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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen
Finance Director Diana Lund
Planning Manager Todd Larson
City Planner Adam Martin
City Attorney Fritz Knaak

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 Olson, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Peters, Olson, Buscher, Riley, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.01: Proclamation Declaring October 2025 as *Domestic Violence Awareness Month*

Mayor Heineman read the proclamation declaring October 2025 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Katie Kelly, Community Outreach Coordinator for the Alexandra House, came forward and shared that they are thankful for the City's leadership and commitment to ending violence in the

community. She noted that nearly one in two women and two in five men report that they have been victims of violence or stalking at some point in their lifetime. She added that in 2024, there were at least 24 domestic-related homicides in Minnesota, and there have already been 17 domestic-related homicides this year. She invited all residents to join in on taking community action against domestic violence. She encouraged everyone to wear purple on Purple Thursday in support of ending domestic violence on Thursday, October 23. She shared that they will be hosting a Hope Fest event on Saturday, September 27, in downtown Anoka to raise awareness and show support for victims and survivors of domestic violence. She said more information can be found on their website, www.AlexandraHouse.org.

4. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 5.01: Approve the Following Meeting Minutes:
 - 1) City Council Regular Session dated September 9, 2025
- 5.02: Adopt Resolution #25-232 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of September 4, 2025, through September 17, 2025.
- 5.03: Adopt Resolution #25-165 Approving Final Payment to Douglas-Kerr Underground LLC for Improvement Project #23-19, The COR Infrastructure Improvements.
- 5.04: Adopt Resolution #25-173 Declaring the Property west of Xkimo Street and South of 15010 Xkimo Street as Surplus and Authorizing Execution of a Quit Claim Deed to Dispose of Property.
- 5.05: Adopt Resolution #25-213 Approving Partial Payment to Dave Perkins Contracting, Inc. for Improvement Project #25-04, Dickensons Mississippi Estate Street Reconstructions.
- 5.06: Adopt Resolution #25-214 Approving Partial Payment to Park Construction Company for Improvement Project #25-03, MSA Alpine Drive Reconstruction.
- 5.07: Adopt Resolution #25-216 Approving Partial Payment to North Valley, Inc. for Improvement Project #25-07, 2025 Neighborhood Pavement Overlay Improvements.
- 5.08: Adopt Resolution #25-217 Approving Partial Payment #27 to Magney Construction, Inc. for Improvement Project #21-09; Centralized Water Treatment Plant.
- 5.09: Adopt Resolution #25-219 Approving Final Plat of "Zero Zone Addition."
- 5.10: Adopt Resolution #25-224 Approving Final Plat and Development Agreement for "Brookside Terrace" (Brookside Construction Inc.)
- 5.11: Adopt Resolution #25-225 Approving Partial Payment to North Valley, Inc. for Improvement Project #25-05, High Point Street Reconstructions.
- 5.12: Adopt Resolution #25-227 Approving Change Order #1 for 2025 Neighborhood Pavement Overlay Improvements, Improvement Project #25-07
- 5.13: Adopt Resolution #25-229 Approving Partial Payment to Douglas-Kerr Underground, LLC for Improvement Project #24-13, Fox Ridge Estates 1st & 2nd Street Reconstructions.

- 5:14: Adopt Resolution #25-230 Approving Construction Contingency Expense No. 10 for Improvement Project #21-09, Centralized Water Treatment Plant.
- 5:15: Adopt Resolution #25-231 Accepting Quotes and Awarding Contract for Waterfront Water-Play Park Utility Improvements, Improvement Project #25-61.
- 5:16: Adopt Resolution #25-233 to Appoint a New Member to the Economic Development Authority.
- 5:17: Adopt Resolution #25-235 Approving an Encroachment Agreement for Taco Bell at 14751 Armstrong Boulevard NW.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Riley, Peters, Buscher, Olson, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

6.01: PUBLIC HEARING: Adopt Resolution #25-218 Vacating Easements and Right-of-Way in Business Park 95 Second and Eighth Additions.

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the vacation of easements and right-of-way in Business Park 95, Second and Eighth Additions.

Public Hearing

Mayor Heineman called the public hearing to order at 7:09 p.m.

Citizen Input

None.

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Riley, Olson, Buscher, Peters, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

Mayor Heineman closed the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

Council Business

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Stewart, to adopt Resolution #25-218 Vacating Easements and Right-of-Way in Business Park 95 Second and Eighth Addition.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Peters, Stewart, Buscher, Olson, Riley, and Specht. Voting No: None.

