

**Minutes
Minnetonka City Council
Monday, January 4, 2020**

1. Call to Order

Mayor Brad Wiersum called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

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

4. Approval of Agenda

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

5. Approval of Minutes:

A. October 19, 2020 study session

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to accept the minutes, as presented. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

B. December 7, 2020 regular council meeting

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to accept the minutes, as presented. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

6. Special Matters: None

7. Reports from City Manager & Council Members

City Manager Geralyn Barone reported on upcoming city events and council meetings.

Schack stated Big Willow Park has been busy with residents participating in the yeti hunt. She thanked the park and recreation department for their creative efforts.

Carter wished staff and the councilmembers a Happy New Year. She encouraged residents to check in on one another because January and the new year can be tough on some individuals. She explained there were resources available to those who were struggling.

Schaeppi thanked staff for creating the yeti hunt. He noted there was a father of two boys on his cul-de-sac that were extremely active in sports. This father was happy to be able to use city facilities while team sports have not been available. He hoped that 2021 would be a positive year for the community.

Wiersum offered all Minnetonka residents his best wishes for 2021. He stated as the community looks to 2021, he understood it was a challenging time. He encouraged residents to offer people more grace and to look for the positive, because it was always darkest before dawn. He encouraged his fellow councilmembers to demonstrate a positive and encouraging outlook. He commended staff and his fellow councilmembers for all that was accomplished in 2020.

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

9. Bids and Purchases: None

10. Consent Agenda – Items Requiring a Majority Vote:

A. Designation of official newspaper for 2021

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to Designate Sun Sailor as the city's official newspaper for 2021. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

11. Consent Agenda – Items requiring Five Votes:

A. Applications for renewed precious metal and secondhand dealer licenses for 2021

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

12. Introduction of Ordinances: None

13. Public Hearings: None

14. Other Business:

A. Resolution for the Excelsior Boulevard Trail - Phase II (Kinsel Road to I-494)

Public Works Director Will Manchester gave the staff report.

Kirk asked if Phase I was completed this summer without any complications. Manchester reported this was the case.

Kirk commented residents have been questioning why the city chose the southern alignment for this trail. He requested staff speak to this further. Manchester explained the southern alignment was chosen based on a number of factors. These factors include pedestrian connections, the location of existing utilities, additional costs for retaining walls, etc.

Kirk stated Phase I was a great new trail for the city. He encouraged staff to work to clear the new ped ramps.

Schaeppi anticipated the new trail design would bring more people to the trail. He questioned if pedestrian counts would be revisited in 2022. He inquired if Hennepin County had changed their funding policy for trails. Manchester explained after trails are installed the city will look at the use in order to complete counts. He reported staff does not have a date set for this count, but this would be completed in 2021. He indicated the city worked with the county on this trail and noted the county was considering a crossing.

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-001. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

B. Opus Area Bridge Improvements – Phase II

Public Works Director Will Manchester gave the staff report.

Schaeppi asked what information would be provided to the council in March. Manchester reported staff would have additional information regarding traffic control and pedestrian flow.

Kirk stated he had the opportunity to get into the Opus area a couple of times this past summer and he saw the new bridges in person. He indicated he was very excited about all of the construction that was occurring within Opus. He hoped that one of the goals within Opus was that it fits within Minnetonka.

Calvert commented she was excited the city received grant money to assist with this project. She agreed the changes within Opus were exciting.

Wiersum indicated there would be a lot more people living within Opus and he appreciated the improvements with pedestrian walkways that were being

completed. He explained these improvements would greatly benefit these residents. He believed these improvements were very appropriate.

Kirk moved, Schack seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-002. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

C. Resolution designating a new Acting Mayor and Alternate Acting Mayor

Wiersum gave the staff report. He recommended Councilmember Schack serve as acting mayor and that Councilmember Carter serve as alternate acting mayor.

Coakley explained she spoke with City Manager Barone about how the acting mayor and alternate acting mayor were chosen. She stated she wanted to better understand the history of Minnetonka.

Wiersum discussed the staff report and noted a history had been provided. He indicated this report shows the rotation occurring for the acting mayor and alternate acting mayor positions. He stated he has served on the city council for the past 18 years and this has how the acting mayor and alternate acting mayor positions have been appointed.

Coakley questioned if the appointment was made by who has been on the council the longest. She stated she wanted to know this for educational purposes.

