



**COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023  
6:00 PM  
PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING ROOM**

Mayor Louismet opened the meeting at 6:05 PM. Councilmembers in attendance included: Bill Walsh and Heidi Hughes. Councilmember Edberg arrived at 6:45 PM. Staff members in attendance included City Manager Lindy Crawford and Assistant City Manager Rick Juba.

**1. CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS CHECK-IN**

Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) members in attendance included Gary Schroerher, Bonnie Greenleaf, Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Chris Frye, and Jeff Luxford. Staff members present included Environmental Engineer Connie Taillon.

Chairperson Gary Schroerher provided an overview of the work the EAC conducted in 2022 including pollinator friendly initiatives, zero waste events, enhancement of downtown recycling opportunities, Adopt-a-Drain, and food scrap collection.

Moving forward the EAC requested City Council support on the following initiatives: Climate Smart Municipalities, solar panel installation on city facilities, additional tree planting in downtown, reducing single use plastic bags, water conservation, additional pollinator plantings, and removal of invasive species such as buckthorn.

The City Council and EAC discussed working with the Parks Advisory Commission to prioritize areas in city parks that could be converted to more natural landscapes which will enhance water conservation and pollinator environments while limiting required maintenance by City crews.

Planning Commission members in attendance included Jim Berry, Ken Baltzer, Mike Amundsen, Andrea West, and Mark Lynch. Staff members present included Community Development Director Jason Lindahl, City Planner Ashton Miller and Planning Technician Shea Lawrence.

Lindahl gave an overview of the projects that the Planning Commission reviewed in 2022 including North Campus High School, McNeely Music Center, the City's public safety project, and Shafer Richardson apartment project. The Planning Commission also reviewed the City's development review process and recommended changes to the City Council which were recently adopted.

Commission members and the City Council discussed recent training provided by the City Attorney and how helpful it was for the Commission. Additional discussion included past joint discussions or field trips with the City Council and Planning Commission and the usefulness of such exercises.

Parks Advisory Commission (PAC) members present included Bryan Belisle, Mark Cermak, Victoria Biehn, Mike Shepard, and Anastasia Davis. Staff members present included City Engineer/ Public Works Director Paul Kauppi and Parks/ Facilities Foreman Andy Wietecki.

Commission member Shepard highlighted the work that the PAC did by attending Marketfest and soliciting

feedback from residents regarding the parks. Shepard also recapped the enhancement project at Memorial Beach and planning efforts for an all-abilities playground at Lakewood Hills Park.

Commission members recommended changes to the rental policy at the Boatworks Commons to encourage more private usage by residents. Staff explained the initial policy for rental of the facility was created to gauge interest in using the facility by private parties, limit parking conflicts in the area and to not compete with existing event space. The facility's top users are non-profit organizations which are not charged to use the facility.

Additional discussion included the potential for the City to work with both public and private schools on playground enhancements.

Kauppi summarized the PAC's review of concerns submitted to them regarding the dog beach located near the City's 7<sup>th</sup> Street swim dock and Matoska Boat Launch. After considering all available information and conducting significant research, at their September 15, 2022 meeting, the PAC voted 7-0 in favor of keeping the dog beach and 7<sup>th</sup> Street swim dock open in their current locations. However, they recommended several changes to improve the area and help prevent future issues.

1. Provide new and improved, easy to read signage at the dog beach and 7<sup>th</sup> Street swim dock to help aid users to better understand the rules and expectations.
2. Improve the fencing that separates the dog beach from the 7<sup>th</sup> Street swim dock area including fencing that will better close off the shoreline area, regardless of water level.
3. Look into adding a gate at the top of the stairs to the dog beach.
4. Improve the buoys layout / style that are used to delineate the swim area from the dog beach area to aid in deterring dogs from crossing over or under them.
5. Continue with existing dog beach leash rule.
6. Continue to maintain pet waste bag stations and nearby trash containers.

In addition, the PAC recommends signing the 7<sup>th</sup> Street swim dock with "No Fishing" as there are numerous other locations for fishing and will help keep swimmers safe from hooks that might be lost near the dock.

The City Council requested additional information from staff regarding the cost of the proposed improvements outlined in the PAC's recommendation. The City Council will discuss this matter at an upcoming City Council meeting.

## **2. 2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

Crawford reviewed the City's 2022 legislative priorities which included increasing the Deputy Registrar filing fees from the State of Minnesota, identifying state funding for the public safety project and seeking legislative relief for cities impacted by the District Court's order impacting water resources. It is recommended to remove the priority regarding funding for the public safety building as that project is now in process and continue the remaining two legislative priorities from 2022.

There was consensus amongst the City Council to prioritize maintaining local control for local municipalities regarding potential statewide THC/legal cannabis regulations and the ability to license and zone related businesses. The City Council will adopt 2023 legislative priorities at their January 24, 2023 regular meeting.

### **3. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS DISCUSSION**

Crawford summarized a recommendation to renovate the Chambers in 2023 to improve safety for elected officials and staff, improve ADA accessibility and update technology for elected officials, staff and the public.

The City Council will consider this at their January 24, 2023 regular meeting..

Adjourned 10:00 PM