

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Kuzma  
Councilmember Chelsee Howell  
Councilmember Debra Musgrove  
Councilmember Michael Olson  
Councilmember Chris Riley – attended remotely  
Councilmember Dan Specht  
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen  
City Engineer/Public Works Director Bruce Westby  
Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood  
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher – attended remotely  
City Attorney Fritz Knaak  
Police Chief Jeff Katers

**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: Consider Crime Free Multi Housing Program and Rental Licensing Requirements**

Police Chief Katers reviewed the Staff report concerning the Crime Free Multi-Housing (CFMH) program which is meant to reduce crime occurring in multi-family rental units. He discussed a similar program that Ramsey had in the early 2000s. He stated that Officer Gardner was in attendance tonight to review this further.

Officer Gardner gave a rundown of the program and its benefits. He shared what he learned from speaking to other agencies and cities about what has worked for them in the past.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this was proposing a set of ordinances that allows the Police Department to build a better relationship with multi-family housing to provide more tools for dealing with problematic situations.

Officer Gardner said yes.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this would force the lease addendum that everyone in this type of housing would not participate in illegal activities.

Officer Gardner said yes. He explained that Anoka and Coon Rapids have a great rapport with all of their apartments and they have three full time officers dedicated to this. He stated that the crime rate in Anoka has dropped drastically since starting a CFMH program.

Mayor Kuzma asked how this will be staffed.

Police Chief Katers explained that they are looking at assigning an existing officer as a full time officer to this program. He stated there are nine apartments in the City which is manageable for one officer. He noted that this is not a replacement for property management. He shared the statistics of police visits to these apartment complexes in 2022.

Councilmember Howell asked how AirBNBs factor into this.

Officer Gardner explained he is unfamiliar with AirBNBs but Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Swalchick has the answer.

Mayor Kuzma asked if any current ordinances will work with this.

Police Chief Katers stated that there are some revisions that will need to be made and Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Swalchick has more information on this. He stated that most cities require that multi-family units are a part of the CFMH program.

Councilmember Riley stated that this is a step that the City needs to take to make sure that the apartments in the City stay good. He said he would like to hear about the cost savings and Code Enforcement aspects of this.

Officer Gardner shared that in all the cities they have spoken to have seen a reduction in the calls for service for the patrol division. He stated this would help with resource delegation.

Councilmember Musgrove asked about the trespass notice and who enforces this.

Officer Gardner stated that would be enforced by the Police Department.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that Anoka seems to be an equal city in relation to this program and stated she would like to see their ordinance. She asked how condo apartments, which are owned, compare in regard to calls and management.

Police Chief Katers stated that this would not fall under this program as the units are owner occupied.

The consensus of the Council was to move forward with the CFMH program.

## **2.02: Discussion Regarding the Public Works Department's Interim Titles**

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the Staff report and recommendation to remove Mr. Westby's and Mr. Riverblood's Interim status in their positions.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby stated that the current Public Works Staff is phenomenal and it has made his transition so much easier. He explained the process when he took over as Interim Public Works Director and what will change when the interim piece of his role is removed to make things more efficient. He added there will be some level of administrative assistance needed.

City Administrator Hagen explained the cost comparison of this.

Parks and Interim Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood shared that things are going well and feels good about where Public Works is.

Councilmember Musgrove thanked Public Works for always fielding questions that residents have regarding snow. She asked if there is need for a Public Works Assistant from Parks only to help with management. She said it seems like there will be a lot happening in Parks and Public Works and wants to ensure there is enough coverage for both departments.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby agreed that some assistance will be needed. He explained that the website needs a lot of updating and he thinks that an administrative assistant would be able to help with this.

Mayor Kuzma shared his concerns that after the former directors retirement he was worried the City would be putting too much on Mr. Westby and Mr. Riverblood and he shared that he is very pleased with how they have handled the work given to them. He stated that he has no problem with removing the interim titles.

Councilmember Riley agreed with Mayor Kuzma's concern that Mr. Westby and Mr. Riverblood would be overloaded but he has not seen anything like that from them and all feedback he has received has been positive. He shared his support for removing the interim titles.

Councilmember Specht shared his support for removing the interim titles and thinks that they have both shown their value. He stated that he loves the phone number that residents can call for snow concerns.

The consensus of the Council was to remove the interim titles from both Mr. Westby and Mr. Riverblood.

### **2.03: Continued Discussions Regarding Municipal Center Rental Fees**

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the Staff report and gave an update on the rental fees in regard to the municipal centers.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked about the new space in Public Works and if it is designed as a rentable space.

