

**REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
FEBRUARY 1, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Fletcher at 7:00 p.m.

City Administrator Watson administered the oath of office to Councilmember Urban.

Everyone present stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following members were present: Mayor Bob Fletcher, Councilmembers: Terry Nyblom, Craig Johnson, Heidi Gunderson, and Greg Urban.

The following members were absent: None.

Also present were: Kevin Watson, City Administrator; Kathy Keefe, Assistant City Administrator; Mark Graham, City Engineer; Bob Sundberg, Finance Director; Ed Leier, Fire Chief; Nolan Wall, Planning/Community Development Director; Caroline Bell Beckman, City Attorney; Jeff Melcoch, Cable Producer; and Beckie Gumatz, Deputy Clerk.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion by Nyblom, seconded by Gunderson, it was

17-02-030 “RESOLVED, that the agenda for the February 1, 2017, Council Meeting be approved.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 17, 2017 City Council Vacancy Interview Meeting

Upon motion by Nyblom, seconded by Johnson, it was

17-02-031 “RESOLVED, to approve the January 17, 2017 City Council Vacancy Interview Meeting Minutes as presented.”

Ayes – 4 Nays – 0 Abstain – 1 (Urban)

The resolution was adopted.

B. January 18, 2017 Workshop Meeting

Upon motion by Nyblom, seconded by Johnson, it was

17-02-032 “RESOLVED, to approve the January 18, 2017 Workshop Meeting Minutes as presented.”

Ayes – 4 Nays – 0 Abstain – 1 (Urban)

The resolution was adopted.

C. January 18, 2017 Regular Meeting

Upon motion by Nyblom, seconded by Johnson, it was

17-02-033 “RESOLVED, to approve the January 18, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.”

Ayes – 4 Nays – 0 Abstain – 1 (Urban)

The resolution was adopted.

City Administrator Watson provided several announcements.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Gunderson, seconded by Urban, it was

17-02-034 “RESOLVED, that the Consent Agenda items for the February 1, 2017, meeting be approved as follows:

- A. Approve Claims #73986 through #74052, and Electronic Claims #1050 through #1055 for payment.
A-1. Debt Service Payment to US Bank Corporate Trust Services
- B. Accept and Acknowledge Vadnais Heights Fire Relief Association Donation
- C. Approve One-Day Lawful Gambling Permit for Magnuson Christian School for an Event at the Vadnais Heights Commons, 655 East County Road F on April 1, 2017
- D. Approve One-Day Lawful Gambling Permit for Duck’s Unlimited Chapter 209 for an Event at Jimmy’s Conference Center, 3565 Labore Road on March 30, 2017
- E. Ratify the Appointment of Fire Department Officers Effective January 1, 2017

- F. Approve 2017 Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Contract for Services
- G. Accept Resignation of Greg Urban from the Planning Commission

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Boy Scouts Evan, James, and Justin introduced themselves. They were at tonight’s meeting working on their Citizenship in the Community merit badges.

Jeff Huth, Director of the Blizzard Foundation, introduced himself and the organization that he is a part of. The Blizzard Foundation is a non-profit located in Vadnais Heights. They are having an event on Saturday, February 4, 2017 at the Vadnais Sports Center from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The Blizzard Foundation is devoted to empowering baseball players regardless of ability level or age to be great citizens in their community.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. Lions Food Shelf

Paul Schirer of the Vadnais Heights Lions Club spoke about the history of the Lions Food Shelf. Currently, distribution is the third Saturday of every month beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Vadnais Heights Commons. Mr. Schrier noted that in 2016, they distributed 46,159 pounds of food to 1,444 individuals.

The City Council thanked Mr. Schirer and the Vadnais Heights Lions Club for all they do in the community.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Ordinance to Allow Keeping of Chickens on Residential Properties

Planning/Community Development Director Wall summarized the changes that have been made to the proposed ordinance since the previous City Council meeting. The minimum lot size has been reduced from 1 acre to 0.5 acres. A provision has also been added that requires properties of less than 0.5 acres to obtain written consent from at least 80% of abutting property owners.

Councilmember Johnson asked if any there are any recommended changes to the percentage of surrounding neighbor approval. Planning/Community Development Director Wall explained that 80% approval was recommended by the City Council at the most recent City Council meeting but that there is the opportunity for the City Council to amend that percentage tonight.

Mayor Fletcher re-opened the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

No one wished to speak.

Mayor Fletcher closed the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

Councilmember Johnson asked Planning/Community Development Director Wall what his best recommendation for a neighbor approval percentage should be. Planning/Community Development Director Wall explained that staff looked at various scenarios and looked at what would happen if one neighbor was against someone having chickens. Staff looked at various lots that have three, four, or five abutting properties. Under the current proposal, only the lot with five abutting neighbors would still be allowed to have chickens if one neighbor was against it. He also noted that staff would be comfortable with requiring 75% of neighbor approval.

