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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma  
Councilmember Chelsee Howell  
Councilmember Debra Musgrove  
Councilmember Michael Olson  
Councilmember Chris Riley  
Councilmember Dan Specht  
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff (arrived at 7:57pm)

Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen  
Finance Director Diana Lund  
Planning Manager Todd Larson  
Economic Development Manager Sean Sullivan  
Community Development Director Stephanie Hanson

**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**

None.

**3. CITIZEN INPUT**

Matt Kuker, PSD Land Development, came forward and shared that he does not have a problem with the City portion of the taxes; however, he had concern with the valuation that the County has been putting on properties lately. He stated he had spoken to the County about this but the valuations are very high. He shared that there are buildings that went from \$6,000,000 valuation to \$9,500,000 valuation, from \$5,600,000 to \$8,200,000, and more. He shared that all four of his buildings went up \$14,800,000 in valuation. He stated that the difference in taxes for these four buildings from last year is \$362,000. He noted that he does not know what the course of action would be to go to the County Board and have them look at their valuations. He explained that the new assessor is looking at these properties differently than they had been looked at over the past 20 years. He said this will be raising some problems in the next few years. He noted that he has

concerns with some of his tenants leaving due to the tax valuation of his buildings, this town, and the County.

#### **4. APPROVE AGENDA**

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

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

#### **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

Councilmember Musgrove shared she would like to pull case 5:15 and move it to Council Business to discuss.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda with the removal of item 5:15:

- 5.01: Receive Cash & Investments for Period Ending November 30, 2023.
- 5.02: Receive November 2023 Financial Reports - General Fund, EDA and Enterprise Funds
- 5.03: Note the following Boards, Commissions, and Committee Meeting Minutes:
  - Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated October 26, 2023
  - Environmental Policy Board Meeting Minutes Dated August 21, 2023
  - Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes Dated October 17, 2023
- 5.04: Approve the Following Meeting Minutes:
  - 1) City Council Work Session dated 11/28/2023
  - 2) City Council Regular Session dated 11/28/2023
- 5.05: Approve Joint Powers Agreement with Anoka County for Regional SWAT team
- 5.06: Approve Business Licenses (includes 2024 Business License Renewals)
- 5.07: Authorization to Update Three Policies within the Personnel Policy
- 5.08: Authorization to Approve Position Reclassifications
- 5.09: Authorization to Hire a Building Maintenance Worker
- 5.10: Authorization to Hire a Utilities Maintenance Worker
- 5.11: Authorization to Promote a Patrol Officer to Sergeant
- 5.12: Adopt Resolution #23-314 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of November 23, 2023 through December 6, 2023.
- 5.13: Adopt Resolution #23-271 Approving Change Order #6 for Improvement Project #23-03, Armstrong Boulevard and Alpine Drive Roundabout Improvements
- 5.14: Adopt Resolution #23-293 Approving a Conditional Use Permit from Rare Pomeranians at 15110 Uranimite St NW
- 5.15: ~~Adopt Resolution #23-301 Approving Loan to SA Group, Inc. from City RLF~~ This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and considered as Item 7.0(A)
- 5.16: Adopt Resolution #23-307 Approving the Final Plat and Development Agreement for Lynwood Third Addition (Project No. 23-121); case of U.S. Home, LLC dba Lennar

- 5:17: Adopt Resolution #23-308 Approving Right-of-Way Permit for a Private Ice Rink on Krypton Street North of 157th Avenue Northwest
- 5:18: Adopt Resolution #23-313 Approving ProjectDox Renewal Quote
- 5:19: Adopt Resolution #23-315 Authorizing the City's 2024 Non-Union Health and Dental Insurance Contributions and Cost of Living Adjustment.

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

## **6. PUBLIC HEARING**

### **6.01: Public Hearing - Consider Zoning Map Amendment Along with a Site Plan and Minor Plat for Storyteller Café Located at 7790 Sunwood Drive NW (Project No. 23-118); Case of Stories Foundation**

#### **Presentation**

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the zoning map amendment, site plan, and minor plat for Storyteller Café. He shared the Planning Commission's recommendation of approval for the zoning map amendment, the site plan, and the minor plat.

