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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Monday, February 8, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Chelsee 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
Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma 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 Kuzma.

2. PRESENTATION

2.01: Mayoral Proclamation Proclaiming February 2021 as Black History Month in the City of Ramsey

Mayor Kuzma read the Mayoral Proclamation Proclaiming February 2021 as Black History Month in the City of Ramsey.

James Wade provided additional background information on Black History Month. He stated that he has known Mayor Kuzma for 30 years and thanked Mayor Kuzma for the opportunity to speak tonight. He stated that his company 2110 Design Group along with Heritage Colors designed a series of posters over the years and presented one of those posters to the City of Ramsey to display at City Hall titled *Stretch Your Mind and Fly*.

3. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

4. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to approve the agenda as presented.

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

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- 5.01: Approve Rental Licenses
- 5.02: Adopt Resolution #21-039 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of January 21, 2021 through February 3, 2021
- 5.03: Adopt Resolution #21-026 Approving Restaurant Assistance Plan: WAC (Water Availability Charge) Program and Approving Loan for Pleasant Valley Sunrise Group LLC dba (doing business as) Aurelio's Pizza
- 5.04: Adopt Resolution #21-037 to Hire a Public Works Parks Maintenance Worker

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

6. PUBLIC HEARING

There were none.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.01: Introduce Ordinance #21-08 to Amend City Code Chapter 10, Article III, Section 57 and 58 Dog Licensing

Police Chief Katers reviewed the staff report and recommendation to remove Section 1-57 – Individual Dog Licensing and the rewording of Section 10-58 – Tags. He noted an additional clean-up item identified by the City Attorney for Section 10-65.1.

Councilmember Musgrove thanked staff for looking into this further after the previous direction from the Council to identify policy streamlines that could be made to make things more efficient. She asked if the motion tonight could include the suggestion from the City Attorney.

City Administrator Ulrich clarified that action would come back in a separate ordinance at a future time.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to introduce Ordinance #21-08 amending Chapter 10, Article III, eliminating Section 10-57 – Individual Dog Licensing and rewording of Section 10-58 – Tags.

Further discussion: Councilmember Riley asked if the additional suggestion could be added to this motion. City Administrator Ulrich commented that is a separate ordinance, so the change would come back. Police Chief Katers stated that it would be a clean-up item and would like to also introduce that tonight. City Administrator Ulrich clarified that the language could be added to the motion. Councilmember Musgrove clarified the language of her motion and Councilmember Specht reconfirmed his second. The updated motion is as follows:

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to introduce Ordinance #21-08 amending Chapter 10, Article III, eliminating Section 10-57 – Individual Dog Licensing and rewording of Section 10-58 – Tags with the addition of the proposed changes to Section 10-65.1 as recommended by the City Attorney.

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

7.02: Adopt Resolution #21-007 Approving Preliminary Plat for Northfork Meadows, Case of Lennar (Project #20-135)

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the staff report and recommendation of the Planning Commission to adopt Resolution #21-007.

Councilmember Riley stated that along the eastern edge there are 80-foot lots, which are allowed by zoning. He asked if the proposed buffering would also be allowed per zoning.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed both those statements to be true. He stated that the proposed lots meet the minimum lot size requirements and also include the 35-foot buffer area, which the City would own under fee title. He explained that the City has learned that easement over private property is not the preferred method for that purpose.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for more information on the strip of land and asked how the developer would construct the berm on that area if it will be an outlot owned by the City.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill replied that similar to other public improvements, the developer is required to build the improvement which would then be deeded to the City.

Councilmember Musgrove asked when the transfer to the City would occur and how that would impact the typical two-year tree guarantee period.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill replied that typically the development agreements include three years of maintenance and replacement of landscaping by the developer.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she did visit the site with some residents and noted that some of the mature trees are near the property line and if they are removed it could impact the adjacent fences. She stated that she was glad to hear there will be discussion of how some of those trees could possibly remain in place. She asked if all berms must have equal slopes on each side.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that staff can have that conversation with the developer prior to final plat depending upon the flexibility provided by the Council. He stated that staff has taken the approach of where the berm could be stopped to protect additional trees rather than changing the slope. He stated that if the slope is changed that could cause problems with drainage and erosion for adjacent properties. He noted that the berm could be stopped short on the southern tip to protect additional trees if desired.

