

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Chelsea Howell
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby – attended remotely
City Attorney Joe Langel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Discuss Council Organization

Mayor Kuzma stated that it is his understanding that the Mayor appoints the EDA members and recommended that Councilmember Riley continue but the second appointment be delayed as Mr. Heineman is a current member and is running in the upcoming special election.

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Howell commented that she reviewed the appointments allocated in the staff report. She stated that she is concerned with providing balance, noting the current allocations proposed. She stated that she was only assigned one appointment whereas other members are allocated four to five appointments.

City Administrator Ulrich asked Councilmember Howell the positions that she is interested in.

Councilmember Howell stated that she is interested in the EDA as she has 17 years of experience as a small business owner. She noted that the at large members will most likely receive the most calls from businesses. She noted that Ward 2 has less than eight percent of businesses.

Mayor Kuzma stated that he would like to reserve the decision on EDA until after the special election. He noted that Councilmember Howell is listed as an alternate and he would agree with that.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that this discussion is important and asked why the EDA appointment would be tabled.

Mayor Kuzma commented that Mr. Heineman is already on the EDA and if he is elected in the special election, he would like to keep him on that group.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that it is unknown as to whether Mr. Heineman would be interested in maintaining that position and Councilmember Howell is interested now. She stated that even though the Mayor makes a recommendation, the Council still needs to ratify that decision.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed that the Council needs to ratify the appointments.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she also noticed a disparity when reviewing the proposed appointments. She stated that in 2018 when she joined the Council, she wanted EDA and Public Works and was instead appointed to Happy Days and the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization. She stated that she is glad to now be joining the Public Works Committee. She commented that as a newcomer to the Council she had to wait her turn to receive her desired appointments and now a newcomer is being assigned to both the EDA and Public Works Committee. She stated that the Fire Board will most likely go away in the coming months and therefore she did not believe an alternate would be needed for that group.

Mayor Kuzma stated that he did not recommend these appointments and noted that it was drafted based on the input Councilmembers provided.

Councilmember Howell asked which staff chose to allocate these positions.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated that staff used the rankings provided by the Council in order to allocate the positions. She recognized that the allocations for Councilmember Howell are not equal and noted that was not done intentionally.

Councilmember Specht asked if there are other positions outside of the EDA that Councilmember Howell would be interested in.

Councilmember Howell stated that she tries not to overextend herself and would be interested in the Fire liaison position if the Police liaison position is not available. She stated that she would be interested in the Public Works Committee if the EDA is not an option.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he also put the EDA as his top priority as he also has years of experience in the business community and provided background information on his experience. He stated that he respects the decision of the Mayor to postpone that appointment until the next

member joins the Council. He stated that he was allocated to a number of positions based on his rankings. He stated that he would be willing to give up his position on the Fire Board or Public Works Committee.

Councilmember Howell commented that her preference is the EDA.

Councilmember Specht asked if the Council could agree to postpone that decision and focus the discussion on the other appointments.

Councilmember Howell stated that the difficult thing is that her highest priority is the EDA and therefore she is unsure of the perfect solution for other appointments. She stated that if she is not chosen for the EDA, Public Works Committee would be her second choice. She again stated that if the Police liaison position is not available, she would then prefer the Anoka County Fire Protection Council position.

Police Chief Katers commented that he would not be able to give up his position.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he would be willing to provide Councilmember Howell with the alternate position.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for clarification on the survey form filled out by the Council. She stated that it was her understanding that the Council was to choose four positions.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated that each Board and Committee should have had some comment as there are appointees and alternates needed.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that her understanding was that only four selections were to be made and therefore only ranked four positions. She asked if that should have jumped out at staff.

Administrative Services Director Lasher commented that not all Councilmembers filled the form out in the same manner but that did not jump out at staff.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he separated his answers between one- and two-year appointments.

Councilmember Specht stated that he also filled the form out wrong and can use this information in the future. He asked if he could be the alternate for the River Crossing group.

Councilmember Woestehoff confirmed that he would be accepting of that change.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she would be willing to take the Park Commission position and serve as alternate for the EPB. She confirmed that she would be willing to continue on the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization.

Councilmember Riley stated that he would be willing to serve as the alternate to the LRRWMO if no one else is interested in that position as he has attended meetings in the past.

It was confirmed that Councilmember Specht would be willing to give Councilmember Howell the position on the Joint Law Enforcement Council. It was also confirmed that Councilmember Specht would be the appointee to the Anoka County Fire Protection Council and the alternate for the Joint Law Enforcement Council.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the list of appointees as discussed tonight.