#### **Public Hearing**

Mayor Kuzma called the public hearing to order at 7:12 p.m.

#### **Citizen Input**

Jeriann Palmer, 8251 154th Lane NW, came forward and asked how tight the housing is going to be between COR 1 and 2 with this zoning change.

Planning Manager Larson shared it is three apartment units that will be on the second floor.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to close the public hearing.

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

The public hearing was closed at 7:14 p.m.

#### **Council Business**

Councilmember Specht shared that he is very excited for this project as it is a great non-profit organization that does wonderful work.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to introduce Ordinance #24-01 rezoning the Subject Property and 7750 Sunwood Drive NW from COR-2 to COR-1.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to adopt Resolution #23-296, granting approval of the Site Plan and Minor Plat for Storyteller Café, contingent upon adoption of Ordinance #24-01.

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

**6.02: Public Hearing - Adopt Resolution #23-309 Adopting the City's 2024-2033 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

**Presentation**

Finance Director Lund reviewed the Staff report concerning the 2024-2033 CIP. She noted that adopting this plan does not authorize any projects and each project will require their own authorization.

Councilmember Musgrove noted that the roads are not listed as an existing high priority project for the year 2026 while playground reconstruction is listed as a highest priority item. She shared that the roads would meet the definition of the highest priority. She asked why the streets are not listed as a highest priority item.

Finance Director Lund shared that engineering went through the needs based off of the roads and the projects in 2026 are a medium priority because the road projects in 2024 and 2025 are high priority. She added that only one priority year can be listed. She explained that if there were two years of funding for a project, then she cannot give two priority codes to one project.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if roads are still a high priority 2026 and beyond.

Finance Director Lund said yes. She explained that a priority 1 item means that there is a replacement in years 2024 and 2025, while a priority 3 item means it will be replaced in 2026.

Councilmember Musgrove stated she would like to see the park's supplemental activities incorporated into the main CIP.

Finance Director Lund explained it was set up this way because the park's supplemental activities do not have funding available for the projects.

Councilmember Riley suggested that they leave the park's supplemental activities separate.

Councilmember Howell shared that she would love to see City Hall become a higher priority.

### **Public Hearing**

Mayor Kuzma called the public hearing to order at 7:17 p.m.

### **Citizen Input**

Jill Johns, 6043 174th Avenue NW, came forward and shared that she is here on behalf of the Ramsey Community Foundation, which is a 501C-3 that was established in Ramsey in 2006. She stated the mission of the Foundation is to improve the quality and life by creating cultural experiences in the City. She noted the foundation's long-term goal is to bring public art to the City. She wanted to call out the roundabout in the COR that is in the CIP. She shared that they consider this to be one of the gateways to the City and that this roundabout could be a perfect opportunity for the foundation to partner with the City to create something that is functional and beautiful. She noted that since this year is Ramsey's 50th anniversary it would be a great occasion to springboard fundraising on the foundation's behalf to find additional funding for this roundabout. She shared that they are here to offer their support for this project and to commit any assistance in working with Staff or Council on the public process of this project. She added that they could also use their status as a 501C-3 organization to find additional funding that may be available to them that would not be available to the City. She noted that the foundation could also use this for their own fundraising efforts for the project. She said they are excited to see this project begin.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to close the public hearing.

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

The public hearing was closed at 7:30 p.m.

### **Council Business**

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adopt Resolution #23-309 Adopting the City of Ramsey's 2024-2033 Capital Improvement Plan.

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

**6.03: Public Hearing - 2024 Tax Levies and General Fund Budget:**

- **Adopt Resolution #23-310 Adopting the 2023, Payable 2024 Municipal Tax Levy**
- **Adopt Resolution #23-311 Adopting the 2024 General Fund Budget**
- **Adopt Resolution #23-312 Adopting the 2024 Economic Development Authority (EDA) Budget**

**Presentation**

Finance Director Lund reviewed the Staff report in regard to the proposed 2024 property tax levy and the general fund budget. She shared that the estimated tax capacity rate is proposed at 41.171%, the general budget is proposed at \$20,799,768, and the overall final levy is proposed at \$20,279,701.