6.02: PUBLIC HEARING: Consider a Request for a Private Kennel License at 14365 Bowers Drive NW.

Presentation

City Planner Martin reviewed the Staff report concerning the request for a private kennel license at 14365 Bowers Drive NW.

Public Hearing

Mayor Heineman called the public hearing to order at 7:13 p.m.

Citizen Input

None.

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Riley, Olson, Buscher, Peters, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

Mayor Heineman closed the public hearing at 7:14 p.m.

Council Business

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Buscher, to adopt Resolution #25-228, Approving a Private Kennel License to Michael and Kathryn Manning at 14365 Bowers Drive NW.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Stewart thanked the Mannings for going through the proper channels to adopt this fourth dog.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Specht, Buscher, Olson, Peters, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

6.03: PUBLIC HEARING: Adopt Resolution #25-220 Adopting Assessments for Past-Due Charges on Municipal Utility Bills and Current Services Rendered.

Presentation

Finance Director Lund reviewed the Staff report in regard to the assessments for past-due charges on municipal utility bills and current services rendered. She shared that there are currently 1,026 delinquent accounts in the amount of \$509,585.72.

Public Hearing

Mayor Heineman called the public hearing to order at 7:18 p.m.

Citizen Input

None.

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Riley, Olson, Buscher, Peters, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

Mayor Heineman closed the public hearing at 7:19 p.m.

Council Business

Councilmember Riley noted that there are several properties on the delinquent list on newer streets or in newer neighborhoods. He asked if there is a lack of understanding of these bills among newer residents.

Finance Director Lund shared that these property owners would all have received this bill. She added that new residents also receive an informational packet when moving in that explains the utility bills.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to adopt Resolution #25-220 Adopting Assessments for Past-Due Charges on Municipal Utility Bills (Which May Include Water, Sewer, Street Lighting, Recycling, Storm Water Charges, and Penalties Incurred) and Current Services Rendered.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Riley, Peters, Buscher, Olson, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.01: Adopt Resolution 25-221 Adopting Proposed 2026 Payable Tax Levies (General, Pavement Management, EDA, and Debt Service) & Schedule Public Hearing for December 9, 2025; Adopt Resolution #25-222 Adopting Proposed 2026 General Fund Budget and Resolution #25-223 Adopting Proposed 2026 EDA Budget.

Finance Director Lund reviewed the Staff report concerning the adoption of the proposed 2026 payable tax levies, 2026 general fund budget, 2026 EDA budget, and scheduling the public hearing for December 9, 2025. She shared that the proposed tax levy for 2026 totals \$23,376,916, which is a 6.5% increase.

Councilmember Specht thanked Staff for all of their hard work putting the budget together every year. He asked how much of the budget was being covered by a transfer from an internal source.

Finance Director Lund said there will be \$1,788,750 transferred from other internal funds, \$917,000 of which will be coming from the COR fund.

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adopt Resolution #25-221 Approving the Proposed 2025, Payable 2026 Tax Levy in the amount of \$23,376,916 and to schedule the City of Ramsey's budget/levy public meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Specht shared that he will not be supporting the budget as he does not agree with all of the additional personnel hires and spending on equipment that are in the proposed budget. He said he thinks they are doing the residents a disservice by growing the government by this much during a time when a lot of people are hurting financially.

Councilmember Riley noted that the City is growing, and the development that they have been working on in the COR area has been successful. He stated that moving around internal funds has made the overall increase only 6.5%; however, there are more cuts that they could have made to decrease this even more. He said he believes they are spending too much. He noted that without the transfers from internal funds, they are actually looking at an over 11% increase.

Mayor Heineman shared that during Work Session meetings, the Council reached consensus that they were comfortable with moving forward with the budget if Staff could get it below a 7.5% increase. He noted that they were able to use funds that are newly afforded to them to bring this down to 6.5%. He said the new funding source was revealed to the Council later due to the Legislative Session running late. He shared that since Staff was able to meet the request of Council to be under 7.5%, he is supportive.

Councilmember Buscher stated Staff put a lot of time into preparing this budget. She noted that they need to get ahead of the growth in the City to continue to take care of residents. She said she will be supporting this.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Peters, Olson, and Buscher.
Voting No: Councilmembers Riley, Specht, and Stewart.

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adopt Resolution #25-222 Adopting Proposed 2026 General Fund Budget.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Peters, Olson, and Buscher.
Voting No: Councilmembers Riley, Specht, and Stewart.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to adopt Resolution #25-223 Adopting Proposed 2026 EDA Budget.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Specht shared his appreciation for the work that the EDA does and for keeping its budget flat this year.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Specht, Peters, Buscher, Olson, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

7.02: Appeal of the Planning Commission's denial of a variance for lot width for the proposed plat of "O'Shaughnessy 3rd Addition" at 17201 St. Francis Blvd. NW.