Administrative Services Director Lasher noted that statute states that based on the size of the EDA, two members of the Council must be a part of the EDA.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the alternate could serve as the interim until the time a second appointment is made. It was confirmed that Councilmember Howell will serve as the alternate.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill continued to review the appointments as discussed tonight and confirmed that with the Council.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she appreciates TimeSaver and believes they do a good job. She did not believe there were other comparable businesses that provide that service but asked if the City goes out for bids or just remains with the same groups each year for other consulting positions.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that by policy professional services typically go up to five years, unless extended by the Council. He stated that after that period the City typically goes out for RFP but noted that can be a burdensome process and therefore the City has tended to extend for the Attorney and Auditor as the prices and services are acceptable. He stated that there is a period of time that would be necessary to bring a new auditor or attorney up to speed and therefore that is part of the consideration. He stated that from a staff and Council perspective the City is happy with the legal services and the competitive rate. He noted that the relationship with the previous City Attorney was over 30 years. He stated that there are good opportunities to test the contract and pricing and therefore would not recommend a 30-year relationship for that position. He stated that if an RFP were going to be done, he would prefer that to be done under more normal circumstances rather than remotely.

Councilmember Musgrove asked the length of the current legal services contract.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that essentially the City is on a 30-day contract for legal services.

Councilmember Musgrove used the example of the Joint Powers Agreement with the Fire Department, noting that the City was not well served and therefore just wants to ensure the City is being responsible and has checks and balances. She stated that she agrees with the legal services and contract proposed but it would be good to know how comparable these rates are.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that he would suggest continuing this contract and noted that he can check with other cities to determine what their rates are, and the Council could compare that information to determine if it would like to go out for RFP.

Councilmember Riley stated that the Council went through the RFP process seven years ago and since that time only moderate or expected increases have been involved. He stated that the process of switching representation was time consuming and painful.

Councilmember Musgrove appreciated that perspective.

Mayor Kuzma commented that the attorney was previously present at every meeting but by not requiring his presence at every meeting provided a cost savings.

City Attorney Langel stated that the original retainer included all meeting attendance, but a cost savings was able to be provided by not requiring that attendance, as 90 percent of the Ramsey meetings do not require input from the City Attorney. He stated that in the past years his hourly rate has only increased by ten dollars per hour, which is well under the typical legal fee. He noted that there is no increase proposed for the retainer.

Councilmember Specht asked the number of cities City Attorney Langel represents.

City Attorney Langel believed he represented 12 municipalities while his firm represents additional municipalities. He commented that he does not represent any cities that border Ramsey, therefore a conflict should not arise.

Councilmember Howell asked the typical length for the City contract for legal services.

City Attorney Langel commented that two to three years are typical contract lengths, going up to five years which typically establishes the retainer amount. He stated that each contract has a 30-day clause therefore the City can terminate the contract if desired.

Mayor Kuzma commented that in his experience City Attorney Langel has provided outstanding service to the City.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the information discussed tonight will be inserted to the draft resolution for formal action at the regular meeting tonight.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the appointed doctor provided input on the pandemic.

Police Chief Katers replied that most of the guiding information was gained through the emergency response guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and Anoka County. He commented that at one point in time all the new hires for the Police Department had to see the appointed doctor for a physical, but that was a long time ago.

2.02: Discussion Regarding Union Contract Negotiations for LELS-Patrol & LELS-Sergeants (Discussion Closed to the Public)

Administrative Services Director Lasher suggested that the Council enter closed session to discuss contract negotiations with LELS-Patrol and LELS-Sergeants.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recess the meeting to Closed Session at 6:27 p.m.

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

The meeting reconvened to Open Session at 6:40 p.m.

Administrative Services Director Lasher reported that in the closed session the Council discussed union negotiations and provided staff with direction to continue to negotiate in an attempt to settle the contracts.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar

Councilmember Musgrove commented for 2021 there is no monthly date, but a future work session item is listed to Review Councilmember Compensation Study. She stated that she believed there was not a consensus to bring this topic forward for discussion and recommended removing it from the future items list.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a Closed Session on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Chelsea Howell
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Deputy City Administrator Tim Gladhill
City Attorney Joe Langel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the Closed Session of the City Council to order at 6:28 p.m.

2. COUNCIL BUSINESS

2.01: Discussion Regarding Union Contract Negotiations for LELS-Patrol & LELS-Sergeants

Administrative Services Director Lasher explained that the purpose of the case is for the Council to discuss the union contract negotiations for LELS-Patrol and LELS-Sergeants.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to adjourn the Closed Session.

Motion carried.

The Closed Session was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.