City Administrator Hagen stated that it would probably not be a part of this policy and that it could be brought on board for rentals based on access to the building.

Councilmember Howell shared her concerns with using the Public Works space or the Water Treatment Plant space for public rentals. She asked if this could be a security issue to bring the public into these areas. She was not supportive of this. She suggested the policy saying that for The League of Women's Voter Forum meetings they would not have to pay a fee at the requirement that the meeting be open to the public.

City Administrator Hagen asked if this would apply to anyone who wants to put on a candidate forum.

Councilmember Howell said yes.

Mayor Kuzma asked if this needs to say anything about QCTV considering they show the League of Women's Voters.

Councilmember Woestehoff said that should be between the entity and QCTV. He asked if part of this was that the City require anyone who rents the space to have their event be open to the public, independent of the room or location.

City Attorney Knaak said they can do that.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this can be added to part of the policy to give the flexibility to open meetings to the public.

Councilmember Musgrove asked who would make the determination on whether a meeting is open to the public or not and sees that this could be a hurdle.

City Attorney Knaak recommended adopting guidelines and the criteria could be laid out to Staff to manage.

City Administrator Hagen does not see any meetings other than public forums that would be pertinent to be open to the public.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the assumption is that the City wants the public forum meetings to be open and it is dictated by a rental policy if the chamber should be set as a facility to be rented.

City Attorney Knaak suggested having a general policy and have something that specifically applies to certain circumstances where the Council chambers will be rented.

Councilmember Musgrove shared concerns with the Public Works and the Water Treatment Plant being open to the public as part of rental policy.

City Administrator Hagen stated that those two locations are not in this policy.

Councilmember Woestehoff shared that he thinks City Hall has a higher vulnerability than the other locations being discussed. He asked if there is an acceptable use policy for the wireless network at City Hall.

City Administrator Hagen shared there is a Staff wifi and a public wifi network.

Administrative Services Director Lasher discussed a few updates and clarifications, including the rates charged. She asked if the Council would consider setting the homeowners association (HOA) and business networking rate at \$40 rather than \$50.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this category was even needed and it just be kept at the resident or non-resident rate depending on who did the booking.

Administrative Services Director Lasher explained that in the last policy when HOAs were put in with residents, they did not like that and those HOA members felt they should get a cheaper rate than residents.

Councilmember Howell agreed with Councilmember Woestehoff.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed with both Councilmember Woestehoff and Howell on removing the HOA section and including them in the general public section to clean up the policy.

Mayor Kuzma asked about removing the HOA portion and if they would still decrease the amount from \$50 to \$40.

Administrative Services Director Lasher explained that they would keep the business networking rate at \$40 and roll the HOA in with the general public.

Councilmember Musgrove shared her thought of removing the title for the HOA section and not putting it under business networking section.

Councilmember Woestehoff shared his idea of removing the HOA and business networking section and just roll these under the general public rates. He asked if Council would be willing to add students under the non-profit and youth organizations category.

Councilmember Specht shared he would support adding that.

Administrative Services Director Lasher agreed that adding the student section is a great idea with more language added to the policy. She added that removing the category for HOAs and business networking would fall in line with what other neighboring cities have in place.

Councilmember Specht asked about the firearms sections and who does the approval of allowing these.

City Administrator Hagen assumed that they would need to contact Police Chief Katers and that it would just be a warning to the City that the individual holds a permit and intends to bring a firearm onto the premises.

The consensus of the Council was to eliminate the category regarding HOAs and business networking, add students to the non-profit and youth organization category and set the fees at \$45 for residents and \$65 for non-residents.

#### **2.04: Review Draft Policy for the Recruitment, Application, and Interview Process of Appointing City Board and Commission Members**

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the Staff report and stated that the application process is open for the upcoming appointments and reviewed a few revisions and changes.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated that there is a current commission member that does not wish to be reappointed and stated that it is in the policy that members who do not wish to be reappointed can reach out to their Councilmember. She looked for clarification on how new Councilmembers would meet with commissions and if she would need to be involved or if the Councilmember would reach out to the commissions on their own.

Councilmember Olson shared his intent to reach out to the commissions on his own.

The consensus of the Council was to move forward with this policy.

### **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 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Brian S. Hagen

City Administrator

ATTEST:

---

Katie M. Schmidt  
City Clerk

Drafted by Ava Rokosz  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*