

**Minutes  
Minnetonka City Council  
Monday, July 31, 2023**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Brad Wiersum called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Roll Call**

Council Members, Kimberly Wilburn, Deb Calvert, Bradley Schaeppi, Kissy Coakley, Brian Kirk, Rebecca Schack and Brad Wiersum were present.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to accept the agenda with addenda to Item 14.B. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**5. Approval of Minutes:**

**A. July 17, 2023 regular meeting minutes**

Calvert moved, Wilburn seconded a motion to accept the minutes. Wilburn, Calvert, Schaeppi, Coakley, Schack and Wiersum voted "yes." Kirk "abstained". Motion carried.

**6. Special Matters:**

**A. Hennepin County Sheriff Dawanna Witt presentation**

Hennepin County Sheriff Dawanna Witt provided the Council with a presentation from the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department. She discussed her history noting she was raised in South Minneapolis and commented on how she wanted interactions with law enforcement to be different. She indicated she has been in law enforcement for the past 23 years and was elected Sheriff in 2022. She commented on how the department was struggling with staffing and was down 85 employees. She described the sheriff departments five strategic priorities, which were violent crime reduction, opioid overdose prevention, programming and reform, recruitment and retention and community outreach. She discussed how mental health issues were impacting policing and then noted the legislative priorities she would be advocating for in the coming year.

Wiersum thanked Sheriff Witt for coming to this meeting and for introducing herself to the council. He explained he was looking forward to working with Sheriff Witt going forward.

## **7. Reports from City Manager & Council Members**

City Manager Mike Funk reported on upcoming city events and council meetings.

Schack stated she served on the Metro Cities Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee. She commented on the matters this committee would be addressing in the coming year.

Schack explained she attended the boards and commissions thank you dinner. She indicated this was a great event. She thanked each member of the community that served on the city's boards and commissions, noting they were an integral part of the city.

Schack reported she attended the employee picnic last week and she stated she enjoyed meeting some of the city's younger public works employees.

Calvert discussed the National League of Cities summer leadership meeting she attended for the Energy Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

Calvert indicated she served on the Metro Cities Metro Agencies Committee with City Manager Mike Funk. She noted this group was working to find solutions for challenges in emergency medical services and response times.

Calvert explained she attended the employee picnic. She reported this event was very well done and she appreciated how the city worked to grow its own talent internally through its internship programs.

Coakley stated she served on the Improvement Local Communities committee with the League of Minnesota Cities. She commented on the issues being addressed by this committee.

Schaeppi reported he attended the boards and commission dinner. He thanked all of the board and commission members that served the City of Minnetonka.

Schaeppi commented on a religious based shooting that occurred today in Memphis. He stated he wanted to bring awareness that the Jewish community was being discriminated against.

Schaeppi stated at the last study session meeting the city council discussed its zoning code and looked at options for creating greater efficiencies within the

code. He explained he supported the City of Minnetonka taking the time to update its city code, especially the language surrounding housing.

Wiersum reported he served on the League of Minnesota Fiscal Futures Policy Committee.

Wiersum thanked all of the volunteers who worked to make this a great community.

**8. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Matters not on the Agenda: None.**

**9. Bids and Purchases: None.**

**10. Consent Agenda – Items Requiring a Majority Vote:**

Coakley asked to pull item 10.C from the consent agenda for further discussion.

**A. Ordinance relating to campaign finance reports**

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-010. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

**B. Resolution supporting an application to Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Act-Affordable Homeownership Grant Program**

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-049. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

**C. Auto Theft Prevention Grant Agreements**

City Manager Mike Funk explained the council was being asked to authorize two grants. The first grant was for personnel and the second grant was for equipment. Captain Meehan described how the grants would be implemented by the department, noting one investigator would be added and one additional officer would be added in 2024.

Coakley questioned how many new firefighters were hired in the last year.

Wiersum stated the fire department added nine new firefighters.

