

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Acting Mayor Chris Riley
 Councilmember Ryan Heineman (attended remotely)
 Councilmember Chelsea Howell
 Councilmember Debra Musgrove
 Councilmember Dan Specht

Members Absent: Mayor Mark Kuzma
 Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen
 City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby
 Finance Director Diana Lund
 Fire Chief Matt Kohner
 Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood
 Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
 IT Manager Jason Frederickson
 City Attorney Fritz Knaak

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Mayor Riley called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Financial Software Replacement/Upgrade

Finance Director Lund discussed the current financial software used by the City and announced that Chris Miller with LOGIS was here today. She hoped that this would be implemented in 2025 after a few of the other cities implemented this. She stated it is a 10 year commitment.

Councilmember Specht asked about the current breakdown.

Finance Director Lund explained that the current breakdown is the cost of the current general ledger and finance system.

Councilmember Specht asked if the number of users would matter with the new system.

Mr. Miller said yes.

Finance Director Lund introduced Chris Miller from LOGIS.

Mr. Miller said he was happy to answer any questions. He mentioned that this has been a comprehensive process and LOGIS is here to support their members. He said LOGIS is having this conversation with 24 other cities and they have 13 written or verbal commitments already. He added this is a highly vetted solution.

Acting Mayor Riley asked Finance Director Lund believes that this software is what Ramsey is looking for and meets the City's needs.

Finance Director Lund said yes since this software is more up to date than the current 2001 software. She mentioned a large component of this is the HR side, which is not currently being used. The HR side will help computerize the HR practices rather than keeping them more manual.

Administrative Services Director Lasher added she was impressed with the demonstration of the software and the adding value it brings by being able to computerize FMLA tracking and performance modules rather than keeping these submissions manual. She discussed the drawbacks of the current software and why this new software makes it easier to use. She added that the current database will be imported into the new system.

Councilmember Musgrove saw the contract shows the goal to get 27 cities and that the costs will stay the same for five years. She asked if more cities are added if that would affect the cost.

Mr. Miller explained that there are currently 24 cities in the ERP system and there is an assumption that if most of the 24 cities come forward the costs will not change at all; however, if only half come forward the prices would have to be redistributed. Outside of the 24 cities, there are four other agencies that are not currently a part of the ERP who have expressed interest in joining. He added that if there was a significant amount of new entrants the cost could potentially go down on the LOGIS support side.

Councilmember Specht asked with this being a cloud based software if any of the hardware needs to be changed.

Mr. Miller said no, the hardware acts the same.

Councilmember Specht saw where there is free on-site or remote training for system enhancements or staff on-boarding. He asked if this training is available for the initial training.

Mr. Miller said the training is initial and ongoing, which is included in the LOGIS portion of the cost.

Councilmember Specht asked if this was the same with the support side and if there was a phone number to call.

Mr. Miller said yes.

Councilmember Heineman asked if the cost would go up if enough cities did not move forward with this.

Mr. Miller said the LOGIS cost could go up because their staffing is based off of the support burden they expect. He added that over time they will right size their staff to accommodate the support needs.

Councilmember Heineman asked if the prices could go up over the five year contract.

Mr. Miller said no contract would be signed until LOGIS knows the numbers of commitment. He added LOGIS is hoping to know the numbers of those interested by November.

Councilmember Specht asked if there could be a cost savings in staff time once this is implemented.

Administrative Services Director Lasher said yes.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for the reasoning behind getting this system on board in 2025.

Finance Director Lund shared that implementation is not to start until 2023 and this gives it about a year to get the first few cities going to see how it all works. She said that delaying it means it can also be put over two budget years.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there was a concern with any other vendor contracts.

Finance Director Lund said the finance system is currently with LOGIS.

Acting Mayor Riley asked what it means if the City stays with the old system and not implement the new one.

Finance Director Lund shared she believes the software will go away and the City would have to find their own vendor. She said LOGIS has excellent support and they have been vetted. She said most cities normally stay together for cost savings.

Councilmember Musgrove asked IT Manager Frederickson if he had any feedback.

IT Manager Frederickson echoed what Finance Director Lund said that LOGIS is a great partner. He likes that they are a support center for their customers.

Councilmember Specht added that the current system has had updates in the past 21 years.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if the Council was in agreement on moving forward with this.

The consensus of the Council was to move forward.