Mayor Kuzma invited members of the public to provide input.

Leslie Clark, 15150 Kangaroo Street, stated that she has become the spokesperson for her neighbors. She stated that there has been recent confusion about which trees will remain and which will be removed, so she would like clarification on that aspect. She commented that there are very mature trees that provide a good buffer, but they are eight to ten feet into the developer's property. She hoped that perhaps those mature trees could be preserved as that would provide a better buffer than a berm with new plantings. She commented that the residents have done a lot of compromising with the City and previous developers in order to agree upon the density for the site and just want to find the best compromise for the buffer.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that staff can continue the discussions with residents and the developer. He stated that staff believed that the buffer and berm with plantings was the desire of the neighbors. He stated that they can continue discussions prior to construction and could bring that back to the Council. He suggested that flexibility be given for the berm if that is the desire of the Council.

Councilmember Riley asked if there would be future ramifications if the berm design is changed.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that they would not want to skip lots for the berm but if the last three lots would prefer to preserve the existing trees rather than have the berm, staff would be agreeable as long as that is agreed upon in writing. He did not believe there would be long-term ramifications as future homeowners would be buying into the situation already in existence.

Councilmember Howell commented that she would prefer to preserve larger mature trees to the extent possible.

Motion by Councilmember Specht seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to Adopt Resolution #21-007 Approving Preliminary Plat of Northfork Meadows, contingent upon work with adjacent neighbors and developer to finalize the landscaping and density transition plan to balance and preserve as many trees as possible while meeting the minimum density transitioning requirements.

Further discussion: Josh Metzger, Lennar, stated that they will do what they can to preserve existing trees, but they would need to first define which trees are on the developer property and which are on adjacent properties to the east. He stated that there will be a graded swale on the eastern property to create the berm and manage stormwater to move south to the stormwater system. He stated that in order to do that, most trees along the property line would need to be removed. He stated that if the stormwater plan can work while preserving trees, they would attempt to do so. He stated that the tree buffer ordinance is very specific on the number of trees that need to be planted per foot, and therefore he would ask that any action specify that for every tree preserved, that would be one less tree required to be planted. He asked if the project engineer could provide input on the grading near that southern boundary and if it would be possible to even preserve trees in that location. Nathan Hermer, ISG, stated that he reviewed the grading prior to the meeting, and it does appear that this could perhaps work to save some trees in that area. Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the developer requested that for every tree preserved one be removed from those that need to be planted. He stated that he would suggest that would apply to those trees that would be required to be planted adjacent to that lot and not just allowed to be removed from somewhere else on the site. Councilmember Specht commented that he worked with staff to develop the language he proposed in his motion which he feels gives staff the flexibility to work with the developer and neighbors without becoming too specific. Councilmember Musgrove asked if staff is comfortable with the motion as stated. Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed that staff is comfortable with the motion language as proposed. Councilmember Musgrove asked if there would still be a berm in the area to the south where trees could be preserved. Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the berm could taper off and stop short, leaving the existing plantings. He noted that staff will continue to have the discussions recognizing that the developer has come forward with the desired buffer as directed.

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

7.03: 2021 Legislative Platform

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt the 2021 City of Ramsey Legislative Platform as presented.

Councilmember Howell referenced the item related to the Governors Executive Order and local control. She stated that many people are running out of time with their finances and businesses and would like to see that item as a high priority.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed. She commented that the Executive Orders impact local control and agree that should be moved up. She asked for more information on TIF districting, specifically if extending the district would keep those funds within The COR rather than placing them on the levy which would benefit the City as a whole.

City Administrator Ulrich explained that typically there is a limited amount of time to complete TIF projects within the District. He stated that the TIF district does capture all of the taxing jurisdiction dollars for primarily infrastructure related improvements within that area. He stated that if those improvements are not funded through the TIF districts, they would be projects that

Ramsey would need to fund through its general fund or other City funds. He stated that if the district were decertified those funds would be distributed to Anoka County and other taxing entities. He reviewed some of the infrastructure that is being paid for through TIF, noting that the cost for those improvements continues to be paid back through the TIF district. He noted that there are also a number of future infrastructure needs that would continue to make The COR viable for additional commercial development. He stated that the TIF district continues to make the opportunity for commercial and business development more attractive and viable.

