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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 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
Planning Manager Todd Larson
Economic Development Manager Sean Sullivan
City Engineer/Public Works Director Bruce Westby
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.

Mayor Heineman shared the passing of Ramsey engineering employee, Jake Hoel. He offered a moment of silence for him and his family.

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

None.

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: Receive Cash and Investments for Period Ending September 30, 2025
- 5.02: Receive August 2025 Finance Reports - General Fund, EDA, and Enterprise Funds
- 5.03: Note the following Boards, Commissions, and Meeting Minutes:
 - Planning Commission - August 28, 2025
 - Environmental Policy Board - May 19, 2025
 - Economic Development Authority - no meeting
 - Park and Rec Commission - August 14, 2025
 - Public Works - July 15, 2025
 - Public Works - August 19, 2025 - no meeting
- 5.04: Approve the Following Meeting Minutes:
 - 1) City Council Work Session dated September 23, 2025
 - 2) City Council Regular Session dated September 23, 2025
- 5.05: Approval of Quit Claim Deed for Kaylee and Justin Allen
- 5.06: Approve Business License Applications
- 5.07: Authorization to Promote a Patrol Officer to Patrol Sergeant
- 5.08: Adopt Resolution #25-246 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of September 18, 2025, through October 8, 2025.
- 5.09: Adopt Resolution #25-226 Approving a Variance to Lot Width for the proposed plat of " OShaughnessy 3rd Addition" at 17201 St. Francis Blvd. NW.
- 5.10: Adopt Resolution #25-236 Supporting Submittal of Building Official Training Municipal Grant
- 5.11: Adopt Resolution #25-238 Approving an Extension of a Variance to Height for a Detached Accessory Building at 17646 St. Francis Boulevard NW (Project #24-121); Case of Chuck and Angie Lattery
- 5.12: Adopt Resolution #25-243 Approving a Development Agreement for Zero Zone Refrigeration, LLC.
- 5.13: Adopt Resolution #25-244 Approving Monetary Donation to the Ramsey Fire Relief Association
- 5.14: Adopt Resolution #25-245 Approving Civil Legal Services Contract with Eckberg Lammers

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 #25-237 Vacating Easements in Riverstone South 5th Addition

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the easement vacation request in Riverstone South 5th Addition.

Public Hearing

Mayor Heineman called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m.

Citizen Input

None.

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

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

Mayor Heineman closed the public hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Council Business

Councilmember Riley noted that their standard is 20 feet, and this request is only for 18 feet, and asked if this gives enough space to maintain the easement.

Planning Manager Larson said yes, as the lines are shallow, so digging deep is not necessary.

Councilmember Stewart asked if the eaves of these houses would be closer together than the eaves of the other homes in the development.

Planning Manager Larson said they would actually be further apart.

Motion by Councilmember Stewart, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to adopt Resolution #25-237 Approving Vacating Easements in Riverstone South Fifth Addition.

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

6.02: PUBLIC HEARING: Adopt Resolution #25-240 Approving the Modification to the Development Program for Development District No. 1 and Establishing Tax Increment Financing District No.19 (Zero Zone); within Development District No.1

and Approving the Tax Increment Financing Plan Therefor; Approving a Development Agreement and Business Subsidy; and Authorizing an Interfund Loan

Presentation

Economic Development Manager Sullivan reviewed the Staff report concerning the approval of the modification to the development program for Development District 1, establishing TIF District 19 for Zero Zone Refrigeration, LLC, and approving the TIF plan, therefore, approving a development agreement and business subsidy, and authorizing an interfund loan.

Public Hearing

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

Citizen Input

Mike Constant, a Zero Zone employee, came forward and shared that their business has been consistently growing over the last 13 years. He said they are a made-to-order business, and they are already sold out into next year. He explained that this expansion will help them keep up with demand and bring down lead times. He added that this will also bring jobs into the community.

