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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, 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 (attended remotely)
Councilmember Dan Specht

Members Absent: Councilmember Shanna Stewart

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen
Police Chief Brad Bluml
City Attorney Amanda Johnson

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 Riley, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call was performed:

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

Motion carried.

3. PRESENTATIONS

None.

4. CITIZEN INPUT

Mr. Gary Van Scoy, 5851 147 Lane NW, Ramsey, stated that he is a current member of the Planning Commission. He expressed appreciation for the efforts of Public Works and city staff during a challenging year and acknowledged their ongoing service to the community. The Commissioner noted more than 25 years of service on the Planning Commission and described that tenure as rewarding. The Commissioner expressed concern and disagreement with recent changes to the variance appeal process, stating that the city's removal of the appeals process from city oversight may increase time and costs for applicants. Citing the Mayor's stated loss of confidence in the Planning Commission, the Commissioner formally submitted an immediate resignation from the position.

Mayor Heineman acknowledged differences of opinion but expressed confidence in the Planning Commission members and appreciation for the Commissioner's service. The mayor noted that while institutional improvements were needed and there was disagreement over a recent decision, the Commissioner's contributions were thoughtful and valuable, and the city benefited from their service. The mayor thanked Commissioner Van Scoy for his work and wished him well.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 5.01: Receive November 2025 Financial Reports – General Fund, EDA, and Enterprise Funds
- 5.02: Receive Cash and Investments for Period Ending November 30, 2025
- 5.03: Receive Cash and Investments for Period Ending December 31, 2025
- 5.04: Note the following Boards, Commissions and Meeting Minutes:
 - 1) Environmental Policy Board dated November 17, 2025
 - 2) Economic Development Authority dated October 9, 2025
 - 3) Public Works dated November 18, 2025
- 5.05: Approve the Following Meeting Minutes:
 - 1) City Council Work Session dated December 9, 2025
 - 2) City Council Regular Session dated December 9, 2025
- 5.06: Approve Amending City Council Meeting Schedule for 2026
- 5.07: Approve Business License Applications
- 5.08: Approve Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Operations Policy
- 5.09: Authorization to Hire a Deputy Fire Chief of Training
- 5.10: Authorization to Hire a Building Inspector/Plans Examiner
- 5.11: Authorization to Hire an Engineering Technician II
- 5.12: Adopt Resolution #26-012 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of December 4, 2025, through December 30, 2025

- 5:13: Adopt Resolution #26-019 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payments of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of December 31, 2025, and January 7, 2026
- 5:14: Adopt Resolution #26-001 Approving Partial Payment to Park Construction Company for Improvement Project #25-03, MSA Alpine Drive Reconstruction
- 5:15: Adopt Resolution #26-002 Approving Final Payment to North Valley, Inc. for Improvement Project #25-02, MSA Sunwood Drive Reconstruction
- 5:16: Adopt Resolution #26-003 Approving Final Payment to North Valley, Inc. for Improvement Project #25-05, High Point Street Reconstruction
- 5:17: Adopt Resolution #26-004 Approving the 2026 Council Organization
- 5:18: Adopt Resolution #26-005 Approving Final Payment to North Valley, Inc. for Improvement Project #25-07, 2025 Neighborhood Pavement Overlay Improvements.
- 5:19: Adopt Resolution #26-006 Approving Partial Payment #30 to Magney Construction, Inc. for Improvement Project #21-09; Centralized Water Treatment Plant
- 5:20: Adopt Resolution #26-008 Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for MSA Bunker Lake Boulevard Reconstruction, Improvement Project #26-01
- 5:21: Adopt Resolution #26-009 Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for Countryside Estates Street Reconstruction, Improvement Project #26-04
- 5:22: Adopt Resolution #26-010 Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for Section 01 Unplatted Street Reconstruction, Improvement Project #26-07
- 5:23: Adopt Resolution #26-011 Ordering Request for Proposals for Engineering Design Services for 2026 Neighborhood Pavement Overlay Improvements, Improvement Project #26-08
- 5:24: Adopt Resolution #26-013 Designating Financial Institutions as Official Depositories; Adopt Resolution #26-014 Authorizing Signatures for Financial Transactions and Adopt Resolution #26-015 Designating BMO Bank, N.A. as the Official Financial Institution for the City of Ramsey Banking Services for the Year of 2026
- 5:25: Adopt Resolution #26-016 Approving the City of Ramsey's 2027 Budget Calendar
- 5:26: Adopt Resolution #26-017 Authorizing the Application for Community Development Block Grant Funding for the Waterfront
- 5:27: Adopt Resolution #26-018 Approving MN Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant Agreement and Contract Services
- 5:28: Adopt Resolution #26-023 Adopting Public Meeting Remote Attendance Policy

A roll call was performed:

Mayor Heineman	aye
Councilmember Peters	aye
Councilmember Buscher	aye

Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Stewart	absent

Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

6.01: PUBLIC HEARING: Violation of Tobacco License

Presentation

Police Chief Brad Bluml reviewed the Staff report regarding G-Will Liquor's violation of the tobacco license. He explained that the violation resulted from a required annual police department tobacco compliance check conducted on November 25, 2025. G-Will Liquors, located at 5427 Alpine Drive, failed a check after selling tobacco to an individual under 21. The clerk involved was cited at the time of the incident. This hearing is required by statute to address the violation and, if confirmed, to impose the mandatory administrative penalty of \$300 for a first offense. The compliance check process was described as a standard, non-deceptive procedure using properly instructed buyers with valid identification.

