

**Minutes
Minnetonka City Council
Monday, August 9, 2021**

1. Call to Order

Mayor Brad Wiersum called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

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

4. Approval of Agenda

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

5. Approval of Minutes:

A. July 26, 2021 regular meeting

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

6. Special Matters: None

7. Reports from City Manager & Council Members

Acting City Manager Julie Wischnack reported on upcoming city events and council meetings. It was noted the mask requirement was back in place at all city facilities. The temporary water restrictions were reviewed with the council.

Carter thanked Acting City Manager Wischnack for her detailed report. She commented on the masking update and encouraged residents to offer grace to city staff members and to be grateful for the fact Minnetonka gets it right most the time. She thanked City Manager Geralyn Barone for doing the right thing on behalf of her and all Minnetonka residents.

Calvert agreed with Councilmember Carter and stated she agreed with staffs decision regarding the mask mandate. She explained these decisions are being made to keep people alive.

Schaeppi thanked staff and the contractors for doing great work along Groveland Road.

Schaeppi stated on Wednesday, August 18 at the Minnetonka Community Center an informational meeting would be held regarding the Minnetonka Boulevard trail project.

Schaeppi discussed the *Star Tribune* article that was recently published regarding suburban zoning. He indicated a one size fits all approach may not work with all cities in the metro area. He commented on the city's 2040 comprehensive plan and reported there was still work for the city to do when it came to affordable housing. He encouraged staff to bring this topic back to the council at a future meeting.

Schaeppi commented on the mask mandate and explained he supported the council weighing in on this issue at a future meeting.

Kirk indicated he read the same *Star Tribune* article as Councilmember Schaeppi.

Kirk believed the mask mandate was appropriate and was keeping in line with the CDC and Hennepin County Health requirements as much as possible. He supported the city protecting everyone in Minnetonka. He wished that the mask mandate was not required, but in order to protect everyone he supported staffs decision. He encouraged all residents in Minnetonka to get vaccinated.

Kirk commented on the ride along he completed on Night to Unite. He thanked all who participated in Night to Unite.

Schack stated she supported the mask mandate that was approved by city staff and the emergency management group. She understood that staff had to make unpopular decisions at times and she thanked staff for their efforts on behalf of the community.

Calvert explained the city was following the scientists and medical experts from the CDC and MDH to make these decisions.

Calvert commented on the community events she attended for Night to Unite. She thanked all of the residents who participated and were able to make donations to the ICA food shelf.

Calvert indicated she attended the employee appreciation picnic and the electric car show at Lone Lake Park.

Calvert reported she attended a National League of Cities Energy, Environment and Resources Committee meeting, a League of Minnesota Cities Elections Task Force meeting, and training for how to respond to antisemitism for Jewish elected officials.

Calvert stated the most fun event she attended in the past two weeks as the Ridge Point ice cream social.

Coakley explained she attended several Night to Unite events but decided to not participate in any ride alongs. She noted she was invited to attend a party off of Highland Terrace in her ward. She thanked the Dwight family for inviting her to their party. She indicated she also attended a party in her neighborhood.

Coakley reminded the city council that not all children from the BIPOC community may enjoy being involved with the police. She encouraged the council to consider not all communities feel safe around the police.

Wiersum discussed his involvement in the Tour de Tonka and stated he was pleased the rain stopped in order to allow participants to get their ride in.

Wiersum commented throughout the pandemic what the city has done has been remarkably consistent. He reported the objective of the city was to keep people safe. He indicated the city does not spend taxpayer dollars on primary scientific research, because this has been done already by other entities. He discussed the operating structure within the city and reported the mayor and council makes policy decisions, not day to day operating decisions.

Wiersum discussed the article that was printed in the *Star Tribune* and explained the city council understood the importance of diversifying the city's housing stock.

8. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Matters not on the Agenda:

Christian LaBarbera, 113 Towns Road, stated he did not understand why youth had to be masked while skating whether in practice or in competition. He explained he appreciated the information the mayor provided regarding the city's governance but noted there was a lot of deference to the CDC and the recommendations made by the CDC. He reported the CDC was recommending masks and were not requirements or mandates. He stated outside of N95 or KN95 masks, the efficacy of mask usage was inconclusive at best. He commented when it came to recreation facilities and with children skating, he would like to see the mask requirement be strongly recommended, but not

required. He indicated he could support all fans and spectators being masked. He feared that the actions that were taken by staff were done in haste and there isn't an explanation outside of deferring to the CDC. He reported he was concerned when the masks would get dialed back.

Wiersum commented the emergency management team meets weekly and staff heard these comments.

Suzie Nelson, 16101 Kensington Court, asked how the mask mandate would be enforced. She commented on the numbers at this time and noted according to the CDC the seven day average for COVID cases in Hennepin County was 1,336 out of a population of 1.266 million. She reported this was 0.1% of the county's population and 77% of Hennepin County's residents age 12 and up were already vaccinated. She stated only 2.26% of hospital beds in Hennepin County were occupied by COVID patients. She indicated the current seven day average for COVID deaths in Hennepin County was 1. She asked if the mask mandate was necessary given the data, especially for those working out. She explained she would support peoples right to mask up, but encouraged the city to allow residents to make their own measured and thoughtful decisions. She reported there were rinks and fitness centers within 10 minutes of Minnetonka that did not require masks. She questioned how effective the city's decision would be given the fact residents and employees would be in buildings outside of the community that do not require masks. She encouraged the city to reverse its decision regarding masks and make masks optional.