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

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

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

Council Business

Councilmember Riley shared that the EDA recommended the Council pass this item. He said this is a great example of the City helping a local business expand.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to adopt Resolution #25-240 Approving the Modification to the Development Program for Development District No. 1 and Establishing Tax Increment Financing District No.19 (Zero Zone); within Development District No.1 and Approving the Tax Increment Financing Plan Therefor; Approving a Development Agreement and Business Subsidy; and Authorizing an Interfund Loan; subject to City Bond Attorney Review (as presented).

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

6.03: PUBLIC HEARING: Adopt Resolution #25-241 Approving Minnesota Investment Fund (MIF) Grant Contract Agreement (Zero Zone Refrigeration, LLC)

Presentation

Economic Development Manager Sullivan reviewed the Staff report in regard to the request to approve a MIF grant contract agreement for Zero Zone Refrigeration, LLC.

Public Hearing

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

Citizen Input

None.

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

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

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

Council Business

Councilmember Buscher shared that she is appreciative that this will bring more jobs into the City with a good starting wage.

Motion by Councilmember Buscher, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adopt Resolution #25-241 Approving Minnesota Investment Fund (MIF) Grant Contract Agreement (Zero Zone Refrigeration, LLC) (as presented); subject to City Attorney review.

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

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.01: Consider an Appeal of a Variance by iDigital

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report concerning the consideration for an appeal of a variance by iDigital.

Josh Gilleland, iDigital, came forward and shared that he filed this appeal due to how this process unfolded. He explained that iDigital currently operates two of the digital billboards in Ramsey, and they pursued a third location in 2022, which is when they were told that the area that they were considering was within two miles of another digital billboard, and the location did not qualify. He noted that Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising applied to the same location, which was approved with a variance. He said when they pursued this location, they were not told that the variance would be a viable solution to the distance issue. He shared that he believes that the Planning Commission lacked critical context when they approved this variance. He noted that variances are for unique

circumstances and not to make up for planning mistakes. He added that land owners east of this site were not notified of this rule change, which would allow billboards in this area. He asked the Council to deny the variance request and allow all interested applicants to apply for a variance.

Megan Rogers, attorney with Larkin Hoffman, representing Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising, came forward and shared that Kenjoh requested a variance to the Sign Code as it allows up to three signs throughout the City; however, there was no space for a third sign, given the requirements. She explained that they went through the variance and survey process while undertaking this expense before presenting it to the Planning Commission. She noted that the Planning Commission considered all facts presented to them and how this could affect future development before making a decision. She added that notices were sent to the property owners in the surrounding area of the sign, as required under Minnesota law.

City Attorney Knaak explained that the Council is being tasked with reviewing the Planning Commission's decision and determining if they believe there was an error in facts or interpretation of the City Code.

Councilmember Stewart asked if iDigital submitted a formal application with the application fee when they were interested in this site in 2022.

Planning Manager Larson said iDigital sent an application form, which was unsigned by the land owner, with no application fee. He added that the plans in the application were not sufficient.

Councilmember Specht shared that he does not believe that the Planning Commission approved this variance correctly based on the variance criteria. He said he does not believe that this variance request should be granted.

Councilmember Riley agreed with Councilmember Specht and added that he does not believe that there were practical difficulties that were met to approve this variance. He noted that this will also affect the character of the locality.

Councilmember Buscher asked if the Council needs to find that the Planning Commission erred in all four criteria for a variance.

City Attorney Knaak stated that finding an error in any of the four criteria would suffice.

Councilmember Buscher shared that she believes the Planning Commission made the correct decision, as she believes this request met all of the criteria for a variance.

Mayor Heineman asked if they were to deny this variance, if it would affect the ability for a billboard to go on this site, regardless.

City Attorney Knaak noted that they should not be considering any future implications with this request, only considering the Planning Commission's decision.

Councilmember Stewart agreed with Councilmember Buscher and shared that she also believes that the Planning Commission did its due diligence and made the correct decision.

Councilmember Buscher noted that the Council is not considering whether or not they personally agree with the decision made by the Planning Commission; they are considering whether or not the Planning Commission made the right decision based on variance requirements.