Coakley inquired how many new police officers had been hired by the department. Captain Meehan reported the only new hires that have been brought on were to replace officers that had left the department. Funk explained the department has not added any new officers in several years. He noted the new

firefighters that were brought on were to assist with moving to a full time fire department.

Schack thanked staff for pursuing these grants to assist with providing public safety to the community.

Coakley moved, Schack seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-050. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**11. Consent Agenda – Items requiring Five Votes: None.**

**12. Introduction of Ordinances: None.**

**13. Public Hearings:**

**A. Temporary liquor license for the Minnetonka Rotary Club for Links & Libations event at 14350 County Road 62**

Community Development Director Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Wiersum opened the public hearing.

Chris Rosenlund, representative of the Minnetonka Rotary Club, discussed the goals of the Rotary Club noting this groups meet every Wednesday at The Marsh at 7:15 a.m. He invited the public to consider being a part of this group. He commented on the Links & Libations event, which would be held on Thursday, September 14 at the Glen Lake Golf Facility. He reported this would be a nine hole scramble event followed by a silent auction, great food and craft beer tasting. He noted this was the rotary clubs main fundraising event and the funds raised would assist with supporting youth and other organizations in the community.

There being no further comments from the public, Wiersum closed the public hearing.

Kirk moved, Schack seconded a motion to grant the license. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**B. On-sale brewer's taproom and Sunday liquor license, and brewer's off-sale intoxicating liquor licenses for Bremmick LLC, dba Boom Island Brewing located at 5959 Baker Road, Suite 320**

Community Development Director Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Wiersum opened the public hearing.

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to continue the public hearing to August 28, 2023 for final consideration. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**14. Other Business:**

**A. Concept plan for Wells Fargo redevelopment at 1809 Plymouth Road**

Community Development Director Julie Wischnack and City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Schaeppi asked what the existing zoning and permitted uses were for this property. Gordon explained the area was guided for mixed use, which allowed of retail, office and residential uses. He stated the zoning was Planned I-394 district.

Kirk questioned what the above grade square footage was for the existing Wells Fargo. Gordon estimated this to be 37,000 square feet.

Wiersum inquired if staff had any issues with this proposal. Gordon indicated traffic and circulation was a concern given this property would be accessing a county road.

Wiersum asked the development team to come forward at this time.

Hector Vinas, representative for the developer, OneCorp Global, thanked staff for the detailed presentation. He explained while he was from Florida, he has worked on a number of projects in this market. He reported the staff from Minnetonka has been very helpful and professional. He stated Wells Fargo was a customer of his and they had asked him to take a look at this site. He commented further on the proposed project and asked for comments or questions from the council.

Calvert asked how many drive thrus the new project would have. Mr. Vinas stated Wells Fargo and the restaurant would have a drive thru.

Schack indicated she thought a lot about this project. She believed there was a lost opportunity for residential or mixed use on this property. However, this was not the project before her. She commented she believed the proposed project had merit and she was grateful for the vibrancy of the Ridgedale area. She anticipated staff would figure out the design piece, but requested the project become more pedestrian friendly. She requested further information regarding the drive thru restrictions for this area. Gordon discussed the drive thru regulations for this property.

Coakley agreed this project had merit. She supported bringing retail stores into this area. She indicated her main concern was with traffic flow in and out of this site.

Calvert explained she agreed with much of what Councilmember Schack mentioned. She appreciated how the city has worked to keep Ridgedale vibrant. She indicated this project would update the property and make the uses more current or right sized. She stated she was not enthusiastic about the proposed drive thrus because they were terrible for the environment. She encouraged the developer to think about the placement of the restaurants to facilitate a grab and go situation that would allow residents to pick food up and walk to the park. She suggested a sit down restaurant be considered instead of fast food. She encouraged the developer to remove a great deal of the concrete/asphalt where possible within this development.

Kirk indicated he had concerns with how cars would stack within the two drive thrus. He feared that the stacking would impede the parking lot and pedestrian walkability on the site. He stated his first impression of the plan that it was uninspired. He recommended the plans be reconsidered to include a vibrant second story patio along with greater density.