**Public Hearing**

Mayor Kuzma called the public hearing to order at 7:54 p.m.

**Citizen Input**

Jeriann Palmer, 8251 154th Lane NW, came forward and asked about the request for the three new full-time street workers. She asked if these positions were in addition to the existing workers. She thanked Staff for what they have done as her taxes have not gone up by a huge amount. She noted that for the amount of what Public Works has gotten over the last few years, three new employees as well as all of their other requests seem to be a large request. She asked if some of these requests can be stretched out over a number of years rather than just one year.

Councilmember Musgrove thanked Ms. Palmer for coming forward and shared her concerns. She shared that she will not be supporting the budget as there are quite a few items that she does appreciate while there are items that she does not support, including the three new street workers in one year. She noted that she is in support of the EDA increase as they have not had an increase in a while.

Councilmember Specht thanked the Staff for their hard work on this budget. He shared there were a lot of items that the Council went back and forth on in the budget. He explained that this year they had a very hard time with the roads due to some of the maintenance in the past. He added that they had to outsource some of the work to bring contractors in to repair the roads. He noted there were other street related items that were not getting done due to a lack of staffing. He shared that they are also adding a parks employee as they have had the same number of parks employees since around 2006; however, parks are increasing as development comes into the City. He shared he will be supporting the budget this evening. He noted he is not happy with the increase; however, as a growing City he feels that this budget is what they need to keep a safe community.

Councilmember Riley agreed with Councilmember Specht.

Councilmember Howell acknowledged Ms. Palmer's concerns with the number of personnel that is being added next year. She shared this was also a concern of hers and she had brought this up in budget discussions. She noted that she believes it is premature to add another parks employee at this point. She added that she believes it is tone-deaf to not try to cut more from the budget given the current state of the economy. She shared she will not be supporting the budget and tax levy this evening; however, she will be supporting the EDA budget.

Mayor Kuzma shared that over the course of the year they had robust discussions on the budget. He noted that the City is growing leaps and bounds. He shared that they also had a lot of snow at the beginning of 2023 and it was difficult to keep up with the snow plowing. He shared he will be supporting the budget this evening as these are items that the City needs as the citizens are demanding these things.

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to close the public hearing.

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

The public hearing was closed at 8:04 p.m.

### **Council Business**

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to Adopt Resolution #23-310 Adopting the 2023, Payable 2024 Municipal Tax Levies (General, Pavement Management, EDA and debt service) in the amount of \$20,279,701.

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

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to Adopt Resolution #23-311 Adopting the 2024 General Fund Budget in the amount of \$20,799,768.

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

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to Adopt Resolution #23-312 Adopting the 2024 EDA Budget in the amount of \$92,390.

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



## 7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

### **7.0(A): Adopt Resolution #23-301 Approving Loan to SA Group, Inc. from City RLF - Please Note: this case was moved from the Consent Agenda - 5.15 to the Regular Agenda - 7.0(A)**

Councilmember Musgrove shared she requested this item be pulled from the Consent Agenda because she had reached out to Economic Development Manager Sullivan with a question on the interest and how this was determined for this loan. She noted that according to the City RLF policy, the amount does not match. She said the policy states that the interest rate should be a fixed rate and equal to the 10-year treasury bond rate at the date of funding but shall not be less than 3%. She noted that Economic Development Manager Sullivan shared that today the treasury bond rate is 4.2%. She added that having a rate in here already is premature based on what the policy states.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated Councilmember Musgrove is correct. He shared he has not done many RLFs in the City; however, every one that they have done, the rate has been below the 3% threshold so they locked in the 3%. He stated when they started looking at this in July the rate was 3.49%. He noted that in the event that the rate does go up, this would be the rate they should use for the policy. He shared that he supports the action of having this item pulled.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to Adopt Resolution #23-301 Approving a \$149,999 loan from RLF (6 years) to SA Group Inc. from City RLF, with the interest rate to be determined based on the 10-year treasury note rate at the time of the loan closing, not to be less than 3%; subject to City Attorney Review.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Musgrove shared that she is glad that they are able to help out this business in this way.

