

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2015 –7:30 PM

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 Johnson at 7:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor Johnson led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Johnson, Councilors Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck,

ABSENT: None

STAFF: City Planner & Interim City Administrator Mark Kaltsas, City Attorney Bob Vose, City Administrative Assistant Beth Horner

VISITORS: Ray Flemal, Rob Sievers, Lynda Franklin

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 July 28, 2015 meeting
- b. Approval of accounts payable; Checks Numbered 15251-15274
- c. Approval of Joint Powers Agreement with City of Medina for Townline Road Overlay Project
- d. Amendment regarding Hennepin County Recycling Funding Policy (**Resolution No. 15-0811-01**)

**Motion by Betts, second by Wenck to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck. Nays: None. Absent: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.**

5. SET AGENDA – ANYONE NOT ON THE AGENDA CAN BE PLACED UNDER OPEN/MISC.

Spencer requested a brief discussion on the Independence Outlay.

6. REPORTS OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES BY COUNCIL AND STAFF

**Spencer attended the following meetings:**

- Met with Ende and Kaltsas on the Public Works budget
- City Workshop on Budget

**Fischer attended the following meetings:**

- None to report

**Wenck attended the following meetings:**

- LMCC meeting
- City Workshop on Budget

**Betts attended the following meetings:**

- Night to Unite- attended three different events
- City Workshop on Budget
- Highway 12 Coalition Meeting

**Johnson attended the following meetings:**

- 4 Community Theater- Shrek
- Staff lunch
- Meeting with Maple Plain Mayor and Gary Kroells from WHPS for yearly review
- Minnehaha Watershed District Meeting
- Met with State Auditors for CAPSH Board
- Night to Unite- attended four different events
- City Workshop on Budget
- Taste of Delano
- Highway 12 Coalition Meeting
- Community Action Partnership Meeting
- Metro Cities Municipal Funding Meeting
- Met with Producers who want to film on farm property

**Horner attended the following meetings:**

- Maple Plain Days Committee Meeting
- Alcohol Server Training
- Planning Commission Meeting

**Kaltsas attended the following meetings:**

- City Workshop on Budget
- Highway 12 Coalition Meeting
- Planning Commission Meeting

7. Motion by City Council Thanking City and West Hennepin Public Safety Staff for all the Planning and Preparation for the Circus and Maple Plain Days

**Motion by Wenck, second by Spencer to approve formal thank you to WHPS. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck. Nays: None. Absent: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.**

8. City Council Discussion Regarding Community Center Rental Policy

Kaltsas stated the concern has been mostly from the use by outside groups or non-residents of the City. Staff is looking for Council direction on moving forward with rentals. There have been problems and damage to the community room on numerous occasions and staff has to deal with time consuming issues related to this. Kaltsas stated they are honoring the rentals that have been booked but are not booking anymore until firm direction is received from Council.

Kaltsas said there have been twenty one rentals to date. Three of those rentals were non-profit organizations (\$75) and five local organizations (\$350). There were not any rentals for resident weddings. Non-resident weddings totaled three at (\$1800). There were two other resident parties that equaled (\$300) and eight non-resident parties for (\$3700). Kaltsas said for local (resident) events the total is approximately (\$725) for the year and the non-resident event total is approximately (\$5500). Kaltsas said all issues have been with the non-resident rental of the facility. He said non-resident renters are coming from all of the metro and we have gained a reputation as a place to go. Kaltsas stated we have not been billed extra from our cleaners yet but have been threatened several times with extra charges. Staff has to deal with problems and ask renters to come back and clean. Staff has to supervise the cleaning and withhold deposits when damage occurs. West Hennepin Public Safety and Public Works have had to deal with issues and have had to come in on the weekends. He noted we are giving out keys to the facility and we do not have staff on call over the weekend. Kaltsas said ads had been running in multiple publications and those have not been renewed.

Spencer asked about correlation of the issues that have occurred and alcohol. Kaltsas said that would be hard to say as resident parties have had alcohol as well as non-resident. He thought it boils down to no ownership and no respect for the property.

Fisher said giving free reign of the facility for a weekend seems like too much. Betts said she feels it should be rented to residents only. She does not see a need to rent to non-residents. Fisher said it was not a revenue driver.

Johnson said the Council would need to define "local" as to what radius beyond the City that would possibly extend. Spencer said the policy should be tweaked so it is for use by local residents and non-profits. He said alcohol should be allowed as long as it is responsibly used.