Mayor Heineman asked about the letter received during the Planning Commission meeting, with concerns that this sign would block an existing sign from view.

Planning Manager Larson noted that the sign that the property owner was concerned about will be completely visible with this new sign.

Ms. Rogers shared that these two signs will be set back and staggered so there will be no effect on the view of the other.

Paul Hilt, iDigital, shared that when they started this process in 2022, they were told that no billboards would be allowed. He explained that they worked with the City while they created their Sign Code. He said that iDigital did their due diligence and were told that this site would not be a possibility for a sign.

Motion by Councilmember Stewart, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adopt Resolution #25-239 sustaining the Planning Commission decision on approving a variance to distance separation requirements for an off-premise digital billboard sign at 6111 Highway 10 NW.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Stewart shared that she may not agree with wanting this billboard on this site; however, she does believe that the Planning Commission made the right decision.

Councilmember Buscher agreed.

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

7.02: Adopt Resolution #25-204 #25-203 Approving a Conditional Use Permit for an Off-Premises Digital Billboard Sign at 6111 Highway 10 NW (Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising)

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the CUP request for an off-premises digital billboard at 6111 Highway 10 NW for Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising. He shared the Planning Commission's recommendation of approval.

Councilmember Specht asked if there is a repair policy in place for this billboard.

Planning Manager Larson shared that this would fall under the International Property Maintenance Code.

Councilmember Buscher noted that in the last case, Mr. Gilleland alluded to the fact that allowing Kenjoh to have this billboard would undermine City revenues. She asked what this was in regard to.

Planning Manager Larson shared that he imagines this does not have anything to do with the application itself.

Ms. Rogers shared that Kenjoh has many signs throughout the State, and they will be paying property taxes in Ramsey. She noted that repairs for the sign will be handled by their third-party vendor.

A representative from Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising shared that they use a third-party vendor for sign maintenance, and they are notified anytime there is an issue with a sign that needs to be fixed. He added that the sign will be under warrant for 10 years. He said if there are to be issues with the sign, then it should be fixed within 24 hours.

Scott Levine, Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising, shared that the monetary benefit that iDigital was alluding to is that they are leasing property from the City for one of their signs.

Councilmember Specht asked if Kenjoh will be offering discounts to Ramsey businesses.

Planning Manager Larson noted that the reduced rate for Ramsey businesses is part of the lease agreement for one of the signs with iDigital.

Councilmember Stewart asked if the City is allowed to advertise on this sign.

Planning Manager Larson shared that the City will be allowed a certain number of segments a month on this sign at no cost to the City.

Councilmember Stewart asked how the sign will be maintained after the 10-year warranty has expired.

A representative from Kenjoh Outdoor Advertising shared that after the 10-year mark, they will still have the third-party vendor fix the sign; it will just come at a cost to them.

Councilmember Specht shared his appreciation for iDigital and all they have done for the City. He noted that he does not see a billboard in this area adding any value to the City, especially after the recently completed Ramsey Gateway project. He said he will not be supportive of this.

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adopt Resolution #25-203 approving a conditional use permit for an off-premises digital billboard sign at 6111 Highway 10 NW.

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

7.03: Adopt Resolution #25-234, Approving a Site Plan Review for a Mixed-Use Building at 7979 Sunwood Drive NW (Roers)

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the Staff report concerning a site plan review for a mixed-use building at 7979 Sunwood Drive NW. He shared the Planning Commission's recommendation for approval.

Nick Asta, Roers Companies, came forward and shared that they have worked hard to get this site plan review to where it is now, based on the previous direction received.

Mayor Heineman asked how much these units will cost.

Mr. Asta said they will be around \$2.18 a square foot for the whole building.

Councilmember Olson asked if Roers Companies will always manage this building themselves or if it is only for a set amount of time.

Mr. Asta said they will always manage the property.

Councilmember Specht asked if the hotel in the area had been approached about this project.

Planning Manager Larson said yes and noted that there are no concerns.