Wiersum explained this was largely the case, but noted serving as the acting mayor and alternate acting mayor was completely voluntary. He stated councilmembers were not required to serve in this position.

Coakley thanked the mayor for this information. City Manager Geralyn Barone explained the council has a document called the Council Rules for Procedure that has a section describing how an acting mayor and alternate acting mayor was selected on a yearly basis.

Wiersum read the language from this section of the Council Rules for Procedure in full for the record.

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to make designation and adopt Resolution 2021-003. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

D. Boards and commissions appointment process next steps

Assistant to the City Manager McKaia Ryberg gave the staff report.

Calvert commented on the option individuals had to self-select their commission position.

Carter questioned if members could serve on an existing commission and serve in a new capacity. She asked if a planning commission member could move to the sustainability commission or if they could represent two commissions. City Manager Geralyn Barone reported city ordinance requires two members to serve dual roles. One member from the planning commission would serve on the sustainability commission and one member of the park board would serve on the sustainability commission. She explained that existing commission members wanted to move over the sustainability commission would have to be further considered by the council. She addressed the self-selection question and noted in the end, the city council would be appointing all nine members of the sustainability commission.

Wiersum commented there may be a case where no one on the planning commission or park board volunteers to serve for the dual capacity position. Barone reported if no one wanted to step forward from the existing members, the council would have the ability to appoint someone to the park board and planning commission for the dual position.

Carter questioned if the dual position could remain vacant until someone volunteered to serve in this capacity. Barone stated this was a possibility or the council could amend city ordinance.

Wiersum explained with the high level of interest on the sustainability commission, he did not believe this would be a concern.

Schack indicated she was on board with all of the recommendations from staff. She asked if candidates would be interviewed twice if they checked interest in both the planning commission and the sustainability commission. Ryberg stated all applicants would be asked the same set of questions.

Schack commented this may be more of an issue on how the candidates are scored by the council.

Carter discussed the demographics of the candidate backgrounds. She believed it was right to have two separate sections for interviews. She questioned how the council should address the candidates who showed interest in sustainability and another board, while other candidates only showed interest in the sustainability commission. She inquired how staff would divide out the interviews for the highest and best use of time.

Wiersum stated when speaking with staff about this item for the agenda, the practical question came down to how many people the council wants to virtually

interview. He anticipated the council could speak to five candidates per hour which could lead to over three hours of interviews for the open seats. He favored making assessments based on paper ballots and interviewing a smaller number of candidates. He supported interviewing only eight candidates for the planning commission and park board, and 20 candidates for the sustainability commission.

Carter agreed with Mayor Wiersum. She supported the Mayor's recommendation to interview eight candidates.

Schaeppi thanked Ms. Ryberg for her thorough presentation. He stated it was exciting to hit 100 candidates for one position. He was pleased to see there was a large number of people that wanted to participate in the community. He supported the council reflecting on how this demand far exceeds the supply of open positions. He encouraged the council to give thought onto how each of the councilmembers will get questions into the candidates. He suggested the council consider how other cities interview candidates. He stated one thought would be to allow candidates to give the council a five minute pitch in order to allow more candidates to speak. He indicated he was happy to take on an additional study session for candidate interviews. He encouraged the council and staff to consider how to follow up with the candidates that are not selected.

Kirk stated it would be difficult to review 100 candidates in order to weed it down to 20. He commented the data points on the applications would be key in assisting the council with this task. He discussed his experience when applying for the planning commission seven or eight years ago. He reported he filled out a much more comprehensive application. He questioned if it was becoming too easy for candidates to apply for open commission seats.

Schack explained she understood the conundrum the council faced and noted the application was simplified in order to attract a broader plate of candidates. She stated this was intentional. She commented some members may get their foot in the door through the planning commission or park board and not through the sustainability commission. She indicated it may be wise to apply for a lower volume position in order to be considered for an open seat that could lead to another appointment in the future. She supported the council interviewing a broad range of candidates to ensure the council was digging deep enough to review a diverse group. She encouraged the council to participate and do their job when it comes to these interviews. She understood Councilmember Schaeppi's proposal but feared the five minute pitches could create a disadvantage. She stated she wanted the conversations and interviews to be more guided.