Councilmember Johnson explained that he is in favor of this ordinance and would like to amend it to require properties that are less than 0.5 acres obtain at least 75% of abutting neighbor approval.

Mayor Fletcher stated that would like to see the ordinance be more restrictive at first, and that it could always be expanded at a later date.

Councilmembers Nyblom and Gunderson indicated that they would be supportive of the 75% of neighbor approval.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Nyblom, it was

17-02-035 “RESOLVED, to amend Ordinance 702 to require that property owners on properties of less than 0.5 acre in size must obtain written consent from 75% of the abutting property owners.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Gunderson, it was

17-02-036 “RESOLVED, to adopt Ordinance 702 amending Chapters 5 (Definitions) and 20 (General Building and Performance Standards) of the City Zoning Code, pertaining to keeping of chickens on residential properties.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

Councilmember Urban stated that he believes this is a good ordinance and he hopes that the strict regulations will be able to help mitigate the concerns of those not in favor of allowing chickens.

Planning/Community Development Director Wall summarized the required conditions for having chickens on residential properties.

Upon motion by Johnson, seconded by Nyblom, it was

17-02-037 “RESOLVED, to approve the attached resolution for Summary Publication of Ordinance 702.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) Memorandum of Understanding

City Engineer Graham explained that Vadnais Heights is served by two watersheds; the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) and the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD). The memorandum of understanding formalizes the agreements that the city has with the RWMWD.

Councilmember Urban stated that he is concerned that watershed district rules can limit development. He asked City Engineer Graham if by signing the document, does it give them any more authority to control potential development in the city than they have now? City Engineer Graham answered in the negative.

Upon motion by Urban, seconded by Johnson, it was

17-02-038 “RESOLVED, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District and the city and authorize the City Administrator to execute it to fulfill obligations for the city’s storm water program.”

Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

B. Consider Setting February 15, 2017 Workshop and Agenda

City Administrator Watson presented potential items for the February 15, 2017, Council Workshop including: discussion with Ramsey County regarding their Vadnais Sports Center Parking Plan, and discussion with Mike Brass regarding the property north of Perkins and how the city can potentially help in any future development.

Mayor Fletcher would also like to have discussion regarding the potential White Bear Lake augmentation.

Upon motion by Nyblom, seconded by Johnson, it was

17-02-039 “RESOLVED, to Set a February 15, 2017 Workshop meeting and Agenda including discussion of a Vadnais Sports Center Parking Plan, discussion regarding the property in the northeast quadrant of City Center and its future development, and an update on the White Bear Lake augmentation discussion with a 5:30 p.m. start time.”

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

The resolution was adopted.

COUNCIL AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Fire Chief Leier had nothing to report.

Assistant City Administrator Keefe welcomed Mr. Urban to the City Council.

Finance Director Sundberg welcomed Mr. Urban to the City Council.

Planning/Community Development Director Wall welcomed Mr. Urban to the City Council. He also reported that there are currently two vacancies on the Planning Commission and that applications are being accepted until Friday, February 10.

City Engineer Graham reported that staff is hoping to get the ice rinks open again this weekend. Staff will also be doing some stormwater work in backyard ponds. The city has also received compliments regarding the new streetlights.

Mayor Fletcher would like the City Center Task Force to look at banner and flower designs for the new streetlights.

Attorney Bell Beckman welcomed Mr. Urban to the City Council. She also noted that she has received an order from the District Court regarding the McCullough assessment appeal; the court ruled in the city’s favor.

Councilmember Urban stated that he is excited to work with everyone.

Councilmember Gunderson welcomed Mr. Urban to the City Council.

Councilmember Johnson welcomed Mr. Urban to the City Council. He also stated that he received a call from a business about having a handwritten changed amount due on their utility bill and asked Finance Director Sundberg about the incident. Finance Director Sundberg explained that that was a glitch in 4th quarter utility billing on some business accounts and that due to the tight timeline, staff decided to hand-write the change rather than make a change in the software to re-print a bill. He also indicated that he will be working with the software provider to figure out what exactly happened with the software.

Councilmember Nyblom reported that he attended a Parks, Recreation, and Trails Commission meeting last week and that they are seeking bids to replace the play structure at Lilly Pond Park. He also reported that this morning he attended a meeting with city staff and members of the Vadnais Heights Lions Club to discuss a Legacy project in the city.

City Administrator Watson reported that he attended the VHEDC monthly board meeting. They are promoting a new program called Real Time Talent, a matching service for job seekers and employers. He also noted that staff is working with VHEDC to start a biannual communication newsletter.

Mayor Fletcher reported that he attended a couple meetings to try and advance the ice palace idea for the 2018 Superbowl. He has received a lot of positive feedback from area businesses. He noted that there will be two community meetings on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at the Vadnais Heights Commons at 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. for anyone interested in participating.

Upon motion by Johnson, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Watson, City Administrator

ATTEST:

Bob Fletcher, Mayor