Kaltsas said a new policy could be put together based on Council direction. Johnson said it is a nice facility and hears a lot of compliments from local residents that are able to use it for their functions.

**Motion by Spencer, second by Betts to have Staff develop a new policy per Council guidelines for use of the Community Room. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck. Nays: None. Absent: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED**

#### 9. City Council Discussion Regarding Potential Shared Services

Johnson said he has heard from several people that they don't know why we would want to take on Maple Plain's debt. He noted the new sign that has been put up in Maple Plain.

Spencer said we owe Maple Plain to give them a consensus as a Council as to where we stand. Johnson said it is important to figure out the administrative piece noting that there is a part-time Administrator now and is it prudent to have a shared Administrator? Johnson said Horner and Bemmels should be asked as to what their feelings are on merging with Maple Plain. He also noted Kaltsas should be asked if it was overwhelming to continue with the hours he is putting in or if he feels it is working. Spencer said it was working extraordinarily well.

Kaltsas said it was working well as set up at this time and that he enjoys working with the staff. From his perspective, it would be beneficial to have a more known period of how long he would be the interim Administrator.

Spencer suggested Kaltsas's contract as interim be extended through the end of the year as questions on a possible merger with Maple Plain are worked through.

Johnson asked Vose how long the City would be in limbo. Vose stated it is not definitive right now but he can confirm that the City does not need an administrator on staff that the position can be on a contract basis. Vose recommended setting a deadline/ date on the position.

Wenck said the merger should be explored further. He said this is an opportunity now and no one would lose their jobs. Wenck said even though there would not be a savings he felt this should keep moving forward.

Betts said she agreed and would like to see more maintenance combined including snow plowing, etc.

Johnson said the Public Works Director is not interested in combining efforts as Independence has enough issues to deal with already. He noted the sewer lines as an example. Betts said we could look at something farther out like ten years from now for more shared services.

Wenck stated he felt it was an accounting problem. He said if Independence plows Maple Plain roads than bill them. He said we all have budgets and know what the rates are. Johnson said he thought we were doing that now with building inspections. Kaltsas said he has met with Melvin from Maple Plain about sharing a building inspector as they have had a recent change in their services.

Johnson said we are already working with Delano on sharing building inspection services when it is needed and that that situation works very well. Kaltsas stated we do have a set rate for services with Delano. Kaltsas and Tessia have met a couple times to explore sharing inspection services with Maple Plain and pertinent rate structures. He said Maple Plain would like to utilize our Inspector as they have a recent change. Johnson stated that the financial situation with ABDO works well with Katelyn coming in once per week.

Wenck asked if Council wanted a motion or a discussion. Spencer stated that he looks at this from a Public Works standpoint and a solution will be needed in the next few years. Spencer would like to see the Building Inspector's time shared. Spencer said it would take some time too and there are hurdles to manage. He said if all of the equipment is pushed together Independence has substantially more money in the mix and they would need to define ownership. He said Independence does not really gain from combining Public Works but Maple Plain would greatly benefit from it by receiving better services and better equipment. Spencer stated our Public Works Director has no interest in combining the Cities. He said we would have to look at the very different infrastructures and it could take a couple years to figure out how that would be managed. Spencer said he didn't want to get two years down the road on this and have the same missing information we have now. He said there are completely different needs such as sewer and all of these differentials need to be examined as far as costs, etc.

Johnson asked Kaltsas if Maple Plain contracts their water plant. Kaltsas thought it was mostly done in-house at this point but said in the past part of it had been contracted out.

Wenck said it could go to a phase two study with the consultant.

**Motion by Wenck, second by Fisher to further research shared services with Maple Plain. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck. Nays: None. Absent: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED**

10. Open/Misc.

Spencer gave an update on the Independence Outlay restoration project. He said the water levels were low enough so it made it workable. Spencer stated the permit expires October 5, 2015 so the project needs to be finished before that date. Spencer is scheduling a meeting with Kaltsas, Olson and Rich Brash to figure out how to complete the project. He asked the Council for authorization.

**Motion by Wenck, second by Betts to give Spencer authorization to finish the Lake Independence Outlet Project. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck. Nays: None. Absent: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED**

11. Adjourn

**Motion by Wenck, second by Spencer to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Fisher, Spencer and Wenck. Nays: None. Absent: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Trish Bemmels  
Recording Secretary