

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Police Captain Brad Bruml
Fire Chief Matt Kohner
City Attorney Fritz Knaak
Finance Director Diana Lund
City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby

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 a Police Department Staffing Issue- Portions of this Meeting may be closed to the public

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated this case will be closed per Minnesota State Statute 13d. 05 subdiv. 3 to discuss medical data on an employee.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, second by Councilmember Musgrove, to recess to Closed Session.

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

Mayor Kuzma recessed the meeting to Closed Session at 5:32 p.m.

The meeting reconvened to Open Session at 5:55 p.m.

Administrative Services Director Lasher provided a summary for the record stating the Council discussed an employee that is out on a medical leave and gave Staff direction which will be followed through on at the next City Council meeting on July 26, 2022.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated there is a different officer who is out on leave that is not anticipated to return due to other employment. She stated Staff would like to have permission with the recruitment to seek two officers that in the likely event there will be two vacancies. She stated given the timing of this and how long it takes, by the time they got to the hiring process they would know whether or not the other officer actually does have other employment and could change course if needed.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if Staff is required to give a resignation notice.

Administrative Services Director Lasher replied yes, a two-week notice is required to be considered resigning in good standing. If this isn't done the employee doesn't get their leave approved that would normally be paid out and would not be eligible for rehire.

The consensus of the Council was to approve recruitment for two officers.

2.02: Discussion Regarding Restructuring the Fire Department

Fire Chief Kohner reviewed the Staff report and request to restructure the Fire Department by eliminating the 27-hour per week Fire Tech position and creating a full time Captain of Administration position.

Mayor Kuzma stated there is no doubt that the population has risen and the call volume has gone up substantially so he thought another person would be needed and supported the request.

Councilmember Riley stated this year the cost was listed at \$13,000 and asked what the cost would be next year.

Fire Chief Kohner replied \$61,000.

Councilmember Riley stated this decision will be made for the budget that they will be talking about.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the \$61,000 would be in addition to what is being paid this year in adding the position.

Fire Chief Kohner replied it would be in addition, adding that is not just the salary but includes benefits.

Finance Director Diana Lund commented that \$61,000 is the net of the position, less the amount if the Fire Technician was paid.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for clarification about the difference in the titles and the roles.

Fire Chief Kohner replied this Fire Tech's primary job is to manage the incident reporting system which goes to the State and generates numbers that are submitted for payroll. That takes 27 hours. The remaining time would be used for responding and other tasks. The reporting could be done during the course of a 40-hour work week to accommodate taking calls.

Councilmember Musgrove commented she was supportive of this but asked to hear back if it isn't working because there isn't dedicated time to get the reporting done. She asked if Fire Chief Kohner had thought that out.

Fire Chief Kohner replied he had thought it out and AnnMarie gave a month's notice so they have had time to prepare including contacting other cities. He stated Anoka and Andover both use something similar to this.

Councilmember Riley asked if there would be any impact on pay equity.

Administrative Services Director Lasher replied no it would not, it would be a newly created position.

Councilmember Specht commented he was supportive and appreciated the efforts to keep costs down.

The consensus of the Council was to restructure the Fire Department by eliminating the 27-hour per week Fire Tech position and creating a full time Captain of Administration position.

2.03: Discuss the Community Development Director Interview Panels

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated the purpose of the case was to discuss the process for the interview panels. She reviewed the Staff report and the request for who Council would like on the panels.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that the last recruitment in hiring Mr. Larson that it worked well. She stated she appreciated being on the panel and found it helpful. She stated she would like to follow the same process but asked for feedback about having the Planning Commission Chair was on the panel but wasn't sure if other commissioners were. She asked how Council felt about that.

Councilmember Woestehoff concurred and suggested that the Planning Commission Chair and EDA Chair be included on the interview panel.

City Administrator Hagen recommended extending an invitation to EPB as well because Community Development works with the EPB board.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if Parks and Rec should be included as well.

City Administrator Hagen replied they don't work as closely with Parks and Rec so he thought the three boards in the case were representative of that department.

Councilmember Howell commented that by the third interview series they have done that a good format was determined so she would like to see that pattern followed. She declined being a part of the first round of interviews because she wanted to take a break and have other Councilmembers step up and be involved. She thought it was important for Councilmembers to have input.

Mayor Kuzma asked if Councilmember Musgrove wanted to be on the panel.

Councilmember Musgrove replied she was interested.

Mayor Kuzma asked Councilmember Woestehoff if he was interested.

Councilmember Woestehoff replied he was.

Councilmember Specht declined to be included in the first round.

Mayor Kuzma commented Councilmember Heineman wouldn't be able to attend but the invitation was there.

