recent discussions with the Council it is staff's understanding that the Municipal Plaza Park property will not be used for Happy Days activities, therefore this work could be completed at any time. Based on conversations with Reshetar Systems, work may begin as soon as the construction contract is executed and a Notice to Proceed is issued.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that when this fill work was done previously there were a lot of resident questions. She asked if there would be information available on the City's website related to the moving of the fill.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the City attempted to share information during the previous movement of fill and staff would once again work to share that information with residents.

Motion by Councilmember Menth, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to Adopt Resolution #20-170 Accepting Quotes and Awarding Contract for Municipal Plaza Park Fill, Improvement Project #20-10.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor LeTourneau, Councilmembers Menth, Riley, Kuzma, Musgrove, and Specht. Voting No: None.

7.04: Adopt Resolution #20-169 Approving Temporary Fencing and Play Area for PACT Charter School

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the staff report and recommendation to approve of the request from PACT Charter School to allow temporary fencing and a temporary play area to allow for social distancing measures related to COVID-19.

Councilmember Kuzma asked if there is a provision related to the length of time.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that this would sunset at the end of the academic school year, noting that if it needed to be extended it would come back at that time.

Councilmember Specht stated that the playground is well utilized by the school and the community. He commented that PACT is a great partner to the community.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to Adopt Resolution #20-169 Approving Temporary Fencing and Play Area for PACT Charter School.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor LeTourneau, Councilmembers Specht, Musgrove, Kuzma, Menth, and Riley. Voting No: None.

7.05: Resolution #20-163 Demonstrating Values of Kindness and Respect During Unprecedented Times

Councilmember Musgrove reviewed the proposed resolution that has been offered to the Council for consideration by herself and Councilmember Specht. She stated that there are some people that are not able to wear a mask as mandated and stated that those people should feel safe to go into stores and should be treated with kindness and respect. She reviewed statistics on COVID-19 and the most impacted segment of the population. She stated that the residents of Ramsey and Minnesota have done an excellent job in following the guidance from the Governor and stated that the numbers in Minnesota have been well below the projected deaths. She commented that businesses are still struggling, and the unemployment rate is very high as those businesses struggle to bring back employees. She commented that the resolution also asks that the Governor not mandate mask wearing. She hoped that the Council would support this resolution.

Chelsea Howell, 5250 156th Lane NW, stated that she was excited to see this resolution on the agenda. She appreciates the comments that Ramsey takes pride working together. She stated that she has spoken with local business owners and they have done a great job in determining how to

operate safely. She stated that the Executive Order puts pressure on business owners and those with health issues that prevent them from wearing a mask. She believed that everyone in the community should be respected and additional stress should not be put on the businesses that are struggling to rebound from the closures. She commended Ramsey for being forward thinking on this issue.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill referenced an email sent from resident Matt Woestehoff, 16078 Uranimite St NW, detailing his concerns with the proposed resolution that was distributed to the Council prior to the meeting, noting that the correspondence will become a part of the record.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that he is not thrilled about wearing a mask but does not believe it is that much of an encumbrance when it could help to stop the pandemic. He stated that if the resolution is adopted it seems that would say masks are not required. He noted that it only takes one person to spread COVID and cause a spike.

Councilmember Musgrove read the last paragraph from the proposed resolution noting that this would only support those that are not able to wear a mask as identified in the Executive Order. She stated that there are some people that cannot wear a mask and the community should be kind to those people and businesses should not be in fear of fines.

Councilmember Kuzma commented that he does not feel it is necessary to adopt this resolution.

Mayor LeTourneau asked if the City must comply with the Executive Order.

Police Chief Katers stated that the City cannot reduce what has been imposed by the State, it can only further restrict it.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that the City is bound by the Executive Order and it would send a bizarre message to do something opposite. He stated that while it can be hard to accept the Executive Order, people can act with kindness and respect of their own free will. He commented that while wearing masks does not solve the problem, it is part of a larger solution including social distancing and handwashing. He commented that it would be irresponsible for the City to support people not wearing masks.