Schaeppi commented it was not his role to put the lens on what he wished the zoning code was for this property. He reviewed the concerns from the public regarding this property, which had to do with the lack of walkability, the lack of intensity, irregular access, and lack of district identity. He reported he believed the project had merit, but he would be more comfortable with less parking and more outdoor eating space.

Wilburn stated she felt much same way as Councilmember Schack and Councilmember Calvert. She agreed this project had merit.

Wiersum commented he believed the project had merit as well. He commented on how there was a lot more housing in the Ridgedale area than there was in the past. He was of the opinion this project fits in with the vision and believed the proposed businesses would work with the surrounding area. He voiced the concerns had with drive thrus and how they were impacting the environment. He recommended the city be careful with adding more drive thrus to the community. He supported the project having more landscaping and less parking lot. He challenged the developer to design for the future and not the past for this project. He recommended the city continue to look at how to make this area more future oriented and walkable given how suburban malls were changing.

**B. Resolution establishing ballot question for proposed charter amendment**

City Attorney Corrine Heine gave the staff report.

Kirk questioned how the mayor was planning to proceed with this agenda item.

Wiersum stated he would like to take comments from the council and then he would allow members of the public to speak. He noted the purpose was not to talk about why we do or do not like rank choice voting. Rather, the wording for the ballot measure was being discussed.

Schack questioned what kind of things would be deemed unconstitutional. Heine stated with respect to the wording of a ballot question, the courts have said it needs to be worded in a way that conveys the essential impact of what the voters are being asked to decide. Also, the ballot question needs to be worded in a way that does not say "vote yes" or "vote no", but should be fairly worded.

Wiersum opened the meeting for public comments.

Mary Pat Blake, 14800 Wieschwood Road, indicated she was a proponent for ranked choice voting. She noted she worked on this issue in 2020 as well. She believed the second option is the better of the two options. She was the opinion the words repeal and reinstatement were important within the ballot question.

Ann Aanestad, resident of Minnetonka, explained she got a petition submitted with over 1,800 signatures with 1,567 verified. She indicated she was disappointed with the ballot language originally because it was quite wordy. She thanked staff for honing this down to the two options. She agreed the second option should move forward for the ballot question. She hoped that the city could repeal ranked choice voting and go back to general elections. She reiterated that primaries would only be held as needed.

Wiersum closed the meeting for public comments.

Wiersum commented this was a first where people on opposite sides of the issue were agreeing on the ballot language.

Schack indicated this was unheard of and stated she would be supporting option two for the ballot language.

Wilburn explained she preferred the second option as well noting she would like the language to read a separate primary will be held if needed, for clarification purposes.

Schaeppi reported he was elected in 2019. He stated he believed the language was an improvement and noted he supported the, if needed, language.

Kirk commented he has been involved in three campaigns with the city. He discussed the amount of money and staff time that was spent on primaries. He supported the "if needed" language or as recommended by Councilmember Wilburn adding the word "separate". He indicated he could go either way on this one.

Calvert stated she would defer to the city's legal expert on this matter. She reported her aim was to have the ballot language easy to understand for the voting public. She wanted to emphasize that she had full faith in staff's ability to put on a fair election. She feared that this matter would be a perpetual petition issue. She noted she could support Councilmember Wilburn's friendly amendment, otherwise she could support option two moving forward.

Wiersum reported this was an important ballot question that should be taken seriously. He stated the essence of the question was whether or not people support ranked choice voting. He explained he discussed this matter with his wife and she was concerned with how long worded the ballot question was originally and she hoped the ballot question could be more succinct. He indicated he agreed with the public that option two was the better option going forward for the ranked choice voting ballot question. He believed the word separate was not necessary.

Schack moved, Coakley seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-051. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**15. Appointments and Reappointments: None.**

**16. Adjournment**

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Becky Koosman  
City Clerk