

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, September 28, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Finance Director Diana Lund
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl
Communications & Events Coordinator Megan Thorstad

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: Quarterly Communications Report

Communications & Events Coordinator Megan Thorstad reviewed City communications from April-June 2021. Residents indicated in the bi-annual survey that they get their communications from the City newsletter, City website, and social media, in that order. The City's Facebook page is the only social media channel that City Staff focuses on, with 5,000 likes.

Communications & Events Coordinator Thorstad stated, with regard to the City website, there are 2,484 "Notify Me" subscribers; 146,000 visits to the webpage to date in 2021; and 110,000 downloads. The most viewed pages on the City website are building permits, inspections, facilities, Happy Days, concert series, and City Council. These numbers reflect website access as of September 22, 2021.

Councilmember Specht requested that City Staff review and adjust the City website's top searches to ensure that website visitors have access to the right information.

Communications & Events Coordinator Thorstad agreed to work with IT to manage website analytics.

Mayor Kuzma asked whether the City website is due for an update soon.

Communications & Events Coordinator Thorstad confirmed that a website update is scheduled in 2022.

Councilmember Howell requested that City Staff provide data regarding whether online visitors to City website are unique users or repeat users.

Communications & Events Coordinator Thorstad agreed.

Holiday Events Update

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood reviewed plans for holiday tree lighting on November 30, 2021, with a 25-foot repurposed artificial tree and 3-foot topper. He stated the artificial tree could be placed on the front steps and integrated with indoor events. He added City Staff are looking at quotes for getting lights on all the trees on the municipal campus.

Communications and Events Coordinator Thorstad stated City Staff are putting together a holiday lights contest for the community with registration information on the City website on CivicRec. A map will be created for a self-guided holiday lights tour, and judging will take place in mid-December.

2.02: Final 2022 Budget/Levy Review Before Preliminary Adoption on 9-28-21

Finance Director Diana Lund reviewed the proposed 2022 budget levy, with potential options for City Council consideration. She stated the first option is for a proposed levy increase of 20%, with 5% for the General Fund and 15% for roads. She added she understood that to be the consensus of the City Council in work sessions, including an option for roads. She noted a majority City Council vote will be required for the levy or it will revert to last year's levy amount.

Finance Director Lund stated these are preliminary numbers and there will be more budget work sessions. She added personnel requests and capital equipment have not been addressed.

City Administrator Ulrich stated, with regard to commercial impacts, Connexus Energy saw a huge property valuation increase.

Finance Director Lund agreed, adding they are working with the County as they have been undervalued over recent years.

Councilmember Heineman asked whether there is data regarding what businesses were paying under the franchise fee.

Finance Director Lund stated most businesses paid approximately \$40/month, or \$480 annually. She added three properties had an \$800 franchise fee.

Councilmember Riley requested that properties used to support value data should be more reflective of average values. He added he understands City Staff wanted to maintain consistency.

Mayor Kuzma stated he is not in support of the budget as the City has not settled contract negotiations. He added budget requests for personnel are not yet analyzed. He expressed concern that the roads will not be fully funded, and the City will have to dip into reserves.

2.03: Discussion Regarding Union Contract Negotiations for AFSCME and LELS-Patrol (Portions Closed to the Public)

Administrative Services Director Lasher introduced the item to discuss the AFSCME and LELS-Patrol contracts in Closed Session.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recess to Closed Session at 5:56 p.m.

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

The meeting reconvened to Open Session at 6:44 p.m.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar

No discussion.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

No discussion.

5. ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Mary Mullen
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, September 28, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Ryan Heineman
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
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the Closed Session of the City Council to order at 5:56 p.m.

2. COUNCIL BUSINESS

**2.01: Discussion Regarding Union Contract Negotiations for AFSCME and LELS-Patrol
(Closed to the Public)**

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

3. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to adjourn the Closed Session

Motion carried.

The Closed Session was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Mary Mullen
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.