2.02: Approve Updated Procedure to Recruit and On-board Public Works Maintenance Workers

Administrative Services Director Lasher reviewed the case and explained the challenges in regard to recruiting, specifically maintenance workers. She mentioned one of the challenges is that the City requires these workers to have a commercial driver's license (CDL). She added there is a certificate that can be applied for so that Shane Turner can be certified to train employees who do not have their CDL. She asked Council for feedback.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby said the question is how Ramsey competes with other cities.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if it is necessary that the City require these workers to have their CDL.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby said the vehicles that the workers will be using all require a CDL to drive.

Councilmember Heineman asked if the workers cannot perform their job until they have their CDL.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby said that is correct as there are certain aspects of the job that cannot be performed without a CDL.

Councilmember Heineman likes the idea of paying for the training. He asked if there would be anything stopping these employees from getting the CDL training paid for by the City and immediately leaving for another job.

City Administrator Hagen said this had been discussed and it has not been fully vetted to treat this like a tuition reimbursement.

Councilmember Heineman said it would be a great idea to implement something like that.

Councilmember Howell agreed.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if they were looking for direction on moving this training in house.

City Administrator Hagen stated they are seeking direction from Council on if the City wants to pay for the training and the in-house aspect can be looked at further later. He said paying for training is done for the on-call firefighters and septic certification for the building inspector.

Acting Mayor Riley shared it seems the Council is in agreement to implement a type of reimbursement plan and that it will be looked at later if the City brings this training in-house.

City Administrator Hagen added that it would make sense to have the training in-house if multiple new employees were brought on at one time.

Councilmember Howell asked if paying for the training will make Ramsey more competitive with neighboring cities.

City Administrator Hagen said it should help from the initial recruitment aspect as in the past they have turned away applicants who did not have a CDL.

Administrative Services Director Lasher added this levels the playing field with the other cities.

There was a consensus of the Council.

2.03: Review of 2023-2032 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Finance Director Lund reviewed the 10 year plan for the upcoming projects, such as the water treatment plant, the community center, and the pavement management. She added a public hearing will be held on this document.

Councilmember Specht asked if the money bonded for is taken into account.

Finance Director Lund said it is reflected under the bonding amount.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if the community center should be moved out as there is not really a plan surrounding it.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed that it should be kept on but moved out to 2032.

Acting Mayor Riley commented that there was a new aerial truck on the list at \$900,000 which seems less than he thought it would be. He asked if this was the right number.

Finance Director Lund said this was the number she received.

Councilmember Musgrove asked about the vehicle costs that are staggered out over a few different years. She said that over time she would think the cost would go up.

Finance Director Lund said there will be an inflationary amount added. She said if it goes on the property tax levy it goes on a prospective year and if it is an equipment certificate it will go three years out.

Councilmember Musgrove asked about the capital maintenance fund running a negative number projected for this year while things are still being budgeted on it. She asked if any increased revenues were projected in that fund.

Finance Director Lund said this is one of the funds that receives the excess revenue transfer if there is any.

Councilmember Specht brought up the Old Town Hall restoration that is tentatively scheduled for 2027. He asked if there is a vision for this.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said this is discussed annually and there are a lot of different aspects to consider. He explained that a retail space is ideal. He said the renovation costs exceeded the revenue potential for a few years which is why the last opportunity did not work out. He said that moving it has been discussed; however, it is very expensive to do so. He hoped a retail opportunity that did not have extensive parking needs would come around to be a good fit for the space.

Councilmember Specht asked if the building could be opened up to the Councilmembers to tour to get an idea of what is in the building.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said that was possible.

Acting Mayor Riley asked about the potential canoe system on Lake Itasca.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said he moved this way out in the plan as a placeholder.

Councilmember Musgrove stated the observation boardwalk for Lake Itasca is scheduled for 2028.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood confirmed this.

Councilmember Specht asked about the development off of 147th Avenue NW and the road reconstruction and asked where that was on the schedule.

Finance Director Lund answered the previous question about Lake Itasca stated the project is under 2026, but is actually unfunded.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if this project should even be on the schedule.

Councilmember Howell said it should be taken out and if good water is in the lake again it can be revisited.

Councilmember Heineman asked if there was a geological survey that could be conducted to see the condition of Lake Itasca.

Finance Director Lund asked if the Council wanted the canoe project removed.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if the Council wanted this on the list as the lake has been dry for nearly two years.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that part of the funds budgeted are the nexus to what is done with charges for the rates and fees. She added taking things off with have a connection to what is charged for rates and fees.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood shared there was \$30,000,000 in excess of park and trail projects which are an eventual public need.