Mayor Kuzma commented that it also allows Ramsey to be more competitive with other communities that have TIF available.

Councilmember Musgrove asked the length of the extension.

City Administrator Ulrich replied that this extension would be for five years and confirmed that an additional extension could be considered if desired at that time. He commented that there is an eventual lifespan of the TIF district.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he likes the idea of pulling some of the policy items for additional discussion. He stated that the item related to the Governors Executive Order does not seem to have much description to it. He understood and agreed that small businesses are struggling but did not think the finger could be pointed at one person. He commented that it is a broad statement that he does not agree with and would want to see it narrowed down.

Councilmember Specht commented that he agrees with Councilmember Howell that there is an issue of timeliness in getting that control away from one person and back to local authorities.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to Adopt the 2021 City of Ramsey Legislative Platform as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Kuzma, Councilmembers Specht, Musgrove, and Riley. Voting No: Councilmembers Howell and Woestehoff.

7.04: Adopt Resolution #21-046 Resolution Supporting Legislation Adopting Minnesota Tax Conformity for Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) Loans

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Resolution #21-046.

Councilmember Riley commented that this is help to almost all Ramsey businesses that would conform to federal guidelines as to taxing for PPP loans. He stated that without acting, Minnesota is saying that they want part of that back. He commented that he is a CPA and there is a lobbyist on behalf of the CPAs moving on this, noting that this is also supported by the National Association of CPAs. He stated that Minnesota stated that this change would result in a loss of income for the State, but the State did not count on this revenue as it did not exist before the Federal Government allocated these funds to help businesses and therefore it should not be seen as a reduction in income for Minnesota. He asked that the other members of the Council support this proposed action.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that he agrees with Councilmember Riley and noted that this would be participation in a very specific manner that impacts Ramsey businesses, whereas the statement he previously opposed was a broad stroke statement. He appreciated that this item is moving forward and hoped for the support of the Council.

Councilmember Howell stated that she will also be supporting this item. She stated that she has spoken with many small business owners and not all of them qualified for PPP. She stated that many small business owners do not qualify for unemployment and therefore additional solutions need to be found for those that have been left out.

Mayor Kuzma stated that he agrees that small businesses should not be taxed on the PPP loans.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she is glad that this is moving forward, and that the City worked with its legislators on this issue. She stated that this is not a standalone issue in terms of taxing, as there are many instances in which Minnesota does not conform with Federal taxing.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to Adopt Resolution #21-046 Supporting Legislation Adopting Minnesota Tax Conformity for Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) Loans.

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

7.05: Adopt Resolution #21-044 Adopting Concept Level Layout Review Comments on Anoka County's Interim Improvements Proposed to Bunker Lake Boulevard/County Road 116

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Resolution #21-044 adopting concept level layout review comments on Anoka County's interim improvements proposed to Bunker Lake Boulevard/County Road 116.

Councilmember Riley referenced the signal system that would be put in at Sunwood and Bunker and asked if the traffic number indicate that is a needed improvement.

City Engineer Westby replied that the warrant numbers have been met for that intersection.

Councilmember Riley asked which intersections would be temporarily restricted, which would be permanently restricted, and where medians would be proposed.

City Engineer Westby replied that the intersections proposed to have a concrete median island would be 143rd Avenue and Basalt Street. He stated that the County is also reviewing a median at the access into Altron, north of 143rd, along with temporary restrictions at Limonite and the access to Connexus.

Councilmember Riley asked if there would be a through median all the way down Bunker, similar to other segments of Bunker.

City Engineer Westby replied that the red line shown on the sketch in the case is a proposed narrow raised concrete median. Staff identified those areas on the sketch and explained the path traffic would need to take to access certain sites. He confirmed that the actions would impact numerous businesses.

Councilmember Specht commented that he would not want to impact businesses in that manner. He recognized that it is in the hands of the County but wanted to ensure that the comment is passed on from the City. He referenced the proposed lights for Sunwood and Bunker and asked if those would be needed to manage actual traffic or anticipated traffic from Highway 10.

City Engineer Westby replied that the County claims that intersection currently meets the warrants.

Councilmember Specht commented that he did not see that as a benefiting improvement, as it would simply be another stop for vehicles traveling the roadway. He asked for clarification on the ability to turn on Limonite.

