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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Ryan Heineman
Councilmember Kirsten Buscher
Councilmember Michael Olson (attended remotely)
Councilmember Eric Peters
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht
Councilmember Shanna Stewart

Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen
Planning Manager Todd Larson
Assistant City Engineer Joe Feriancek

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Heineman 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 Heineman.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Stewart, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.01: New Board and Commission Member Ceremonial Oath of Office

Mayor Heineman gave the Oath of Office to new Parks and Recreation Commissioner Garth Andersen, and Planning and Zoning Commissioners Jeffrey Lubarski, Debra Musgrove, and Nichole Rudack.

4. CITIZEN INPUT

Nicole Rudack, 14608 Peridot Street NW, came forward and addressed the lack of participation in the leash laws and picking up animal waste in the neighborhoods by the COR, particularly The Gables and The Station. She suggested they install cameras in this area to encourage participation in these laws.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- 5.01: Receive February 2025 Financial Reports - General Fund, EDA and Enterprise Funds
- 5.02: Receive Cash and Investments for Period Ending March 31, 2025
- 5.03: Review 2025 Body Worn Camera Audit
- 5.04: Approve the Following Meeting Minutes:
 - 1. City Council Special Work Session dated March 18, 2025
 - 2. City Council Work Session dated March 25, 2025
 - 3. City Council Regular Session dated March 25, 2025
- 5.05: Approve Business License Applications.
- 5.06: Authorization to Hire a Building Maintenance Worker
- 5.07: Adopt Resolution #25-075 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of March 20, 2025, through April 2, 2025.
- 5.08: Adopt Resolution #25-064 Approving Both the Site Plan for a Proposed Expansion of an Existing Parking Lot at 7900 Riverdale Drive NW and a Stormwater Maintenance Agreement (Project No. 25-102); Case of Pleasureland RV Center - North Metro
- 5.09: Adopt Resolution #25-072 Proclaiming April 25, 2025, as Arbor Day and the Month of May as Arbor Month
- 5.10: Adopt Resolution #25-074 Accepting Donation of Cash for Park Improvements.
- 5.11: Adopt Resolution #25-076 Approving Correction of Trail Easement Legal Description for Outlot B, Northfork and Outlot A, Northfork Trail Addition

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	aye

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Councilmember Olson aye
Councilmember Specht aye
Councilmember Peters aye
Mayor Heineman aye

Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.01: Adopt Resolution #25-065 Approving a Site Plan Review for a Solar Energy System on the Ramsey Landfill Property (Cedar Creek Energy)

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the site plan review for a solar energy system at the Ramsey Landfill. He shared the Planning Commission’s recommendation of approval.

Alex Gast, Cedar Creek Energy, came forward and shared that they have been working with Connexus Energy to develop this land with a solar energy system that would serve the members of Connexus Energy. He noted that the anticipated life of this system would be 30 years or greater.

Councilmember Buscher said she is very excited about this project as she thinks it is important to utilize land like this for the City’s energy infrastructure. She asked about the community benefit planning.

Mr. Gast explained that as part of this project they intend to use their registered apprenticeship program, which would give 15% on-the-job training to electricians through apprenticeships.

Councilmember Specht asked what happens to the site after the 30-year lifespan.

Mr. Gast said they would typically repower the system after 30 years by recycling the current modules and installing new ones.

Councilmember Riley asked what opportunities they would be missing out on by allowing this development.

Planning Manager Larson said the land does not have soil that is suitable to support a building so they would not be able to use it for anything that would require a building. He stated this kind of system which would be placed on the ground, would work, but not much else. He noted this solar energy system would do something with land that they likely would not be able to do anything else with.

Councilmember Specht shared that he had gone and toured the location. He explained that when this was originally proposed, there were concerns that this could be an eyesore; however, after touring the land, the berms are very high and there would likely be very little visibility of the system. He added that there were also concerns in the past about this system being abandoned after its useful life, but recycling and reinstalling new modules would solve this concern. He stated that Connexus Energy is being required by the State to have certain amounts of solar energy, and this is a great place to do that. He shared his support for this.

Councilmember Olson asked about the stability of anchoring the solar energy system, given that the soil is not suitable to be built on.

Mr. Gast explained that they have performed a substantial amount of geotechnical exploration on the site. He said they would install a driven beam to a depth of around 10 feet into the soil to secure these systems to the ground. He noted that during wind events, the system would go into a wind stow mode, which would make the panels go flat and allow wind to pass over the system. He added that this has been signed off on by structural engineers.

Mayor Heineman asked if there will be any immediate benefits for Ramsey residents with this system.

