

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

OPEN MEETING

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Krachmer at 5:30 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Mike Krachmer and Council Members Erik Goebel, Steve Rogers, Kelly Jozwowski, and Katherine Doll Kanne. The following member was absent: None.

Also present were: City Administrator, Kevin Watson; Assistant City Administrator, Kaylin Clement; Planning/Community Development Director, Nolan Wall; City Engineer/Public Works Director, Jesse Farrell; Fire Chief, Chris Hearnden; and Deputy Clerk, Peggy Aho.

FUTURE CITY COUNCIL REQUESTS

Mayor Krachmer said he would like to review the various commissions for a number of reasons including to clarify whether we are going to start a new committee/or commission for the Green Team. He said he would also like to look at starting up the Community Engagement Committee. He would like to discuss these at a future workshop. Council Member Doll Kanne agreed. City Administrator Watson said that City staff can frame up a dialogue on how the commissions function, what makes sense to have and what doesn't. Watson said this may take some time to prepare for a Workshop.

Krachmer said he would also like to do a housing study and said perhaps the Planning Commission could provide some input. Planning/Community Development Director Wall said that Ramsey County will be at an upcoming meeting to discuss HRA grants.

GREENSTEP CITIES PRESENTATION

Kristin Mroz, MPCA, GreenStep Cities & Tribal Nations Director, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Green Step Cities program. She said they have a 147 communities in the pilot program. She reviewed the five steps of the program: 1) resolution committing to local sustainability; 2) milestone demonstrating local commitment through actions; 3) achieved, meeting statewide sustainability action standards; 4) quantification, measuring communitywide impact of action; and 5) improvement demonstrating community wide success of actions.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT DISCUSSION

City Administrator Watson noted that this has no pending deadline, and that it is just food for thought. He said that many cities are providing a match of sorts to incentivize employees to

begin planning for retirement. He said one such avenue would be a 457 retirement with City matches to employees plans. Council Member Doll Kanne asked if there is a vesting term for the match. Council discussed vesting periods.

Kanne Doll said she is supportive of having something in place. Watson said staff will take a deeper dive into this.

Watson noted that another area the City could look at as an incentive would be to provide phone stipends to staff that use their personal cell phones regularly for work. The Council asked for more comparable stipends from other cities. Kanne Doll said she would like to have it written out what is the tipping point before someone falls into this policy.

Watson said another area would be a vehicle allowance for department heads that require significant travel for work in their personal vehicles. Council Member Rogers asked for information on how many miles staff are driving on a monthly basis.

Watson asked that the Council consider adjusting staff's weekly hours during the summer to account for the "Minnesota lifestyle" from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Council Members discussed this and said they would be in favor of summer hours.

Regarding staffing additions, Rogers asked that staff create a create business case and quantify additional staff.

PARKS MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION

City Administrator Watson said the memo/information he provided to the Council he had provided to the previous Council. The memo outlines what a Parks Master Plan would provide. He said that the City has never really had a Plan, just basically an inventory.

Watson said this effort would give the Parks, Rec and Trails Commission a purpose and could cost around \$100,000.

Council Member Rogers said he would like to know what the Commission's role would be. Watson replied that they would ask the questions, the City would pay for an expertise to help facilitate this and get people motivated. Watson said he will begin talking to facilitators and getting quotes.

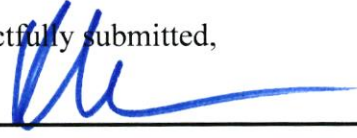
2023-2024 WORKPLAN AND GOALS DISCUSSION

City Administrator Watson introduced the 2023-2024 Workplan, hoping for a discussion of and getting Council Members thoughts on the plan which was provided by the consultant. He said he is looking for direction.

Watson suggested adding somewhere the Green Steps/Green Leaf programs.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin Watson, City Administrator

APPROVED