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to an appeal of the Planning Commission's denial of a variance for lot width on the proposed plat of "O'Shaughnessy 3rd Addition" at 17201 St. Francis Boulevard NW.

Tim O'Shaughnessy, 17201 St. Francis Boulevard NW, came forward and thanked Staff and the Planning Commission for all of their work on this item. He shared that the southern lot of this plat needs over 60% non-easement property, while the proposal from the City would leave this lot at less than 50% buildable. He said they comply with the spirit of the ordinance. He noted that MnDOT has approved this request. He stated that he wants the southern lot to be as nice as possible.

Councilmember Riley asked if the applicant would still be able to meet his goals by moving the lot lines.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy said no, as it would turn the northern lot into a skinny lot.

Mayor Heineman explained that when the Planning Commission decides on a variance, the Council can overrule this if the findings were inaccurate. He noted that there are seven conditions for approving a variance. He asked if all seven conditions were addressed in these findings from the Planning Commission.

Planning Manager Larson explained that they only need to meet one of the conditions to approve a variance.

Mayor Heineman shared that he sees errors in the findings of the Planning Commission, as they are only addressing two of the conditions.

Planning Manager Larson explained that the application did not include any direct answers to the seven conditions to see if any of them worked. He noted that this burden is on the applicant to provide, and it was not provided. He said Staff looked at this and figured out a way to make it work, and the applicant did not like this solution.

Councilmember Buscher shared that other properties throughout the City have been given this variance, and it would not alter the character of the locality, as this would still be a large plot of land.

Mayor Heineman noted that if they are turning a 30-acre lot into four larger lots, this would still meet the character of the area. He said there are developments on the other side of Highway 47 with a lot smaller lot sizes.

Planning Manager Larson stated the developments across Highway 47 are in different zoning districts and were approved due to offsetting dedicated land given to the City for open space. He said there is no give and take in this situation.

Mayor Heineman asked if the applicant had an interest in rezoning the property to a PUD.

Planning Manager Larson shared that there was a concept plan proposed a few years ago to run a street through this area to several one-acre lots. He said this was not looked at favorably by Staff as there was no offset of dedicated land, which would have gone against the spirit of the Rural Residential zoning area.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy explained that there was no formal proposal at this time for the PUD. He said he is not opposed to dedicating open space.

Planning Manager Larson suggested that the Council direct Staff to put together some provisions for flag lots of large acreages in the Rural Residential area.

Councilmember Riley said he is not sure that, at this point, he would want to make a change to any ordinances.

Councilmember Stewart agreed.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to table this item and direct Staff to prepare a resolution overturning the Planning Commission's decision with specific practical difficulties, under Finding B that the proposed narrow lot would be out of character with other lots in the area, justifying the variance, and bring the resolution approving the variance back at the October 14 meeting.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Specht shared that he believes this request fits with the spirit of the nearby lots, and he is supportive of this variance.

Mayor Heineman noted that Staff and the Planning Commission did everything right in this situation, and the appeals process is something that is in place to allow the Council to look at the situation. He said this overturning is not indicative of Staff or the Planning Commission doing a poor job.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Riley, Peters, Buscher, Olson, Specht, and Stewart. Voting No: None.

7.03: Adopt Ordinance #25-08 - Zoning Code Updates.

Planning manager Larson reviewed the Staff report concerning the proposed zoning code updates.

Motion by Councilmember Specht, seconded by Councilmember Stewart, to adopt Ordinance #25-08 Amending Chapter 106 Pertaining to the Zoning Code.

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 Charter Recommended Ordinance #25-09 Amending Chapters 2, 3, and 7 of the City Charter.

City Administrator Hagen reviewed the Staff report in regard to the proposed amendments to the City Charter.

Motion by Councilmember Olson, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to adopt Ordinance #25-09 Amending Chapters 2, 3, and 7 of the City Charter.

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.

8. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

City Administrator Hagen announced upcoming meetings and events.

Councilmember Buscher shared that the Fire Department will be having an Open House on October 7 at Station #1 and on October 9 at Station #2.

Councilmember Specht shared that Iglesia CREES will be hosting their 15th Annual Festival of Nations this Saturday, September 27.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Heineman, Councilmembers Stewart, Buscher, Olson, Peters, Riley, and Specht. Voting No: None.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:23 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.