Motion by Councilmember Olson, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to adopt Resolution #25-234, Approving a Site Plan for a Mixed-Use Building at 7979 Sunwood Drive NW.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Specht said he would like to keep this land open for businesses that the residents want in the City, like restaurants or retail stores.

Councilmember Stewart shared that she will be supporting this since it is a mixed-use building, and the project will also incorporate retail space.

Councilmember Buscher noted that she has also heard concerns from residents about the number of apartment buildings in the City; however, there is also a need for housing options throughout the City. She said she is pleased that this will be a mixed-use building with some retail presence. She added that it had been brought to her attention that there are concerns with some of the subcontractors that have been used by Roers. She said she will not be objecting to this project; however, she wants to emphasize that they do not want to see a bad build in their City and wants to make sure that everyone who works on the property is following fair labor practices and regulations.

Mayor Heineman shared that he is not a fan of filling the COR area with apartments; however, the Met Council continues to increase density requirements, which need to be met. He added that he appreciates the mixed-use aspect as well.

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

7.04: Adopt Resolution #25-242 Approving Construction Contingency Expense No. 11 for Improvement Project #21-09, Centralized Water Treatment Plant

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby reviewed the Staff report in regard to approving a contingency expense request for the water treatment plant.

Councilmember Buscher asked if the specific equipment needed is something that is typically found in a water treatment facility and should have been known of the need for it well before now.

Aaron Vollmer, AE2S, came forward and shared that, given the height of the facility, there is a need for remote actuator heads in a catwalk area. He noted that this is a safety issue. He explained that the contractor's valve supplier did not review the electrical drawings when they bid on the project and did not include these remote heads in their scope. He said the contractors noted the discrepancy, which is causing this delay.

Councilmember Buscher shared that she hoped that another expense request for the water treatment plant would not come forward to the Council. She asked why these requests are continuing to come forward.

Mr. Vollmer noted that they are just trying to be transparent in bringing forward the contractor's requests.

Councilmember Riley asked why this cost is being added to the price of the accepted bid since the contractor's valve supplier missed something.

Mr. Vollmer shared that they shared the same frustrations. He explained the way that projects like this are bid by being separated into suppliers. He said the value suppliers were never provided the electrical plans.

Mayor Heineman asked whose responsibility it was to make sure the suppliers had all of the plans to make the appropriate bids.

Mr. Vollmer said it is the responsibility of Magney Construction, the contractor for the project.

Councilmember Peters asked about the fine for not meeting the substantial completion date of the project.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby said it is \$1,000 a day billed to the contractor.

Mayor Heineman asked how far this project has gone beyond its originally approved amount.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby shared that there will be an available construction contingency amount of \$265,194.80 if this is approved.

Councilmember Olson asked how the contingency fund account works.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby explained that any amount not spent of this contingency amount will come back to the City and not be paid to the contractor.

Mayor Heineman asked what would happen if they went over the contingency amount.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby said they do not believe that they will get to a point where they use all of the contingency funds.

Councilmember Stewart asked if the time extension request from the contractor would also come with an extension request from the engineer.

Mr. Vollmer shared that they do not plan to request any compensation for this time extension request at this time.

Councilmember Specht said that at this point, he wants to just get this project finished. He stated that he has been excited for this project for a long time and is looking forward to it being finished, even though he is disappointed in this oversight by the contractor.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Peters, to adopt Resolution #25-242 approving Construction Contingency Expense No. 11 for Improvement Project #21-09, Centralized Water Treatment Plant.

Further discussion:

Councilmember Buscher shared her appreciation for Mr. Vollmer and all of the great work being done on this project. She said she is looking forward to getting this project finished.

Mayor Heineman shared that he is not supportive of this 11th extension request.

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

8. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

City Administrator Hagen announced upcoming meetings and events. He congratulated QCTV on winning Business of the Year in the Services category for the Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce.

Councilmember Buscher congratulated Aaron Pipenhagen on his promotion to Patrol Sergeant. She encouraged residents to sign up for the next Citizens' Academy.

Councilmember Specht also encouraged residents to attend the next Citizens' Academy, as it is very informative.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:49 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.