Councilmember Menth commented that now that the Council is aware that the rules cannot be lessened and could only be strengthened, he would not want to muddy the waters for businesses. He stated that there are bigger issues and he would not support this.

Councilmember Riley referenced numbers three and four, which would allow a business to post a sign that would not require people to wear masks when they do not want to. He stated that he does support encouraging the Governor to eliminate the mask mandate. He stated that perhaps this resolution be stopped at number two, commenting that this would make a stronger statement with less words.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that he would pose concern with how the statement reads. He stated that he would argue that wearing masks are not a detriment to Ramsey businesses, as the businesses

could be closed down if the COVID numbers increase. He stated that he disagrees with the language in the proposed resolution and would not support it.

Councilmember Specht stated that he wants to ensure that everyone is treated with respect and fairness. He referenced number three, noting that medical exemptions are identified in the Executive Order. He stated that people are being attacked for not wearing masks when there could be a health condition that prevents them from wearing a mask. He stated that peoples differences should be respected. He referenced number two, noting that there are articles on both sides of the topic and mask wearing does not seem to be the key factor in determining the spikes in COVID. He stated that he would support the resolution as proposed.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that number three states nothing less or more than the Governor's Executive Order. She stated that it does not say that people do not have to wear a mask, it simply says if someone does not have a mask on, they should still be treated with respect. She stated that she would like to see the Governor work with the legislative branches of the government to craft something. She believed that the Minnesota numbers show that people are able to follow the precautions necessary to protect the community. She commented that the mask sometimes gives people a false sense of security and causes them to spread germs more than they would without the mask.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to Adopt Resolution #20-163 Demonstrating Values of Kindness and Respect During Unprecedented Times.

Further discussion: Ms. Howell recognized that people are frustrated and want to get back to normal life. She stated that her grandmother is 89 and has health problems that prevent her from wearing a mask. She stated that her grandmother has been turned away from stores telling her to come back with written documentation of her health exemption. She stated that she has a friend that has severe medical issues that has passed out twice in a salon from wearing a mask. She stated that the community could be kind to people rather than being frustrated that they are not doing the same as others. Mayor LeTourneau stated that he has an adult son with a disability that has not been turned away from any stores for not wearing a mask. He commented that his wife has a compromised immune system and has not been turned away or treated differently in the community. He stated that Ramsey is a great community that has a sense of kindness and fairness. He believed that adopting this resolution would pose a higher risk to residents and businesses and would go in violation of the Executive Order from the Governor.

Motion failed. Voting Yes: Councilmembers Musgrove, Specht, and Riley. Voting No: Mayor LeTourneau, Councilmembers Kuzma and Menth.

8. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill announced upcoming meetings and events.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Kuzma, seconded by Councilmember Menth, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

A recording of this meeting is available for viewing online at www.qctv.org
<<http://www.qctv.org>>. Recordings are available for 36 months after the date of the meeting.

Comment sent in regarding Resolution #20-163

From: Matt Woestehoff <matt@mattwoestehoff.com<<mailto:matt@mattwoestehoff.com>>>
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 10:45 AM
To: John LeTourneau <Jletourneau@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:Jletourneau@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>;
Chris Riley <criley@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:criley@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>; Jeff Menth
<JMenth@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:JMenth@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>; Mark Kuzma
<mkuzma@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:mkuzma@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>; Dan Specht
<dspecht@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:dspecht@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>; Debra Musgrove
<DMusgrove@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:DMusgrove@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>
Cc: Meetings Inbox <meetings@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:meetings@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>; Kurt
Ulrich <kulrich@ci.ramsey.mn.us<<mailto:kulrich@ci.ramsey.mn.us>>>
Subject: Further comments on Resolution #20-163

Good morning City Council and Staff-

I see that Resolution #20-163 is back on the agenda for tonight - I acknowledge it is not a public hearing, but again would like to share a few comments.

I believe this resolution has some noble goals. I believe protecting our local businesses is paramount, and also the freedom of our residents to live without fear of retribution for something out of their control is incredibly important- and something we need to focus more on.