Acting Mayor Riley said he would remove the canoe project.

Councilmember Specht said it can be kept on a private list of things to do someday.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if this would be the same for the observation boardwalk over Lake Itasca.

Acting Mayor Riley said he would probably feel the same but he asked for more clarification on this project.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said this can be a boardwalk that goes out into the water and returns again into the trail or could be a T-shaped dock. He added this project allows people to go out beyond the cattails and sit or view the waterfall or sunsets over the lake.

Councilmember Musgrove asked about the dedicated \$100,000 for the playground replacement program and why every year had these funds other than 2028 and 2030.

Finance Director Lund stated that the fund runs out of money and directed Councilmember Musgrove to the cash flows and lawful gambling fund and showed why this was.

Acting Mayor Riley stated it makes sense to commit to doing one park each year.

Councilmember Specht asked if the funds would keep going up as it comes from the gambling fees.

Finance Director Lund said these numbers are rather consistent with what has been collected.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby answered Councilmember Specht's earlier question about the streets in the new development off of 147th Avenue NW and said the streets are not in the current CIP.

Finance Director Lund shared she will request a public hearing on the CIP and the schedule is based off of how many more times the Council would like to see this before a public hearing.

Acting Mayor Riley asked Council if they would like to see this again before a public hearing is called.

Councilmember Specht said that absent members may have some feedback and would be good to mention this in one more work session to see if those members have any feedback.

Councilmember Howell agreed.

Acting Mayor Riley called for it to be seen in one more work session before the public hearing.

Finance Director Lund asked if it would be okay to put this on the next meeting and have asking for the public hearing on the consent agenda.

Acting Mayor Riley said yes.

The consensus of the Council was to discuss this further at the next work session.

2.04: Review Proposed 2023 Schedule Rates, Fees, and Charges

Finance Director Lund reviewed the staff report and discussed the proposed rates and charges for 2023.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood clarified the item concerning PACT Charter School field maintenance stating this was for general maintenance.

Acting Mayor Riley asked Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood to talk about the field maintenance fees as they are large increases.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood explained the method to this and that the maintenance being charged for are of small fraction to the actual cost. He added that a few years ago the City met with their counterparts in Anoka and standardized field maintenance costs for the athletic associations. He said these increases have been communicated to the athletic association.

Acting Mayor Riley asked about the charges for stripping for softball and baseball and if they were per game or per week.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said these charges are per game or per day and the City has a system for knowing when the games are scheduled for.

Councilmember Musgrove asked how usual it is for cities to be doing field maintenance and asked how long the fees have been at the rate for 2022.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood shared the City of Anoka and Ramsey, in cooperation with the athletic association, agreed that the City would look at increases every other year.

Councilmember Musgrove said with the PACT Charter School there is a specific dedication for their maintenance but the others are based on games. She asked if this is due to a contract with PACT.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said that was correct.

Councilmember Specht asked if part of this agreement was that the PACT playground would stay open for general public use.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood said this park is used by the public.

Councilmember Specht asked about the new school center room rentals and park facility rentals. He asked if this is something that could be looked at again.

City Administrator Hagen said yes this will be coming forward as part of the overall policy discussion.

Councilmember Specht commented he wanted to keep this on the radar as he has gotten feedback from individuals who have rented facilities on the weekends stating the area was not very clean.

Interim Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood shared that after this incident there was a Ramsey business that was hired to perform these services and the price point is \$50 during the week per cleaning and \$75 per weekend cleaning. He said the City is charging the same fund where the revenue from the facility goes for maintenance. He added that time is built in between reservations for cleaning.

Acting Mayor Riley asked to move on to some of the bigger fees.

Finance Director Lund gave an overview of some of the other large fees. She said they are looking to increase the administrative fee for delinquent fees. The sewer and water are both proposed at a 10% rate increase, as these are being proposed to fund the water treatment plant. She discussed the current rates for sewer and water in other communities.

Acting Mayor Riley stated there was not time to discuss this information and asked Council if they would like to see this at another work session.

Finance Director Lund said any questions about utilities can be discussed at a later date and the first quarter utilities do not hit until April of 2023.

Councilmember Howell said she had a few questions to ask when this is discussed.

Councilmember Musgrove said it would be helpful to have the other members present for the discussion.

Acting Mayor Riley said this can be moved to another work session.

The consensus of the Council was to discuss this further at the next work session.

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 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Hagen
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
City Clerk

Drafted by Ava Rokosz
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.