Brian Burandt, CEO of Connexus Energy, came forward and shared that it is a well-known fact that Ramsey is growing, causing a greater electrical need. He explained that there is a mandate from the State to decarbonize their portfolio. He said that adding solar energy to this site would negate the need for additional substations and transmission lines.

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Buscher, to adopt Resolution #25-065 approving a Site Plan Review for a Solar Energy System on the Ramsey Landfill Property.

Further Discussion:

Councilmember Buscher stated this would have a lot of benefits for the community, including a 20% tax coming to the City from the Minnesota Solar Production Tax. She shared her excitement for what this project would bring to Ramsey, including the apprenticeship program.

Debra Musgrove, 15247 Fluorine Street NW, came forward and shared that she is very familiar with this project. She noted that when this was originally discussed, there was going to be some land that the City would still be able to use for industry in the bottom corner of this site. She asked if this was still the case.

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the site map and showed the areas of the overall site that could potentially be developed into something else.

Ms. Musgrove asked about the parcel across the street.

City Administrator Hagen explained that the City did acquire land from the MPCA many years ago that is south of this site. He said they want to have conversations with the State down the road to acquire more land to further redevelop this area.

Mayor Heineman shared that he is typically not the biggest fan of solar energy; however, he understands that there is a State mandate for more solar energy. He added that there had been concerns in the past about this site being an eyesore, but if they do not move forward with this project, they would have to add more infrastructure in other areas that could be more of an eyesore than this would be. He said he will be supporting this.

Councilmember Olson stated when this was originally brought forward to the Council he voted against it out of concern it would be an eyesore. He shared that he has since toured the site and was able to see that it would not be an eyesore with the trees and berms in place. He noted that with the State mandate, something like this has to happen, and the proposed site is an ideal spot.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

7.02: Adopt Resolution #25-070 Accepting Bids and Awarding Contract for Sorteberg's Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #25-06

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek reviewed the Staff report concerning Sorteberg's street reconstruction project. He shared that the low bid came from Park Construction Company in the amount of \$423,698.35, which is 29% lower than the engineer's estimate.

Councilmember Peters asked if they had ever used Park Construction Company in the past.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek said yes and added that most recently, they did the MSA overlay and they are also subcontractors for the Highway 10 Gateway project.

Councilmember Specht asked what they will be doing with the savings from this project.

City Administrator Hagen said they will have to see where the rest of the bids come in for this year's street projects. He noted that if they are able to save money this year with bids coming in lower than estimated, then this money would stay in the street fund to be used for future projects.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to adopt Resolution #25-070 awarding a contract to Park Construction Company in the amount of \$423,698.35 for Sorteberg's Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #25-06.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

7.03: Adopt Ordinance #25-05: Code Amendments to Chapters 2, 10, 26, 105, 106, and 109

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the code amendments to Chapters 2, 10, 26, 105, 106, and 109 of City Code.

Motion by Councilmember Stewart, seconded by Councilmember Buscher, to adopt Ordinance #25-05 Amending Chapters 2, 10, 26, 105, 106, and 109 of City Code.

Further Discussion:

Councilmember Specht thanked Staff for their hard work on these amendments.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

7.04: Adopt Ordinance #25-06 Amending Chapter 26: Rental Residential Dwelling Units and adopt Resolution #25-073 Adopting a Rental Inspections Procedures Policy

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report concerning the amendments to Chapter 26 of City Code relating to rental residential dwelling units.

Councilmember Stewart shared that she does not think this amendment is polished to the best of its ability, and she will not be supporting this.

Councilmember Buscher said she will also not be supporting this as she feels as though Staff has the best knowledge on these matters, and what they had originally was the best practice.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to adopt Ordinance #25-06 Amending Chapter 26: Rental Residential Dwelling Units.

Further Discussion:

Mayor Heineman shared his appreciation for Staff's work on this. He said they did a great job at working together to give more rights to the property owners and increase privacy rights to the renters.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	nay
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	nay
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to adopt Resolution #25-073 adopting a Rental Inspections Procedures Policy.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	nay
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	nay
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

8. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

8.01: Legislative Update

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the legislative update. He shared that he went to the Capitol last week to testify for the water treatment funding bonding bill, which was in front of the House. He announced upcoming meetings and events.

Councilmember Riley reminded residents to file their taxes before April 15.

Councilmember Buscher shared that St. Katharine Drexel is holding their Easter Egg Hunt this Saturday at 1:00 p.m.

Councilmember Specht added that there is an Egg Paw-looza for pets being put on by the City on Saturday, April 19.

Mayor Heineman shared that there are currently positions open at the City and encouraged those interested to apply.

Councilmember Peters mentioned the 5K at Elmcrest Park on May 17.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Stewart, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Buscher	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Stewart	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Mayor Heineman	aye

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Hagen
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
City Clerk

Drafted by Ava Major
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

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