But the tone, the content, and the intentional divisiveness is disheartening.

What we as Ramsey need is not an empty resolution, but communication and compassion from our leaders.

We need to say that face coverings are part of the solution, but by no means the whole thing. We need to say that washing hands and staying six feet apart are an incredibly important aspect in slowing the spread.

We need to believe that the sooner we do these things, the faster the pandemic will no longer spread at a rapid rate.

We need to acknowledge that some in our community cannot wear a mask, and that is OK.

We need to learn to read past the headlines, but stop before the comments.

We need to not sew division on a topic that is truly meant to help all of our residents and backed by scientists AND economists.

Goldman Sachs on June 29 published a study related to the economic outlook, and correlation between masks and the GDP. The result of their research? A nationwide mask mandate could save the national GDP as much as 5%. That is the equivalent of about \$1 trillion dollars.

<https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/pages/face-masks-and-gdp.html>

Neel Kashkari, who is president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis made a statement in the last few days, alongside Dr. Osterholm whom the resolution mentions. Their opinion was not about masks - but a call for even more strict lockdowns. And I quote “If we don’t do the hard shutdown, it’s going to be a much longer, harder economic recovery, with much more serious health consequences for many Americans. We can continue to fumble our way through it, or we can take a much more strategic approach.” As a reminder, this is the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. To say his expertise does not revolve around the local economy would be wholly unfounded.

<https://www.startribune.com/prominent-minnesotans-pitch-lockdown-to-slow-covid-19/572054322/>

A recent study by the Cleveland Federal Reserve also shows that people are approximately 70% more comfortable when shopping if others are wearing masks. People who are comfortable will shop more or longer. Mandating face coverings therefore is for the economic benefit of small businesses.

<https://www.clevelandfed.org/newsroom-and-events/publications/economic-commentary/2020-economic-commentaries/ec-2020-survey-results-on-mask-wearing-behaviors-and-beliefs.aspx>

It is also important to remember that 72% of the United States population has some sort of face covering mandate, and that Pew Research acknowledges that 72% of Republicans and 88% of Democrats have worn a mask in the past month (as of 4/10/20). As much as you may try, this is not actually a partisan issue. This is common sense that the majority of Americans believe may be helpful.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/23/most-americans-say-they-regularly-wore-a-mask-in-stores-in-the-past-month-fewer-see-others-doing-it/>

If we ignore the selective interpretations of medical advice sprinkled in the finding of facts, the passive disdain for our democratic governor, and we just focus on the resolutions, I have some suggestions:

1. If you want to give businesses the opportunity to have a sign that supports the States stance that no business can ask for proof of medical exemption, then create one. Create it, share it in the community and allow businesses to print it. This isn't a policy issue - this, like many topics, can be solved with further clear communications.
2. If you want the governor to rescind his executive order, then be kind and respectful. Wear a mask if you can. Stay six feet apart. Wash your hands. Show that we can be trusted to do what's best for the community together and that the executive order is unnecessary.
3. Research shows requiring face coverings can an economic benefit to businesses in both short term shopping experiences and longterm impact of the economy.
4. If we continue down our current path and President Trump issues a nationwide mask mandate since the data shows it'll save our GDP \$1 trillion dollars, I'd expect you to hold him to the same scrutiny.

Hearing these points, as well as my previous comments, I hope that you as a City Council can understand my true disappointment that this is even a topic on the agenda. We can do better. We must do better. We cannot sit stagnant but must move forward, too. Although the intention of the resolution is good, I do firmly believe this will move us backwards as a community and put our businesses, and residents, at greater risk in both the short and long term.

Thank you again for your time,
Matt

Matt

Woestehoff // Father/Husband/Director/Commissioner/Candidate // 952.484.1370 // matt@mattwoestehoff.com
[attwoestehoff.com<mailto:matt@mattwoestehoff.com>](mailto:matt@mattwoestehoff.com)
16078 Uramite St NW // Ramsey

Read more: <https://mattwoestehoff.com/thoughts>