Councilmember Riley and Mayor Kuzma both declined being on the first round panel as well.

Mayor Kuzma stated Councilmember Woestehoff and Councilmember Musgrove would attend for the Council.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated for first round interviews the panel would consist of Councilmember Woestehoff and Councilmember Musgrove. She asked for Council feedback on having Commission Chairs being included on second interviews.

Councilmember Howell replied she supported the EDA and Planning Commission Chairs but not the EPB Chair.

Administrative Services Director Lasher asked if it was for both.

Councilmember Riley asked if Councilmember Howell had a reason for excluding the EPB.

Councilmember Howell replied it seemed to her that the EDA and Planning Commission were more relevant.

Councilmember Specht commented that he supported having the Councilmembers in on the interviews. He noted if City Administrator Hagen thought it was important to have the EBP on it but he was neutral on it. He thought the more active ones in the development area would be the Planning and EDA so he would like to see those two for sure.

Mayor Kuzma stated he would support the EPB being consulted as well.

Councilmember Musgrove asked Mayor Kuzma if that would be for the second round.

Mayor Kuzma replied he would suggest for both.

Councilmember Heineman asked if having the EPB on the committee, if that is a voting position, or an advisory one.

Mayor Kuzma replied it would be an advisory position.

Councilmember Heineman replied if it is an advisory position he would be okay with it because it couldn't hurt to have another person there.

Mayor Kuzma stated there is support for all three on both interview panels.

Administrative Services Director Lasher asked if it was correct that the full City Council wanted to be involved in the second interview.

Mayor Kuzma replied yes.

Administrative Services Director Lasher asked for the remaining positions Staff would like discretion to reach out to the remaining individuals and offer it up based on their availability. She asked if that was acceptable.

Councilmember Musgrove asked who Administrative Services Director Lasher was going to ask for their availability.

Administrative Services Director Lasher to offer to two department heads on the first interview and offer to all department heads on the second interview. For the first and second interview, depending on schedules, all division managers who would be reporting to this individual and herself and City Administrator Hagen.

Councilmember Howell commented on the point system that was mentioned. She stated when they did the initial hiring when Brian came on board former City Administrator Ulrich had chosen not to score based on points and simply put in his thoughts. For the City Administrator position former City Administrator Ulrich had suggested not using the score system because it could pigeonhole them into hiring a candidate.

Administrative Services Director Lasher asked Councilmember Howell if she was referring to the scoring of applications to determine who is invited to an interview or the actual interview process scoring.

Councilmember Howell replied the process where they are pointing candidates.

Administrative Services Director Lasher replied like each interview question they are pointing. She stated she didn't recall pointing interview questions but thought they just made a determination in general whether they wanted the person to advance.

Councilmember Howell replied yes for the City Administrator position but when Brian Hagen initially interviewed, they pointed each section but she didn't think that was very helpful.

Administrative Services Director Lasher asked if Councilmember Howell's preference was to not use a pointing system and agreed with that.

Mayor Kuzma commented he agreed as well.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that the case indicated the first interview would be the first week of August 2022 and the second one would be the second week of August 2022. She asked if Tuesdays would work for everyone's schedules or if not she requested being told as soon as possible.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated she indicated first interviews would be the week of August 1, 2022 and second interviews would be the week of August 15, 2022, which is the first and third week.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented Tuesdays don't work for him.

Councilmember Musgrove replied as soon so they can find out the dates then she can let work know.

Administrative Services Director Lasher replied she would do her best.

2.04: Discuss the Draft Communication Coordinator Job Description

Administrative Services Director Lasher presented the staff report and draft Communication Coordinator job description. She stated Staff feel this is more than enough to keep someone working full time very busy doing strictly communications. She continued they feel this job description, when put into action, is going to be much more engaging for the community including information about what is happening at Council meetings and in the community.

Councilmember Specht commented he was really impressed with the job description and thought it was very encompassing of what is wanted. He suggested adding something about having social media skills, training or experience. He asked for Council feedback.

Councilmember Woestehoff concurred with that. He added a concern with having graphic design as the first key function bullet point because he didn't want that to be the priority focus for someone applying because it doesn't mesh with the entire job description. He referenced the heading Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities and read "extensive knowledge with Adobe Creative Suite" and under "Minimum Qualifications" which reads "a working knowledge of design software such as

Illustrator and Photoshop.” He suggested removing one of them, the adjective, or creating a balance between extensive knowledge and working knowledge.

Councilmember Riley referenced page three under the heading “Knowledge, Skills and Abilities” and read “knowledge of English, spelling, grammar, punctuation.” And then under the heading “Minimum Qualifications,” it reads “excellent spelling, grammar, punctuation.” He thought it was the same thing.