9. Bids and Purchases: None

10. Consent Agenda – Items Requiring a Majority Vote:

A. Tolling agreement in stormwater pond litigation

Schack moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve the tolling agreement. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

11. Consent Agenda – Items requiring Five Votes: None

12. Introduction of Ordinances:

A. Items relating to Goddard School, a daycare facility, at 14900 Highway 7

City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Calvert stated this was a very tight site and understood several high priority oak trees would be lost. She commented the site would not accommodate tree

replacement and shrubs would be planted instead. She encouraged the applicant to work with city staff to replant trees onsite or somewhere else in order to assist in reducing the urban heat island. Gordon explained this was discussed by staff and noted the grading of the playground would be revisited.

Kirk moved, Carter seconded a motion to approve the introduction of the ordinance and refer it to the planning commission. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

B. Ordinance authorizing the sale of a portion of city-owned property at 14840 Highway 7

Acting City Manager Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Kirk moved, Carter seconded a motion to approve the introduction of the ordinance and refer it to the planning commission. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

13. Public Hearings:

A. Temporary on-sale liquor license for The Rotary Club of Minnetonka Foundation, 14350 County Road 62

Acting City Manager Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Wiersum opened the public hearing.

Chris Roselund, representative of the Rotary Club of Minnetonka, thanked the council for considering his request. He reported the Rotary Club met every Wednesday at the Eisenhower Community Center from 7:15 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. He discussed the importance of getting back out in the community to raise funds at the Links and Libations golf scramble, silent auction and raffle. He commented on how the funds raised by the Rotary Club benefit the community. He encouraged residents to consider participating in event or making a donation to the Rotary Club of Minnetonka.

Wiersum reported this was a great event.

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

Schack moved, Calvert seconded a motion to hold the public hearing grant the license. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

14. Other Business:

A. Resolution for the Tonka-Woodcroft Improvements Project

Public Works Director Will Manchester gave the staff report.

Carter explained this was her neighborhood. She anticipated there were 300 to 400 homes in the project area. She questioned how staff would reach out to each homeowner to have them understand how their property would be impacted. Manchester encouraged residents to reach out to Mitch Hatcher to have a one on one conversation at the property to talk through concerns about the project.

Kirk stated he was pleased a boxed trench would be used and asked if this can be done to assist in saving more trees. Manchester reported the city uses box trenches for OSHA reasons and explained the city works with a contractor in order to save trees.

Schaeppi commented this was a relatively complex project and he appreciated all of the best management practices that were included. He inquired if a tree were removed and replaced would it be planted in the right of way. Manchester indicated all replanted trees would have to be put in the right of way.

Schaeppi asked how the council could vote to approve additional funding for tree replacement. Manchester explained that in 2016 the council decided to do a tree replacement for the Libb's Lake project. He commented a voucher program was created to assist with tree replacement.

Schaeppi supported the city council pursuing a tree voucher program for this project.

Calvert thanked Councilmember Schaeppi for asking about the trees. She understood a lot of thought went into this project and she appreciated the work. She explained the trees in this neighborhood were truly special. For this reason, she implored all working on this project to save as many trees as possible or to offer vouchers for those that are lost. She requested further information on why the city was considering a ribbon curb for portions of the project area. Manchester stated ribbon curb was being proposed in the area of the buffer strips because it works well for water runoff when there is not much elevation relief.

Wiersum stated this was a very big project for the city to take on. He discussed the additional storm sewer infrastructure and asked if there would be any outlets in residential yards. Manchester commented he did not think the outlets would be an issue as they were fairly isolated.

Wiersum opened the meeting for public comments.

There were no comments from the public at this time.

Calvert encouraged staff to work to save as many trees as possible in the project area. She explained she was excited about the proposed pollinator gardens.

Carter stated her neighborhood needed these improvements and she looked forward to having this project completed.

Wiersum discussed the great job staff did in saving and protecting trees throughout the Libb's Lake project.

Carter moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-071. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

B. Resolution for the Ridgedale Drive Trail Project and agreement with Xcel Energy

Public Works Director Will Manchester gave the staff report.

Schack asked if the neighborhood engagement on this project has been fairly minimal. Manchester reported this was the case. He stated the watermain was being worked on at this time and noted the only concerns he has heard were regarding driveway access.

Schaeppi explained he was looking forward to this route being completed. He questioned what type of base coat would be used for this trail. Manchester commented on the base coat and noted compaction was key to ensure the trail did not settle.

Schack commented this was a low profile but very useful connection for the city.

Calvert concurred and suggested staff try to hold one more neighborhood meeting for this project.

Wiersum reported this trail segment was noteworthy because it would provide residents with safe passage across the city's interstates. In addition, this trail would lead from residential areas both west of I-494 and south of I-394 to some of the most significant commercial areas of the city. He indicated this trail would safely open up walking or biking to a significant part of the city, which could promote alternative modes of transportation for residents versus driving. He stated he was supportive of the proposed trail.

Schack moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-072, approve the agreement and amend the CIP. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

15. Appointments and Reappointments:

A. Appoint Acting City Manager

Acting City Manager Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Wiersum asked if Mr. Funk were to revert to the assistant city manager his salary would return to assistant city manager salary. Wischnack reported this was the case.

Calvert discussed the great work Mr. Funk was completing on behalf of the City of Minnetonka and noted she would be supporting this appointment.

Carter commented she was very grateful the city had Mr. Funk in place as an assistant city manager and she was grateful he was willing to step up and serve as the acting city manager in the interim.

Calvert moved, Carter seconded a motion to approve the appointment. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

16. Adjournment

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Becky Koosman
City Clerk