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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2022, 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: Councilmember Ryan Heineman

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen  
Police Chief Jeff Katers  
Fire Chief Matt Kohner  
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher  
City Attorney Fritz Knaak  
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: Annual Police Department Update and Review of 2021 Activity**

Police Chief Katers presented the annual Police Department update and review of 2021 activities. He summarized the data from the year which he stated informs their decisions. He stated in 2021 they had the highest number of calls for service in department history. He stated the response times is around six minutes for emergency calls. He pointed out that what he categorized as quality of life calls far outweighed criminal calls. He highlighted upward trends for calls regarding medical calls for service, motor vehicle accidents and fleeing. He stated a crime map can be accessed online at [communitycrimemap.com](http://communitycrimemap.com) and look for Ramsey. He highlighted community and Council support.

Mayor Kuzma commented he appreciated the good job the police department does and asked Police Chief Katers to pass it along to his staff.

## **2.02: Annual Fire Department Update and Review of 2021 Activity**

Fire Chief Matt Kohner presented the Annual Fire Department update and review of 2021 activity. He highlighted the increase in call volumes. He noted response times of 6 minutes and 58 seconds for emergencies after the start of the Duty Crew Model which has reduced response times. He noted this is the first time call volumes were higher on the east side of town versus the west side which he attributed to added buildings. He reported eight structure fires in Ramsey for the year. He reported medical calls far outweighed calls for fire. He highlighted the data that daytime medical calls are the highest demand. He also highlighted training the firefighters participated, education opportunities and events they have provided in the community. He noted the Ramsey Fire Department was awarded the Fire Department of the Year award which is awarded by the Minnesota Fire Department Association. He reviewed other events of note during the year.

Mayor Kuzma thanked Fire Chief Kohner and his department. He asked about the training exercise that was scheduled for tomorrow.

Fire Chief Kohner explained the activity of an active live burn that will happen at the intersection Highway 10 and Bowers Drive at a former home of Al Pearson and family.

Councilmember Specht commented that he has heard so much positive feedback from the Fire Department's Open House events and thanked Fire Chief Kohner for doing a great job connecting with the community.

### **3. CITIZEN INPUT**

Jim Gutzwiller, 16651 Quicksilver Street, asked if there is any information or update to the north entrance of Elm Crest Park.

Mayor Kuzma replied they are still working on it and asked City Attorney Knaak to comment.

City Attorney Knaak stated they are very close to a resolution, that is as much detail as he could provide.

### **4. APPROVE AGENDA**

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

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

### **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- 5.01: Consider Declaration of Restrictions and Covenants for Project Specific Wetland Replacement
- 5.02: Approve the following Meeting Minutes:
  - 1) City Council Work Session dated June 14, 2022
  - 2) City Council Regular Session dated June 14, 2022
- 5.03: Approve Business Licenses
- 5.04: Approve Rental Licenses
- 5.05: Authorization to Reclassify the Engineering Technician IV to Senior Engineering Technician
- 5.06: Authorization to Temporarily Increase the Recreation Specialist from 29 to 40 Hours per Week
- 5.07: Authorization to Hire a Police Officer Filling a Current Vacancy
- 5.08: Authorization to Hire a Part-time Receptionist/Secretary
- 5.09: Authorization to Hire a Temporary Non Benefit Eligible AFSCME Public Works Maintenance Worker
- 5.10: Adopt Resolution #22-152 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of June 9, 2022 through June 22, 2022
- 5.11: Adopt Resolution #22-149 Authorizing Signatures for Financial Transactions
- 5.12: Adopt Resolution #22-151 Declaring Participation in State Performance Measurement Program
- 5.13: Adopt Resolution #22-133 Authorizing Final Payment to Northwest Asphalt & Maintenance for Improvement Project #22-08, 2022 Crack Seal Improvements
- 5.14: Adopt Resolution #22-139 Authorizing Partial Payment No. 2 to Douglas-Kerr Underground, LLC., for Improvement Project #22-05, Riverdale Drive Trunk Utility Improvements, Llama Street to Bowers Drive
- 5.15: Adopt Resolution #22-142 Authorizing Partial Payment to North Valley Inc. for Fire Station No. 1 Parking Lot Improvements, Improvement Project #21-10
- 5.16: Adopt Resolution #22-144 Approving Contracted Services for Traffic Count Updates in COR and Surrounding Area
- 5.17: Adopt Resolution #22-145 Appointing the City Administrator as Deputy City Clerk in Addition to the City Administrator's Existing Duties per Minnesota Statute 412.151 in the Event of the Absence of the City Clerk
- 5.18: Adopt Resolution #22-150 Approving Plans and Specification and Authorizing Advertisements for Bids for Autumn Heights Streets Reconstructions, Improvement Project #22-02

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

## **6. PUBLIC HEARING**

None.