Coakley explained there was a large number of applicants and she understood there may be a need to scale back the interviews some. However, she feared that the city's mission and vision to attract diversity and people of color would be

lost if the council did not take the time to interview all of the candidates. She stated she was excited about all of the people that applied. She wanted these individuals to know that she appreciated these people for doing their best and stated the council would now do their best to review each application.

Carter commented on the interview questions. She believed that by asking each candidate the same questions a fair and level playing field was created. She indicated the proposed questions spoke to traditional work skills and recognized that people came with different lived experiences. She suggested all references to "work experience" be changed to previous experience.

Schack apologized for the interruption but noted Carter may be referencing the 2020 interview questions and referred her to the 2021 interview questions.

Carter thanked Schack for the clarification.

Calvert commented gender is a kind of diversifier and encouraged the council to keep this in mind for the candidate positions. She stated she was happy to see 12% of the candidates being BIPOC because this was a proportional reflection of the BIPOC population in Minnetonka. She thanked staff for passing along a spreadsheet on the candidates to the council. She questioned if the council had any suggestions on how to address the scoring of candidates that selected more than one commission.

Wiersum explained he has started to work with the applications and has tried to focus on the first two choices from each candidate. He believed the council had to focus on how to streamline and simplify the selection process, understanding that this would be a challenge given the number of candidates. He indicated he tried to balance the issues because he did not want to have to throw out a favorite candidate. He reported each councilmember gets to score the candidates and he understood each councilmember may have different ways of reviewing and scoring the candidates.

Coakley stated she went straight to the questions to see how the candidates answered the questions. She indicated she was not reviewing candidates based on their skill sets. She commented there was so much information to take in and she also appreciated the spreadsheet that was provided by staff.

City Manager Geralyn Barone reviewed the candidate interview questions with the council and asked for feedback. She reported future years would not be as burdensome. She noted the number of candidates was higher this year because the council had created a new commission. She requested further comment from the council on the number of candidates that should be interviewed for each commission/board.

Wiersum asked if there was any opportunity to modify what was done at subsequent meetings after January 11, 2021. Barone reported staff could take direction and guidance from the council after this meeting.

Schaeppi stated he was slightly disappointed that the number of candidates that were being interviewed was being cut down. He believed the council would learn a lot by having more people at the table.

Calvert reported she has been involved in hiring processes, has served on the planning commission and was now on the council. She explained that not all applicants were created equal and the amount of effort put into the applications differed. She stated speaking was a valuable skill set and some candidates have more of this skill set than others. She indicated some candidates may not fully understand the time commitment involved with serving on a board or commission. She suggested a question be added to ensure candidates understand the level of commitment. She respectfully disagreed that all candidates should be allowed to speak. She explained she wanted to learn how the candidates would work in a panel situation. She supported the mayor's suggestion to shift gears after the January 11, 2021 worksession meeting. It was her hope the council would be able to discern who had put effort into their application and those that had not in order to whittle down the number of candidates.

Kirk discussed how important community outreach would be for the sustainability commission. He recommended all of the candidates that applied for the sustainability commission be kept on file and that the sustainability commission engage with these individuals in the future.

Wiersum appreciated this recommendation.

Carter stated it might be presumptuous for the city to assume candidates would be available for interviews on January 11 when selections would be made on January 6.

Wiersum explained in the past, this was the way interviews were conducted. He suggested the city build in enough flexibility that if 16 candidates are invited and only 13 can make it on January 11 that three more be invited deeper from the candidate pool. He understood this was not a perfect process, but was as good as the city could make it given the level of resources available. He indicated the council may want to consider a new interview process in the future. Barone stated once the interviews are completed on January 11, she would like the council to address the interview process in order to provide staff with further guidance before moving onto the next round.

Wiersum supported this recommendation.

Carter recommended this reflection not be taken after a three hour council worksession meeting. She feared this would not lead to meaningful responses and suggestions. Barone stated she was thinking of addressing this topic at a future worksession meeting this spring.

Kirk asked if applicants would receive the questions prior to the interview.

Wiersum reported this would be a public meeting and the questions were readily available online. He did not believe the questions had to be sent out to the candidates prior to the meeting. He anticipated the proactive candidates would find these questions prior to the meeting in order to be prepared for the interview.

Reviewed staff recommendations and provided feedback. No formal action required.

15. Appointments and Reappointments: None

16. Adjournment

Calvert moved, Schack seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Becky Koosman
City Clerk