Public Hearing

Mayor Heineman called the public hearing to order at 7:08 p.m.

Citizen Input

None.

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

A roll call was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Mayor Heineman closed the public hearing at 7:09 p.m.

Council Business

Mayor Heineman noted that tobacco noncompliance cases have been rare during his time on the Council, and as Mayor, he asked whether this was the city's first compliance violation to reach this stage, or whether an appeal process had led the matter to the Council.

Police Chief Bluml stated that there are 17 licensed tobacco retailers in the city and noted that state law changed in 2020, raising the minimum age for tobacco sales from 18 to 21. He added that the city ordinance is currently being updated to align with the statute and will be brought forward at a future meeting.

Mayor Heineman asked whether there had been other violations of the ordinance in recent years and whether any had been brought before the Council.

Police Chief Bluml confirmed that this is the first violation presented to the Council during his tenure.

Mayor Heineman stated that the fine is being assessed against G-Will Liquors as a business entity. Still, the violation resulted from the actions of an individual employee and does not necessarily indicate unsafe practices by the company as a whole.

Police Chief Bluml confirmed that the violation could be attributable to a single employee and noted that the primary public safety concern is whether the business provides adequate training to its employees.

Councilmember Buscher asked about whether informational flyers or notices are distributed when statutes change to help ensure that businesses are aware of and comply with updated requirements.

Police Chief Bluml stated that staff's plan was to mail the updated ordinance to licensed businesses during the upcoming license renewal process to ensure awareness of the changes, including the revised 36-month timeframe for repeat offenses.

Councilmember Buscher asked whether the city offers any training courses or educational opportunities for business owners or employees to reduce penalties and improve future compliance.

Police Chief Bluml stated that the city does not currently offer such training courses but indicated that staff could explore developing them in the future.

Councilmember Specht asked whether the business disputed the violation, presented any additional information, or acknowledged the incident and indicated steps to prevent future occurrences.

Police Chief Bluml indicated the company had not contacted him, so he was not sure what steps would be taken to prevent future occurrences.

Councilmember Peters stated that checking identification is a straightforward requirement and noted that employees are typically trained on this responsibility. He further observed that the business did not appear to contest the violation or present mitigating information and concluded that the fine should be assessed.

Police Chief Bluml stated that the business was notified of the violation by a letter sent to the location where the offense occurred and by certified mail to the company's headquarters, in addition to the officer's direct contact with the employee at the time of the incident.

Motion by Councilmember Peters, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to affirm that a tobacco sale violation to a person under the age of 21 did occur at G-Will Liquors on November 25, 2025.

Further discussion: Mayor Heineman stated that the matter was straightforward and that the Council should proceed with the action. He acknowledged that, while the violation is assessed against the business, it may result from an individual employee's mistake rather than a failure of the company as a whole. He expressed understanding of the statutory process and encouraged all businesses to retrain employees on identification requirements, noting that checking identification is a well-known obligation. The mayor concluded by expressing hope that the incident would serve as a reminder of the need to comply. Councilmember Riley reiterated that the police department's compliance checks are conducted transparently and are not intended to deceive businesses. He noted that in this instance, the purchaser made their age clear and that the violation did not result from a misunderstanding of the law but from an error in judgment. He stated that the incident indicates a need for improved diligence by the employee and the business and concluded that the \$300 administrative penalty is an appropriate corrective measure.

A roll call was performed:

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

Motion carried.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

None.

8. MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND STAFF INPUT

City Administrator Hagen announced upcoming meetings and events. He noted city offices will be closed Monday, January 19, 2026, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Councilmember Buscher expressed appreciation to the Fire Department for the opportunity to observe vehicle driving and parking training and emphasized the importance of understanding the operational challenges faced by emergency responders when requesting roadway accommodations. She also thanked the Public Works Department for a snowplow ride-along experience, noting the demanding overnight schedules, extended work hours, and complexity of snow removal operations. Councilmember Buscher encouraged residents to show patience and communicate concerns respectfully with city staff, highlighted the importance of resident cooperation with snow removal efforts, and recognized the dedication and commitment of public works employees. She concluded by expressing gratitude to the Police Department for their continued service and commitment to public safety.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call was performed:

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Hagen
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
City Clerk

Drafted by Sue Osbeck
TimeSaver Off-Site Secretarial, Inc.