## **7. COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **7.01: Adopt Ordinance #22-18 to Rezone 15861 Jarvis St NW from R-1 (Rural Developing) to E-3 Employment (Project No. 22-120); Case of Big C Development LLC**

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the proposed resolution to adopt Ordinance #22-18 to rezone the subject property from residential to E-3 Employment which would be in line with the Comprehensive Plan.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to waive the City Charter's requirement to read the Ordinance aloud and Adopt Ordinance #22-18 to rezone the property at 15861 Jarvis St NW from R-1 to E-3.

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

### **7.02: Adopt Resolution #22-148 Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisements for Bids for Riverdale Drive Extension, Llama Street to Bowers Drive, Improvement Project #20-05**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Resolution #22-148. He noted the next steps and to get a condensed schedule to get construction done before the weather gets cold in the fall.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to adopt Resolution #22-148 approving plans and specification and authorizing advertisements for bids for Riverdale Drive extension, Llama Street to Bowers Drive, Improvement Project #20-05.

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

### **7.03: Adopt Ordinance #22-19 Amending Sign Code to Allow Off-Premise Digital Billboard Signs**

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Ordinance #22-19 amending Sign Code to allow Off-Premise Digital Billboard signs. He addressed Councilmember Woestehoff's previous questions about allowing them in PUD districts such as the golf course by stating that if it is the Council's direction to not allow it language to that effect be added for clarity.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if Councilmember Woestehoff wanted to add comment about the PUD. She stated her thoughts on this is that she went from not being in favor of it to now being in favor based on recommendations from the EDA, Staff, and a close vote from the Planning Commission. She asked Staff to give feedback as to the benefit to the businesses.

City Administrator Hagen replied there are two separate issues the City has been discussing. He stated it started with a lease with the billboard company which led to a need for an ordinance to allow billboards. He explained the ordinance is broad in nature and regulates any property along the Highway 10 corridor if adopted and identifies what will be allowed for billboards regarding location. He highlighted benefits to businesses, noting that anyone can advertise on it and it increases advertising ability, especially for businesses along The COR. He stated public service alerts could be posted and community events. He explained separate from that, which the Council has already supported, is a lease for a billboard on land owned by the City. Within that lease, there is more freedom to place additional requirements.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that the ordinance does not include a requirement that any of the billboards have civil or City-based messaging. He stated at one point it was mentioned that was going to be included but has since been removed. He pointed out the differences between those in the ordinance and those on City-owned land. He highlighted that two included in the ordinance would have no direct fiscal benefit to the City but may benefit Ramsey businesses. He commented that he brought up the PUD because the golf course isn't zoned specifically as a residential area and the ordinance is written billboards are excluded in residential areas and the definition for PUDs is a little ambiguous that it could be possible.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if that would be something Councilmember Woestehoff would want to add to the ordinance or not.

Councilmember Woestehoff replied he didn't support the ordinance but thought having a billboard next to the golf course distracting because of the open space but could imagine that being attracting for a business. He questioned the assumption that this is the solution to helping smaller Ramsey businesses be more visible and would buy advertising on the digital billboards or if they would be taken over by larger franchise chains. He stated he has never supported billboards in Ramsey because it pulls away from the small-town feel.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to waive the City Charter requirement to read the ordinance aloud and adopt Ordinance #22-19 Amending Sign Code to allow off-premise digital billboards with the recommended changes to not allow them in the PUD zoned areas.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Riley answered Councilmember Musgrove's question on why the EDA started with this which was to help the local businesses in The COR that can't be seen to get their name out and advertise on Highway 10. He stated the EDA found that it wouldn't cost the City anything and could become a source of revenue. Councilmember Musgrove asked with the inclusion of the PUD and other limitations within the district, if they were being too limiting. Councilmember Woestehoff replied it wouldn't be too limiting because there is room on the far end but it does make it a little harder.

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

#### **7.04: Authorization to Approve a Restructure in Administrative Services**

City Administrator Hagen stated this was pulled from the Consent Agenda at Councilmember Howell's request. He reviewed the history and responsibilities of the Administrative Services Director. He stated the duties have grown to be more than one person can handle so the proposal is to separate the role. He noted that the proposal is to implement a Human Resources Specialist position and promote Nicole Laubach into that role from the Administrative Assistant position in Community Development and promote Katie Schmidt from Deputy City Clerk to City Clerk.