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

### **7.01: Introduce Ordinance #23-19 Amending Temporary Sign Regulations**

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report concerning the proposed amendment to temporary sign regulations.

Councilmember Musgrove asked about the EDA's recommendation to double the existing timeframe.

Planning Manager Larson explained that the EDA's recommendation was to take the existing six week timeframe with a four week extension and doubling that to a 12 week timeframe with an eight week extension. He shared that the Planning Commission's recommendation was the same; however, the eight week extension could be extended further.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to introduce Ordinance #23-19 amending Chapter 117 pertaining to temporary signs.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

**7.02: Introduction of Ordinance #23-18, Amending Chapter 105, Buildings and Building Regulations, pertaining to Address Numbers**

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to amending Chapter 105 of the City Code pertaining to buildings and building regulations for address numbers.

Councilmember Howell asked if there were any concerns or objections raised at the Planning Commission meeting about any portions of the ordinance.

Planning Manager Larson shared that they did talk about some of the contrasting and visibility at night; however, these provisions have been modified so the proposed ordinance was based off of that discussion.

Councilmember Howell shared her main concern reading through this is how it applies to residential buildings requiring it to be on the primary structure. She noted that a lot of people may have a boulder out that is decorative where they have these numbers displayed. She added that there is an allowance if someone's primary structure is hidden by trees; however, she does not like that it would be allowed for some people and not others. She stated that she would like to see the requirement go away for having the numbers on the primary structure and to be required to have the light reflective coating if it is not on the primary structure.

Councilmember Specht agreed and shared they may need to spend more time looking at the residential piece of this. He noted that he is okay with the new construction and commercial updates.

Planning Manager Larson shared that this provision is in the Building Code today, so this mirrors the Building Code. He shared that when a house is built, the number is put on the house.

Councilmember Musgrove asked about the construction site requirements and how the signage is supposed to meet the requirements in the section above, yet the home is not completely constructed. She asked more about how this works for the construction sites.

Planning Manager Larson explained that a common way to do this is to take a can of spray paint and spray the number on the side of the plywood or house wrap. He added that some homebuilders will put a post near the street which would also be acceptable.

Mayor Kuzma asked if there was a consensus to change the residential requirements.

Councilmember Musgrove said yes, especially with already established homes.

Community Development Director Hanson explained that the reason this is in the Code as it is adopted as part of the Building Code as well and is a requirement.

Councilmember Howell asked where currently existing homes fall in this.

Planning Manager Larson stated that the Building Code only addresses things at the time of construction. He noted that if an older home decided to do some redecorating and got a decorative post or something similar, as long as it is visible from the street, they would meet the intent of the other provision and the City would be fine with it.

Councilmember Howell noted that she does see validity in her original comments. She stated she would like to see them not be so restrictive if there is a way to work with this.

Mayor Kuzma asked if it is possible that they can reword this.

Community Development Director Hanson shared they can talk to the Building Department and see where there is wiggle room for this.

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to introduce Ordinance #23-18, Amending Chapter 105, Buildings and Building Regulations, pertaining to Address Numbers.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

## **8. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT**

City Administrator Hagen announced upcoming meetings and events.

Councilmember Specht shared that he was able to tour a new business in the City, Little Explorers, who are holding open houses. He added that Ramsey's Artery Studio has a lot of fun events coming up and encouraged residents to take a look. He noted that Lord of Life Church has Ruby's Pantry on December 22 and there is a permit to carry event going on at Total Defense on December 30. He wished everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Councilmember Woestehoff gave kudos to the Anoka Middle School for the Arts children for putting on a great band concert this evening. He thanked the MnDOT people for making Highway 10 easy to go at a safe speed.

Councilmember Musgrove wished all residents a Merry Christmas and thanked the Council and Staff for a great year.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian S. Hagen  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Katie M. Schmidt  
City Clerk

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

A recording of this meeting is available for viewing online at [www.qctv.org](http://www.qctv.org)  
<<http://www.qctv.org>>. Recordings are available for 36 months after the date of the meeting.