Mayor Kuzma asked if Council was comfortable with the job description with the changes that were mentioned.

Councilmember Musgrove replied she appreciated the information and format of this. She stated she had some appreciation with what Parks does with their annual photo contest and how that helps with some of the graphic design. She stated she was supportive of this.

The consensus of the Council was in favor of the draft Communication Coordinator job description with the changes mentioned.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated she will move forward with putting the draft into a final form and start recruitment next week. She stated additional conversations about events, Happy Days in particular, and how to address that.

2.05: Preliminary 2023 General Fund Budget/Levy Review

Finance Director Lund reviewed the Staff report and Preliminary 2023 General Fund Budget and Levy.

Mayor Kuzma asked if this takes into consideration the moves made tonight as far as personnel.

Finance Director Lund replied she didn’t know what happened on the first case, but in regard to the Fire Department, that one was documented that it was accepted tonight. She stated in the notes section she will go through and show which ones she said if it was a 2022 item that was approved but not a part of the 2022 budget so Council could see why they are increasing. She stated there is currently a Drug Enforcement Officer who will work until the end of September but they are not going out for the grant again so that will add back about \$70,000 worth of expense for salaries only so they can have another officer on the streets.

Councilmember Musgrove asked who “they” is.

Finance Director Lund corrected that it was the Driving Under the Influence Task Force Officer, not the Drug Task Force Officer.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented what Councilmember Musgrove was asking was who was stopping the funding for the grant.

Finance Director Lund replied the Police Chief.

Councilmember Musgrove asked what the reason was.

Finance Director Lund replied that officer is dedicated strictly to the driving under the influence so that takes time away from the department.

Police Captain Bruml stated they were fortunate to have that position for two of the fiscal years and it has been great for the department and the officers to get dedicated time when they are just out looking for drunk drivers, speeders, people not wearing their seat belts. But with staffing issues and call increases, Chief Katers made the decision to not put in for the grant so they could have more people taking calls for service right now.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if they would try for it next year potentially.

Police Captain Bruml replied the other factor is that there is a cycle generally of getting the grant for two years, being denied on the third year and then getting it again for two years. He stated it wasn't for sure but he thought they may not have been given it this year anyway.

Mayor Kuzma commented he knew the contracts were negotiated but stated his concern is with inflation as high as it is, he asked if there would problems with the lease contract with other cities poaching Staff because they are only at 3% or 3.5%. He asked if an adjustment would need to be made at some point and if that is something that needs to be talked about today.

Finance Director Lund replied it is a contract settlement and she wasn't sure what other cities across the board are locked into contracts too because a lot of cities were up at the same time. She stated in about 2025 when contracts are over is probably when there will be a big request to get up to market.

Police Captain Bruml commented with the last recruitment they had a very low level of number of applicants, only seven came to first interviews with final being down to three people. He stated the way cities are handling that now is with money. Down payments are being given to come. He stated he didn't think Ramsey's Police Chief was in favor of that because it is perpetuating the problem and stealing from other agencies but it is something they are aware of and trying to make sure Ramsey is still an attractive department. He stated he thought they were with some of the other incentives but cities like Maple Grove offer a lot more money and are getting officers that way.

Administrative Services Director Lasher commented that January 1, 2023 the starting wage starts at 75% of the pay scale rather than 70% of the pay scale so the City is bumping employees up sooner which should help.

Mayor Kuzma stated he wanted to bring it up because he thought they were going to get caught in a big market rate adjustment. Since they are talking budgets it is something they want to have a contingency plan on.

Finance Director Lund reviewed information related to increases for the employee retirement plan, health insurance, worker's comp, positions that were added.

Councilmember Specht referenced the new Community Development Director and asked if the assumption a similar salary level as Mr. Hagen came in as.

Finance Director Lund replied yes. She reviewed information related to Capital Equipment Requests.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced a note about the equipment fund will need to change excess revenue policy and asked if the equipment fund one that rolls into that.

Finance Director Lund replied yes, 30%.

Councilmember Woestehoff replied when Finance Director Lund says it may need to be changed if it empties, the suggested idea is it may need a higher percentage.

Finance Director Lund replied if it is at zero the question would be do they keep it as one of the funds that still gets it or does it go negative, or do they decide in that year that it doesn't contribute to any negative amount, only to positive. She stated it has to be a future discussion.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that helps.

Finance Director Lund reviewed information from the staff report related to other State grants and aids.

Mayor Kuzma asked if the body cameras have come online yet.

Finance Director Lund replied more discussion is needed because there are body camera and the squad cameras and they want to go with the same vendor. She stated the body cameras are to be funded, they are about \$280,000 based off the latest bid, at the budget discussion for 2022 was to use the ARPA funds. The net amount that was listed on the case, they received about \$3.1 million there is about \$2.75 remaining in ARPA Funds that has been offset to cover the police cameras but they have not ordered them yet because of the squad video side of it.

