



CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY APRIL 16, 2024

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING TIME: 6:30 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 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 Spencer, Grotting, and Betts

Absent: McCoy

Staff: Kaltsas, Simon

Visitors: Sally Simpson and County Commissioner Kevin Anderson

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 April 2, 2024, LBAE Meeting.
- b. Approval of City Council Minutes from the April 2, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting.
- c. Approval of City Council Minutes from the April 11, 2024, City Council Workshop.
- d. Approval of Accounts Payable (Batch #1; Checks Numbered 22743-22767, Batch #2, Checks Numbered 22768-22779 and Batch #3, Checks Numbered 22780-22794).
- e. Large Assembly Permit:
  - i. Tour de Tonka – August 3, 2024

Move LBAE Meeting Minutes Approval to the minutes at the next meeting.

**Motion by Spencer to approve consent agenda items b-e, seconded by Betts to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Spencer, Grotting and. Nays: None. Absent: McCoy 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.

**Spencer attended the following meetings:**

- Fire Dept Retirement of Nate Scott
- West Hennepin Public Safety Police Academy Graduation
- Workshop
- Board of Appeals
- Spent the morning with Public Works director driving around looking at current road conditions.
- Gravel roads workshop
- Hennepin County Cover Crops Workshop

**Grotting attended the following meetings:**

- Fire Dept. Retirement of Nate Scott
- West Hennepin Public Safety Police Academy Graduation
- Workshop
- Board of Appeal

**Betts attended the following meetings:**

- West Hennepin Public Safety Police Academy Graduation
- Workshop
- Board of Appeal

**Johnson attended the following meetings:**

- West Hennepin Public Safety Police Academy Graduation
- County in review at the Government Center
- Fire Dept. Retirement of Nate Scott
- Presented annual centennial plaque for the Ag Society Farm Bureau spring dinner to Doug & Mary Jo Ende
- Loretto Fire Breakfast
- Regional Council of Mayors
- Maple Plain Chamber Meeting
- NW League
- Workshop
- Ag presentation by Hennepin County Environmental Services
- Hwy 55 Corridor coalition
- Baxter MN Mayors Assoc
- Long Lake Fire Dept Breakfast

7. Hennepin County Commissioner Annual Council Visit – Commissioner Kevin Anderson.

County Commissioner serving District 7 Kevin Anderson – I show up as often as I can. I provide a lot of updates and try to be as transparent as possible. I try to give a yearly update to reintroduce myself and provide an update what is happening in the county and how it is impacting Independence.



District 7 – Public Works chair in Hennepin County, Vice chair of Law Safety Justice Committee, Health and Human Services committee and the vice chair housing and redevelopment. Served on several boards and several committees at the state level and federal level.

Representation of county budget – largest portion is health and human services – by far what we spend most time and energy on. Counties are responsible for funding the safety net for people in need.

Independence & Greenfield has 400 residents that receive Human Services Support. Needs exist in every community. It's harder in a rural setting because we don't have facilities out here.

Solutions are online support and try to find innovative ways to help.

Johnson – what depts do you think these are under or are these people coming through other parts for energy services, etc.

Anderson – community action partnership, social services, food, rental assistance. Direct county services.

Johnson – if they are getting energy assistance, we would hear about that through Community Action.

Anderson – Yes. This year we had increase public safety budget for police, social workers, Public Works- we have had a lot of projects out here and maintenance. Where Independence sits in Hennepin County, the age and condition of roadways are warranting maintenance and reconstruction. We have several projects listed. CR 139 RR crossing replacement, culvert replacement 11 & 50, mill and over lay on Co Rd 83 in 2023. 2024 CSAH 19 road, chip and seal Co Rd 6, Rebecca Park trail mill & overlay, County Rd 19 pedestrian ramp.

Recently passed Complete and Green Streets policy – give us another tool to say when we are coming in to do the projects, what other improvements can we look at doing at the same time.

Johnson – in 2023 they did the major replacement along the river N of gun club. That was a major improvement due to the road washing out.

Supporting Youth in Independence – Between over \$700k we have seen.

Johnson – 2023 major replacement weren't we going to ask a question on our grant process?

Kaltsas – we were.

Anderson – grant process is moving through right now. We stopped our contract with MN Youth Sports League. We brought it to an internal person to process them at Hennepin County. Points system.

Kaltsas – we would like help on that and see how we can get the park grant through.

Anderson – reach out to my team to set it up.

Johnson – Kent Koch and I attended State of the County event. I was a little disappointed in that compared to what they had done in the past. When they did snip its, it was a broader presentation. It was a nice event, but it seemed things were missing.

Anderson – it would be nice to have district 7 to show up a little more.

Johnson – Jeff Lunde is holding a summit.

Anderson – HC is hosting a safe cities summit in coordination with cities united. It's designed to bring cities and law enforcement together to come up with solutions that we can implement at the local level.

Johnson – we seen about the County Sheriff suing the County of oversight with a former county sheriff?

Anderson – I can't talk about any of that since its pending litigation.

Grotting – if you looked at things critically, what is the one thing Hennepin County can do a better job at spending money or focusing on?



