

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, January 21, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.
City Hall Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Independence City Council was called to order by Mayor Spencer at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor Spencer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, McCoy

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas, Administrative Services Director Simon,
WHPS Chief Kroells

VISITORS: See Sign-in Sheet.

4. ****CONSENT AGENDA****

All items listed under Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by Council and will be acted on by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

- a. Approval of City Council Minutes from the December 16, 2024, Special City Council Meeting.
- b. Approval of City Council Minutes from the January 7, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting.
- c. Approval of Accounts Payable; (Batch #1 - Checks No. 23342-23376, Batch #2 - Checks No. 23378-23390). (Check #23377 was voided)
- d. Approval of Annual Criminal Prosecution Service Agreement with Carson, Clelland & Schreder.
- e. Maple Plain Fire Department December 2024 and 2024 Year End Reports (for information only).

Motion by Betts, seconded by McCoy to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0

5. Set Agenda – Anyone Not on the Agenda can be Placed Under Open/Misc.

6. Reports of Boards and Committees by Council and Staff.

Betts attended the following meetings:

- None

McCoy attended the following meetings:

- None

Grotting attended the following meetings:

- Public Works
- Fire Commission

Spencer attended the following meetings:

- WHPS part time officer interviews
- NW League
- Lake Minnetonka Cable Commission Executive Commission
- Maple Plain Fire Commission

Simon – None

Kaltsas – None

7. West Hennepin Public Safety – Director Gary Kroells: Presentation of the December 2024 Activity Report.

Chief Kroells stated that there were 4,707 incidents throughout 2024. In December there were 225 in Independence and 130 in Maple Plain. A few incidents from his recap are below: (See full report in Council Packet.)

Animal Complaint on December 6th - 8900 block of Dean Lane, Independence. Officer was dispatched to two dogs eating a dead deer carcass. Officer arrived on scene and found two white Great Pyrenees who we are familiar with from previous reports. Officer was unable to get ahold of the animal owner and the dogs were impounded to the animal shelter. Eventually, the animal owner reached out and was advised where his dogs were.

Arrest on December 11th - Intersection of County Road 6 and County Road 90, Independence. Officer was dispatched to multiple traffic complaints involving the same vehicle. Officer located the vehicle driving over 90-MPH and dangerously passing cars. Officer spoke to the driver and observed signs of impairment. He was ultimately arrested for DWI and provided an evidentiary breath test of 0.14. He also had two prior convictions and a B- Card restricting him from any alcohol use. He was transported to Hennepin County Jail where he was charged with 2nd degree DWI.

Welfare Check on December 12th - 100 block of Kuntz Drive, Independence. Officer was dispatched to an iPhone crash detection notification. Officer arrived on scene and spoke to the phone owner who advised she lost her phone the day prior and was unable to locate it. Ultimately, it was determined the phone was lost in the field and the manure spreader picked up the phone and tossed it hard enough to enable to crash detection system.

Arrest on December 13th - Intersection of County Road 92 and Cardinal Way, Independence. Officer was on routine patrol and observed a vehicle turn into the oncoming lane of traffic then corrected into the proper lane. Officer observed multiple lane violations and stopped the vehicle. They displayed signs of impairment and performed poor on Field Sobriety Tests. Driver was arrested for DWI and provided an evidentiary breath test of 0.21. Driver was transported to Hennepin County Jail to be charged.

Motorist Assist on December 19th - Intersection of Highway 12 and County Road 92, Independence. Officer was on routine patrol and observed a stalled vehicle on the shoulder. Officer approached the vehicle and found the driver asleep. Officer woke the driver and didn't observe signs of impairment. Driver advised he was waiting for the roads to be plowed before continuing with his drive. He was advised to find a parking lot.

Arrest on December 20th - Intersection of County Road 90 and Fogelman Road, Independence. Officer was on routine patrol and observed a vehicle with numerous lane violations. Officer stopped the vehicle and spoke to the driver. Driver displayed signs of impairment and provided a preliminary breath test of 0.17. Driver was placed under arrest for DWI. Due to the driver vomiting, an evidentiary breath test was not taken, and a search warrant was completed for a bodily fluid sample. Pending charges.

Arrest on December 23rd - 3200 block of County Road 92, Independence. Officer was dispatched to a single vehicle rollover crash. Officer arrived on scene and found the lone occupant trapped inside the overturned vehicle. The driver was able to open the sunroof and extricate herself. She refused a medical transport and officer observed signs of impairment. Preliminary breath test displayed 0.000. A search warrant was executed for a blood draw. Pending charges.