Mayor Kuzma asked if that was going to happen this year.

Police Captain Bruml replied yes hopefully. He stated they are currently developing the policy and he has quotes from the two main vendors, Panasonic and Axon. He asked if there was \$117,000 set aside from ARPA.

Finance Director Lund replied originally there was \$117,000 set aside just for the body cameras and then it went up to \$280,000 based on where the market is today.

Mayor Kuzma asked about LOGIS with the increase in storing all this video which he thought was going to be expensive.

Police Captain Bruml replied part of the estimate is for storage. He stated the cameras are not the bulk of the cost, the main piece is storage, and redaction which is time consuming. He stated to have that working well is very important, that is what led them to pursue Axon versus Panasonic. He stated several years ago they started with about \$80,000 and are now up to \$360,000. They were pretty set on Panasonic until about three years ago. That quote got up to \$299,000 and at that point he asked for due diligence because it was so far from the original \$80,000. He stated that is what, from many different organizations including Anoka PD and Elk River PD, was giving feedback with issues Panasonic had with the cameras and with redaction. They have decided they would prefer Axon but are not at the point to buy because they need public input and Council approval. He stated the officers he spoke to want the cameras for protection to be able to record the officer's version of what happened when going on calls especially in domestic situations. He stated he wanted this purchase to go ahead and not wait.

Mayor Kuzma commented there is consensus to go ahead with the cameras but expressed concern that if there are not enough funds available that it should be a line item in the budget for that.

Finance Director Lund replied it has been said that the ARPA funds will cover the cost of the police cameras so what ever the cost is will come from the ARPA fund and what ever is remaining is what is spent, most likely on the roads.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced the heading Capital Outlay, noting there is an upgrade or replacement for the squad video cameras. He asked if that is so they work together and is that an ARPA eligible fund as well and should they be looking at that as a funding source as opposed to the General Fund.

Police Captain Bruml replied Councilmember Woestehoff was right, it is so the cameras work together and store cases together. The Panasonic system that is in now has been great for the squad cameras and he had no doubts about it for that but when working with two systems they would need to request a full time person for evidence management because now with the addition of the body cams there would be two sets of camera data and different ways of producing videos for court. Also the video trigger for the cameras to turn on would be different. He stated there are many benefits to having one system eventually but they are trying not to do it all at once because it is a large price tag.

Finance Director Lund replied in regard to the ARPA funds, when they made the special ruling that anything \$10 million and under was considered a funding loss for the cities it can be spent towards any item.

Finance Director Lund continued review of the Staff report.

Councilmember Riley referenced Finance Director's information about an increase in health insurance and asked if that is a known increase or if it is an estimate.

Finance Director Lund replied that is a known increase from the carrier.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the Capital Equipment and Finance Director Lund's statement that there was a request but it was two years out. She asked if half of it could be budgeted in one year and half of it in another year like they did with the fire truck.

Finance Director Lund replied it is a plow truck and there is a plow truck that is included in this list but she believed there is going to be one that is requested for 2024 also because of the additional roads that are being put in place with new developments. Because there is such a time lag with ordering the equipment and it being two years out, the question is should they be ordered together, that is the request.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby stated what is being proposed is they have about three new miles of frontage roads that are proposed with the Highway 10 improvements and with more developments they are looking at adding more miles of roads and they are already falling behind the eight-hour target window. Knowing it is two years from the time a plow is ordered to when it is delivered they are proposing to order one now, which doesn't mean it needs to be paid for it all up front. He stated they could pay for the under carriage now or pay for it upon delivery.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented these are big numbers that look very scary however he commented that the estimated tax capacity rate goes down a percent so that is potentially good news.

Finance Director Lund replied it goes down but the taxable value went up about 20% so there is still going to be a tax increase for the majority of people. She stressed these are estimates as of today.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar

Noted.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Hagen
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
City Clerk

Drafted by Joni Helmeke
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, July 12, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Also Present: Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Police Captain Brad Bruml
City Attorney Fritz Knaak
City Administrator Brian Hagen

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the Closed Session of the City Council to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. COUNCIL BUSINESS

2.01: Discuss a Police Department Staffing Issue-Portions of this Meeting may be closed to the public (Closed to the Public)

Administrative Services Director Lasher explained that the purpose of the case is for the Council to discuss medical data on an employee.

The City Council discussed the issue, asked questions of Staff, and provided direction.

3. ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye

Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye
Councilmember Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

The Closed Session was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Hagen
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
City Clerk

Drafted by Joni Helmeke
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.