Anderson – I think one of the things I'd really like to evaluate is making sure the contracts with providers are going toward the goals we have stated we want them to go towards. I am often frustrated with is measurable goals that are clearly defined that we are working towards them. Work that happens in some of our community providers space and our trusted messenger programs – its great but I'm not sure what we are going to get out of that. We should be having county folks building relationships in Independence and Greenfield and western suburbs because there are a lot of people that don't have any trust in what Hennepin County is doing out here. We have a road project coming up, it will close off a road, there is an idea we can do it better. If we had Hennepin County staff, we could engage with the residents and communities to help make the impact less impactful.

Betts – like what the state did when they did US Hwy 12?

Anderson – that's part of it. We can't do it for every project. More avenues to solicit community feedback.

8. Consider Approval of Funds Transfer as Recommended to Close Out ARPA Funds.

- a) **RESOLUTION No. 24-0416-01** – Considering approval of the transfer of funds in accordance with the finance recommendations.

Kaltsas – as part of reporting requirements for ARPA funds, we have to report that those funds have been used and there are some deadlines for that. We have said those funds will be used for PS, ABDO said we should close that out and finalize report to Dept of Treasury. What do we want to do with that money since it's already been spent for WHPS. Instead of putting it into our general funds, we should put it into another account to usage for some of our projects. All money will remain in general funds but out of the unallocated. Building, road, Public Works equip and admin funds. There is \$90k we have earmarked for WHPS improvements. Amounts to move listed on resolution. We can change those amounts if anyone has any import. I put more into PW since we had some gaps for tandem axel.

Johnson – by doing this now, it is in the 2023 accounting process.

Kaltsas – it lets us report those funds are spent and no more regulation issues we have to worry about.

Spencer – this is allowable under American rescue plan?

Kaltsas – we already said WHPS in entirety. We got the money retroactive, now we have captured that money since we already made the payment.

Johnson - Road and bridge fund, they are designating \$25m as a guarantee. It may be increased

**Motion by Betts to approve resolution No 24-0416-01 approving the transfer of funds in accordance with the finance recommendations, seconded by Grotting to approve the transfer of funds. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Spencer, Grotting and. Nays: None. Absent: McCoy Abstain: None.**  
**MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0**



9. Consider Approval of a Resolution Supporting Retention of Local Land Use and Zoning Control and Opposing the Middle Housing Bill.

a. **RESOLUTION No. 24-0416-02**

Johnson – the more support from the cities the better.

Kaltsas – the counties have no impact by it. It was at the municipal levels. The initial bill is dead for this year, but we can give it to our local legislators. It keeps coming back. It would be detrimental to cities like independence.

Johnson – they feel like there's one alive in the senate

Kaltsas – I changed a couple things but it's the model resolution.

**Motion by Spencer to approve resolution No 24-0416-02 seconded by Betts to approve LMC Model resolution. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Spencer, Grotting and. Nays: None.**

**Absent: McCoy Abstain: None.**

**MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0**

10. Open/Misc.

Sally Simpson – Copeland Rd, it's been a long time between communications and wanting to know when we can count on some feedback. Almost a year ago I sent my letter to the city. Today we don't have any feedback. I have not talked to everyone in the room, but we want to hear the data. What did the traffic data show, what are solutions for short or long run? Residents on Copeland are not united in saying we all want asphalt, or we all don't.

Johnson – we had a work session last Thursday.

Kaltsas – we presented a bunch of different info relating to all gravel roads across the city. Since Copeland residents met, the council asked to broaden to all gravel roads that are in similar issues. City engineer, PW, council, inventoried the roads, and put together documentation of the issues we identified. WE have been working on a capital gravel road plan – 10 year maybe? How do we fund this? Bond for it – issue debt or try to accommodate through PW budget. We are coming back to council based on direction within the next 30-35 days for options to support funding. We are talking about doing an initial project for highest prioritized roads (larger project) to issue debt and balance that with annual budget specific to gravel roads to help accomplish all roads within 10 years and without assessments to property owners. Our intent is to create the plan and bring it back to the residents. Copeland rd is unique for the issues. We have put together a plan for Copeland. Paving of Copeland was not agreed to or consensus, but some wanted to pay. WE have been maintaining roads for years instead of replenishing the gravel on the roads. More traffic.

Simpson – when I read the minutes, I will have something I can share with the residents.

Kaltsas – I can share more breakdown too, but we have identified about \$4-5m of work that needs to be done on the roads. All of that came from the Copeland rd group. We don't want to put a bandage on Copeland Rd, we want to do it right. We are trying to work this into our budget for 2025 since the budget was already established.

Johnson – Copeland is one of the top priority roads.

Kaltsas – we did unofficial roads and put a counter on it. We took counts and can show you what those are too.

Simpson – I will share the info and let's keep going



11. Adjourn.

**Motion by Spencer to adjourn, seconded by Grotting to adjourn at 7:23pm. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Spencer, Grotting and. Nays: None. Absent: McCoy Abstain: None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 4-0**

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Solien/Recording Secretary