

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL  
TUESDAY July 19, 2022–6:30 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 Johnson at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor Johnson led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Johnson, Councilors McCoy, Betts, Spencer, and Grotting (virtual)

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas, City Admin Assistant Simon, and Chief Kroells

VISITORS: JP Story, Keith Becker, Steve Bohl

*All votes were roll call votes.*

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 5, 2022, Regular City Council Meeting.
- b. Approval of Accounts Payable (Batch # 1; Checks Numbered 21343-21365)
- c. Agriculture Preserve Renewal Application for the Following Properties:
  - i. PID No. 17-118-24-43-0008 (Requested by Keith Triplett)
  - ii. PID No. 33-118-24-34-0001 (Requested by Maura Tierney)
- d. Large Assembly Permit for This Old Horse, Inc. (Polo Match at TC Polo Club) – To be Held on Sunday, August 7, 2022.
- e. Approve Adding Two (2) Additional Election Judges to for the Upcoming Elections.
- f. 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Building Permit Report (for information only).
- g. West Metro Drug Task Force (YTD Report – for information only).

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

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

6. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES BY COUNCIL AND STAFF

**Grotting attended the following meetings:**

- nothing

**Spencer attended the following meetings:**

- nothing

**McCoy attended the following meetings:**

- Fire Commission

**Betts attended the following meetings:**

- Hwy 12 Coalition
- Fire Commission
- Police Commission

**Johnson attended the following meetings:**

- Hwy 12 Coalition
- Regional Council Mayors Meeting
- Maple Plain Fire Commission
- Police Commission
- LMC Policy Committee (Zoom)
- Visitation for Peter Tritz- formerly with LMC Trust Funds
- Orono schools play, The Little Merimaid

**Kaltsas attended the following meetings:**

- nothing more than what others mentioned

7. West Hennepin Public Safety – Director Gary Kroells: Presentation of the June 2022 Activity Report.

Chief Kroells shared the West Metro Drug Task Force is extremely busy and successful - actively building cases and is one of the most successful DTF in Hennepin County. Members include: 1 WHPS, 2 HC Sherriff Dept (supervising), 1 Minnetrista, 1 Medina, and 1 Orono. They've been active since 2004 after completing a 2003 case study. Mayor Johnson recalled when it began, they filled the community room with all the drugs. Gary: 10 years ago, we were proud of a minimum number and now we need 10lbs to feel excited about it because of the amounts available. Cocaine is making a big comeback in MN and the Midwest. McCoy: asked what's driving that. Kroells: Availability. It's easier to come across the borders. Crossing into US from Mexico and is more expensive than Meth. Legalizing Marijuana cuts into the Mexican cartels supply chain so they're increasing their efforts to make others like Meth and making it cheaper to maintain their profit margins. Johnson: Several years ago, the HS were a hotbed. Is that still true recently? Kroells: MJ & TCH/vaping is, especially now that the state legalized TCH gummies. These are starter drugs, and they move up from that. McCoy: Gummy issue in schools yet? Kroells: It's not well-regulated and the interpretation "anyone can sell gummies". It's not licensed- so it's not needed to sell. Kaltsas: Cities' attorneys can weigh in and cities can make their own restrictions. So ordinances will need to be brought before the council. McCoy: After spending millions on "anti-smoking," this should not be overlooked. Betts: Can anyone overdose on them? Kroells: 10mg TCH can be too much, even for an addict. Shared from a person's testimony: A CO legal dose (MN-eating 2 to equal it) impacted someone making them feel like their legs were not working. Tobacco use is not a crime, only attempting to buy at a store if underage. Betts: What does not interact well with TCH (life-threatening)? Kroells: IDK but some medical benefits exist but there are worries. McCoy: noted "take 1 at a time" vs. smoking tobacco which

they don't just smoke 1. Whatever if printed on the package, doesn't mean anything.

342 Incidents: 253- Independence & 89- Maple Plain. See the full report for more details.

WHPS may be down 1 squad after a pursuit. Lastly mentioned, Officers took their time to calm people down and deescalate helping those struggling. A suicidal male report. Johnson: Several suicidal reports were mentioned. What happens when taking them to hospitals? Kroells: Hospitals do their best, but Drs release if they're found not to be harmful to themselves. Rarely do they stay there long and are returned home. Mayor thanked the West Metro Drug Task Force and WHPS.

8. 2022 Chip Sealing Bid Award: Discussion and Consideration of Awarding to Lowest Bidder.

Kaltsas: Annually or biannually, we have an adopted 5-year plan that looks at various aspects of our roads. Franklin Hills, McKown Ct, Woodhill Ln and Becker Rd – we will look to update that next year for the next 5 years. We only received 1 bid this year and a written statement from another saying that they couldn't get it done this year. Pearson Bros, \$1.25 last year up to \$1.65. We budgeted \$50k for roads annually. We are a couple thousand over but will reduce somewhere else to maintain budget. We had issues with sweepings last year and we will inspect and make sure to get granite chips up. Johnson: Do we always use rollers with overlays? Kaltsas: Yes. Johnson: We will send out notification letters to the property owners to let them know when we will do this project. Kaltsas: We are required to have more than one bid, but we have documentation saying that the other bid cannot get it done. Johnson: With the increased gas prices, I'm surprised the bid wasn't higher.

**Motion by Spencer, seconded by McCoy to accept and approve the Pearson bid for chip sealing the streets. Ayes: Johnson, McCoy, Betts, Spencer, and Grotting. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.**

9. Discuss August 2, 2022, City Council Meeting Time to Facilitate Attendance at Night to Unite.

Kaltsas: Anticipating 2 or maybe 3 routine items for the 8-2-2022 CC mtg and since Night to Unite is the same night, he proposed moving up the time so councilors could attend gatherings. Sometimes we can't accommodate with our time schedules. Johnson: A previous year's host was also concerned as they're on the agenda. Kroells: 12 parties are already registered. 7 already in Independence; more are likely coming. Police and Fire Depts usually meet here 4:30-4:45 and roll to those by 5:30-5:45pm. Johnson: Pointed out that McCoy is the Fire Chief and would prefer to attend. McCoy agreed. Betts: We can't change to a different day, right? McCoy: Kaltsas: I'll limit to 2 items. Normally we have elections to contend with, but this yr. elections are on 8/9.

**Moved by McCoy, seconded by Spencer to move the starting time of the August 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council Meeting to 5pm. Ayes: Johnson, McCoy, Betts, Spencer, and Grotting. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.**

The City will publish in the papers and notify the Planning Commissioners.

10. Discuss on Funding Community Park Garden Maintenance Updates

Christian Eichers would like to fix vandalized kiosk and replace a few plants. Kaltsas: We have funding. Eichers didn't yet give a budget amount. Suggest it's \$1k or less. Minus Plexiglass which Gary will help monitor since we have cameras installed. No donuts have been seen and cameras are fully functioning now. Johnson: We want to keep the park looking nice. Eichers won't always be available to work on it, so

this reduces time that Public Works spends there.

**Moved by Spencer, seconded by Betts to allow spending up to \$1,000 for replanting in the park.  
Ayes: Spencer, Grotting, McCoy, Betts, Johnson Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION  
DECLARED CARRIED.**

Staff to reach out to Eichers

11. Open/Misc.

12. Adjourn.

**Motion carried by Betts, second by Spencer to adjourn the meeting at 7:13pm.**

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Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Johnson / Recording Secretary