City Engineer Westby replied that would become a right-in/right-out as a temporary condition with the intent for it to become a permanent improvement when Bunker Lake Boulevard is constructed to its full design in 10 to 20 years.

Councilmember Specht commented that there is sufficient space for a vehicle to wait to turn left onto Limonite without disrupting traffic and therefore did not feel that is a needed improvement.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the JPA is active with regular meetings or whether meetings are held only when a project comes forward.

City Engineer Westby replied that the JPA was adopted in 2005 between the County and City and it guides Public Works improvements throughout The COR. He commented that it is active, still used and still enforced. He stated that the JPA could be amended.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she would like to see additional study of the JPA as she is unsure of the input the City would have based on the JPA. She stated that she is concerned with the impacts to trucks and semis attempting to access the businesses.

City Engineer Westby replied that Anoka County is aware of the business park and that there is a large volume of trucks, therefore it will be designed to accommodate heavy truck traffic.

Councilmember Riley stated that he would assume everyone supports the turn lanes and improvements but would like to see stronger language related to the restrictions and business impacts. He stated that there are many businesses off 143rd, many residents off Limonite, and Connexus, which is one of the biggest businesses in Ramsey that would be impacted. He stated that the description of temporary for an improvement is not typically 10 to 20 years.

Mayor Kuzma asked if there could be a meeting with MnDOT to review these details.

City Engineer Westby replied that MnDOT attended a virtual meeting in January and had no comments on the access restrictions. He confirmed that the comments would need to be discussed with Anoka County. He asked for direction on the stronger term preferred to replace concern.

Councilmember Riley suggested strongly objects to.

Councilmember Specht suggested has grave concerns.

City Engineer Westby asked and received consensus of the Council to use strongly opposes.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to Adopt Resolution #21-044 Adopting Concept Level Layout Review Comments on Anoka County's Interim Improvements Proposed to Bunker Lake Boulevard/County Road 116, with the changes as discussed and direction for staff to continue meeting with the County in attempt to gain the best design possible.

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

7.06: Adopt Ordinance #21-05 Vacating Easement for Riverstone 5th Addition

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Ordinance #21-05.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for additional details on the request.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill identified the easement proposed for vacation and provided background information on the request.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to waive the Charter requirement to read the ordinance aloud and adopt Ordinance #21-05 Vacating a 60 Foot Drainage and Utility Easement Related to Riverstone 4th Addition.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

7.07: Authorize Staff to Submit Application to Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, and Minnesota DNR for Tree Preservation for Riverstone South (Project No. 19-152); Case of Capstone Homes

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the staff report and recommendation to authorize staff to prepare and submit grant applications for either or both, Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) and DNR Natural and Scenic Areas Grants.

Councilmember Riley stated that additional sources of funds were mentioned and asked if any of those would come from the lottery.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that some of those applications have a yearlong review process. He stated that these are competitive grants and go through a scoring process. He stated that the other opportunities are more for the 2023/2024 funding cycle.

Councilmember Howell asked what the City would be required to fund in a scenario that requires a 50 percent match.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill estimated the cost of the property to be about \$350,000, therefore 50 percent would be \$175,000. He stated that if the timing does not work out, the City could continue discussions with the developer.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that there are a lot of restrictions that would be placed on the seven acres if the grant is obtained and asked if there has been discussion with the parks department to ensure that they are aware of the restrictions.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill replied that Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent has been an integral part of this process. He noted that the seven acres is intended to be preserved in its natural state and this would not be developed into an active park. He stated that the one-acre park would be provided for recreational opportunity.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that forest is very special and therefore she would like to preserve that area to the extent possible, noting that it will also provide a barrier between the neighborhoods.

Councilmember Riley asked at what point the City could say the area does not need to be preserved if funding cannot be obtained.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill replied that if the City is not successful in gaining funding, it would need to think about a contingency. He recognized that there are some variables but believed the City would be successful in gaining some type of funding. He stated that is a question the Council could discuss if it comes to that point.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to authorize staff to prepare and submit Grant Applications for LCCMR as well as DNR Natural and Scenic Areas Grants.

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

8. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

City Administrator Ulrich announced upcoming meetings and events.

Councilmember Specht thanked the Boy Scout Troops #3204 and #5204 for allowing him to speak to them recently about local government.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:41 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.

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.