Assault on December 29th - 4100 block of Woodhill Drive, Independence. Officer was dispatched to a loud party complaint in the area. Officer arrived on scene and received information that an individual was assaulted earlier in the night and was at the emergency room. Officer arrived on scene and took statements from witnesses. It was determined the host of the party followed the victim outside after a verbal altercation and began punching and kicking the victim multiple times. The victim had severe swelling, abrasions, and bruises across his face. He sustained a broken nose and facial bone and was treated at the hospital. Incident still pending further investigation.

When going through Chief Kroells' reports, often we'll hear that drugs and alcohol are 9 out of 10 times the common denominator. Police wouldn't need to be called if drugs or alcohol weren't involved.

8. Annual Fee Schedule Adoption.

a. **RESOLUTION 25-0121-01** - Annual Fee Schedule Adoption.

Kaltsas – The City reviews its Fee Schedule annually relating to fees associated with permits, plan reviews, photocopies, sewer fees, or anything involving the City. We look at the cost to provide that service and effort needed to do that. One fee consistent is our quarterly sewer

charge. This is the only thing needing to be increased this year to keep up with the cost of providing that service. In 2017 and 2020 we did sewer rate studies to compare our cost to other cities in providing sewer service. I initiated a study with ABDO at the end of 2024. We are evaluating all 34 lift stations to proactively make improvements to those stations. The study is still in works. In 2nd quarter of 2025, we should be able to sit down and look ahead. I'm recommending a 3% increase to our Quarterly Sewer Charge to keep up with services, goods, and maintenance and helps to offset staff cost, too.

Betts – Will Bridgevine have any impact on sewer?

Kaltsas – It will yet it isn't all built out yet. We've received 13 building permits so far which is not even half built out. Once we do get all those up and running, it will help our overall rates. You will see that show up in some of the updates to rate study.

McCoy – The table in the packet has not been updated? Are we staying stable with our rates?

Kaltsas – It was started but it leveled off. We settled a lot of fees during Covid, but we are holding steady now. It's lower than we projected 5 years ago.

Motion by Grotting, seconded by McCoy to approve RESOLUTION 25-0121-01 for adopting the Annual Fee Schedule including the 3% quarterly sewer charge increase. Ayes: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0

9. Signature Authorization of Council Member Ray McCoy.

b. **RESOLUTION 25-0121-02** – Authorizing Council Member Ray McCoy as Signatory on City Accounts.

Spencer – The City must have two signers on all checks, but now that Johnson has retired, we need another signer.

Motion by Spencer, seconded by Betts to approve RESOLUTION 25-0121-02 authorizing Councilmember McCoy as Signatory on City Accounts. Ayes: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0

10. Open/Misc.

Kaltsas had worked with ABDO on year-end clean-up of accounts, and we discussed adopting a resolution to finalize some things. There was a balance in our city hall remodel fund, and we want to transfer and close out that fund of \$10,000. Council authorized mower and trade in existing one and use capital funds. RESOLUTION 25-0121-03

Motion by McCoy, seconded by Betts to approve RESOLUTION 25-0121-03 approving

fund transfer and capital equipment purchase. Ayes: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0

The council discussed the council's empty seat and the process to fill it. Since it'll be critical for everyone to be here, a workshop was scheduled for 7 am on Monday, January 27th, 2025. If anyone has expressed interest, we can talk about that then.

Kaltsas – At the Maple Plain Fire Commission meeting tonight, we recommended the approval for the Chief's newer vehicle.

Spencer: Chief Denneson found a 2010 Tahoe from the City of Minnetonka Fire Department with 15,000 miles on it, so with it just needing striping and a radio back in it for about \$16,000. Then they'd just sell the older Chief's vehicle. We may need to approve purchase of a newer vehicle.

Motion by Spencer, seconded by McCoy to approved purchase of the 2010 Tahoe and sell old chief vehicle. Ayes: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0

Kaltsas – We're planning on having a joint meeting with Maple Plain and Independence Councils.

Kroells – I'll be retiring in April after 31 years. We posted the Chief position internally and externally and have 10 candidates' interviews next Tuesday and Wednesday. Following up to that I am inviting both councils to a presentation of the finalists on February 5th from 5-9pm. The top 3 candidates will be interviewed that night using score cards and sheets to rank them. Kroells will do a mock press release, so you can see how they handle it.

Kaltsas – No official action is being taken, but both councils will be present.

McCoy – When does the Police Commission meet to decide?

Kroells – We will get everyone back together by February 12th to pick top candidate.

McCoy can zoom in for this presentation.

11. Adjourn.

Motion by Betts, seconded by Grotting to adjourn the meeting at 7:02pm. Ayes: Spencer, Betts, Grotting, and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Johnson/ Recording Secretary