Councilmember Howell thanked City Administrator Hagen for providing additional information and back story for the public. She commented on the proposal to remove the City Clerk responsibilities and supervision taken from the role. She suggested changing the title of Administrative Services Director to Human Resources and Communications Director because the role isn't encompassing all the administrative services the City provides. She stated she was supportive of dividing the positions as it benefits the department.

Councilmember Specht thanked the Staff for their work on this and for suggesting changes. He commented he understood what Councilmember Howell was saying and thought it was a good title as well. He asked what Administrative Services Director Lasher or Staff thought about the change.

City Administrator Hagen replied that he understood having a long title and the challenge. He commented he wasn't sure that adding Human Resources is needed and noted it would bring a need for changing things like business cards, name plates. He thought the role was more broad than just Human Resources and encompassed other administrative staff oversight.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, second by Councilmember Howell, to remove the City Clerk role from Administrative Services Director position as well as to include that statement on the resolution as point three; appointing Katie Schmidt from Deputy City Clerk to City Clerk at step one of 2022 wage scale which is \$38.02 and to promote Nicole Laubach from part-time Planning Division Administrative Assistant to full-time Human Resources Specialist at step one of the 2022 wage scale, which is \$26.50 an hour, effective July 1, 2022 and to retitle the Administrative Services Director to Human Resources Director.

#### Further Discussion:

Mayor Kuzma commented he thought they weren't going to change the title. Councilmember Musgrove apologized, adding she thought there were two people who recommended that and there was no voiced opposition, which is why she put it in the motion. Mayor Kuzma agreed it is in the motion and there is a second. Councilmember Woestehoff asked as a point of order if the resolution would need to be changed at every instance that referenced the title to the new title. Councilmember Musgrove agreed the title change should be noted in Resolution #22-146.

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

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, second by Councilmember Riley, to remove City Clerk role from Administrative Service Director position, promote Katie Schmidt from Deputy City Clerk to City Clerk at step one of the 2022 wage scale, promote Nicole Laubach from Planning Division Administrative Assistant to full time Human Resources Specialist at step on the 2022 wage scale effective July 1, 2022, as well as add bullet point three to Resolution #22-146 indicating that the City Clerk role is removed from the Administrative Services Director position.

Further Discussion:

Councilmember Howell commented her hesitation is that the City Clerk position is such an administrative position and having that removed from under the title of Administrative Services Director is where she is struggling supporting it. She continued it seems the position is more human resources and communications oriented. She stated she would be abstaining from voting. Councilmember Musgrove commented she made the motion in favor of the name change because there were Councilmembers who had made that suggestion and no one had made an comments to oppose it. She asked for their thoughts and position on it. Councilmember Specht commented that the person in the role had previously indicated the current title would be good to keep. He stated he didn't have expertise in this area and could go either way. He also cited City Administrator Hagen's comments that the role would oversee some administrative services still. Councilmember Riley also cited City Administrator Hagen's comments indicating the current title would be appropriate. He added in looking at the proposed org chart it includes oversight of HR, Communications, Administrative Clerk, and Receptionist which seemed to him to be administrative and agreed with keeping Administrative Services Director in place as the title. Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he didn't comment because Councilmember Musgrove had started making a motion and he was about to as well.

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

## **8. MAYOR/ COUNCIL/ STAFF INPUT**

City Administrator Hagen commented there are a number of City-led road projects going on at this time so if Council is hearing things from residents that their concerns are passed along to ensure those projects aren't impacting residents too much. He stated there is a lot of Staff out there while the projects are going on so they will be mindful for that. He highlighted the Open House that is tomorrow morning at 7:00 a.m. for businesses and another more general public one at 5:00 p.m. tomorrow evening. Both sessions are in the Alexander Ramsey room.

Mayor Kuzma asked about the concerts on Thursday.

City Administrator Hagen stated the concerts are on Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

Councilmember Specht commented the Fire Department training is going to happen tomorrow on the corner of Highway 10 and Bowers Drive so if residents see that, it is expected and planned.

Councilmember Musgrove commented on a Staff member who is retiring, Grant Riemer. She recounted her first meeting with him and stated she has known Mr. Riemer to be a hard worker.

She highlighted his achievements in the community, thanked him for his years of service, and wished him well in his retirement.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian Hagen  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Katie M. Schmidt  
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Joni Helmeke  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*