

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2010 – 7:30 P.M.

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, Council Members Betts, Spencer Wallace and Wenck.

STAFF: Clerk-Administrator Hirsch, Attorney Vose.

VISITORS: Carole Peter, Jim Bull, Lance Gyllenblad.

4. CONSENT AGENDA.

Approve:

- Council Minutes – May 11, 2010.
- Final Accounts Payable list for May 2010.
- Resolution No. 10-0525-01 Advertising for Bids of the first class and web based advertising.
- Application for the Tour De Tonka Bike Ride to be held on Aug. 7, 2010.
- Accept the resignation of Planning Commissioner Greg Gardella.

Hirsch explained Resolution No. 10-0525-01 will allow the City to advertise for bids online because the publication the City used previously is no longer in business.

Johnson removed approval of advertising for a replacement Planning Commissioner.

Motion by Wenck, second by Spencer, to approve the consent agenda. Ayes: Betts, Johnson, Spencer, Wallace, Wenck. Nays: none. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

Advertising for a replacement Planning Commissioner

Hirsch stated she spoke with Tom Palmquist, who had previously applied for the Planning Commission. Palmquist is still interested in serving on the Planning Commission.

The Council decided to wait to appoint Palmquist until it had the opportunity to meet him and review his application.

Request for Clarification

Hirsch asked what information the Council requested regarding the storm water ponds in addition to how many there are and where.

Wenck and Betts responded the Council wanted to know who is responsible for each pond.

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

Carole Peter asked to be added to the agenda.

Hirsch added a discussion about sign placement.

6. REPORTS OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES BY COUNCIL AND STAFF

Spencer: Step To It kickoff event.

Wenck: West Hennepin Police Commission meeting, Lake Minnetonka Communication Commission meeting. Wenck invited the Council to a LMCC meeting to discuss bringing fiber optic cable to homes on Saturday, June 5.

Wallace: Nothing to report.

Betts: West Hennepin Chamber meeting, West Hennepin Police Commission meeting, Delano Senior Center Volunteer Thank-You Luncheon.

Mayor: Northwest League of Municipalities meeting, political meeting at Wayzata City Hall, Step To It kickoff event, Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin Finance Committee meeting, West Hennepin Chamber of Commerce meeting, West Hennepin Police Commission meeting, Greater Lakes Food Bank meeting, Orono Awards Night, Highway 55 Corridor Coalition Subcommittee meeting.

Hirsch: West Hennepin Police Commission meeting.

7. COMMISSIONER JEFF JOHNSON VISIT.

Commissioner Johnson gave the Council a comparison of the Hennepin County 2009 and 2010 budgets and noted that the 2010 budget was less than the 2009 budget. Despite the budget decrease, the property tax levy increased a little less than 5 percent. The County will begin its formal budget process in September, but the expectation is the County will see a small budget decrease in 2011. Commissioner Johnson stated 2012 will be a difficult financial year. The biggest budget concern for the County has been money for indigent healthcare services, which significantly impacts Hennepin County Medical Center. The County administrator has asked all departments to create 2011 budgets that are about 95 percent of their 2010 budgets.

Mayor Johnson noted the overall property values in Hennepin County have decreased 4.4 percent in the suburban areas.

Commissioner Johnson responded the County is expecting another small decrease in value next year and a large decrease in commercial values in the following year.

Mayor Johnson stated the City of Independence's overall property values will decrease 8.8 percent in 2011.

Wenck stated the human services portion of the Hennepin County budget decreased substantially from 2009 to 2010.

Commissioner Johnson responded the human services portion of the budget decreased about 10 percent. Part of the reason for the decrease is the State is now handling childcare payments instead of having the payments pass through the County. Overall, human services had about a 4 percent budget decrease. Many human service vendors were cut from the 2010 budget.

Mayor Johnson asked what the County would be doing with redistricting.

Commissioner Johnson stated the County Board decides who will be elected for a four-year term in the 2012 election and who will be elected for a two-year term in 2012. The County has historically always done its own redistricting. Northwest Hennepin County is growing, but all other areas are not, which will affect redistricting.

Mayor Johnson thanked Commissioner Johnson for his visit.

8. DIRECTOR RAY MCCOY – WEST HENNEPIN PUBLIC SAFETY. APRIL 2010 ACTIVITY REPORT.

McCoy stated through the end of April, the number of incidents in Independence was roughly the same as 2009. Nothing major happened in the month of April. West Hennepin Public Safety received a thank-you from the Hennepin County Attorney for investigating the dog bite incident earlier this year. The vacation and comp plan budget looks strong going into the summer months. WHPS will be an officer short into 2011, so the Police Commission had approved hiring a part-time officer from the City of Medina, but has since reversed the decision and instead use the same approach that was used in 2009. WHPS received its final 2009 Audit Report, which came back with two comments regarding segregation of duties and the need for a statement printed on the back of WHPS checks. The Highway 12 detour is going well. There are some issues with the stoplights on County Road 6, but Mn/DOT seems to have fixed those problems.

Johnson stated he noticed the traffic backs up when there is not enough room to make a right-hand turn on County Road 6.

McCoy added the high level of afternoon traffic on County Road 83 also adds to the congestion on County Road 6. Mn/DOT will be placing No Parking signs on County Road 90 for the Memorial Day Holiday and WHPS will be helping direct traffic to Lewis Cemetery.

Johnson asked how the recent seatbelt enforcement went.

McCoy responded one of the requirements of WHPS's Safe and Sober grant is to conduct high-visibility seatbelt enforcement, which was conducted on May 24. WHPS stopped 136 people for not wearing their seatbelts.

Johnson asked if bus drivers have seatbelts.

McCoy responded bus drivers are required to wear their seatbelts. The fine for not wearing a seatbelt is \$25 to the State and \$75 to the court system. He noted area chiefs have been discussing the Tour De Tonka. Most of the police departments in the area have been charging for police services. WHPS uses reserve officers for the event and has put in a request to charge \$25 per hour for the Department's time. Because of the Highway 12 construction, the bike route will stay in the southern part of Independence.

The Ironman tournament also uses police services during its event. McCoy suggested making reimbursing WHPS part of the application process for these large events.

Johnson stated the Chamber of Commerce wanted to park a semi-trailer on Drake Drive to direct traffic to downtown Maple Plain.

Betts asked where the trailer would be located.

Johnson explained the trailer would be on Drake Drive between County Road 90 and the barricades.

Wenck stated Delano did the same thing when Highway 12 was under construction in their city and it seemed to be effective.

Johnson noted there already are a lot of signs along County Road 6.

McCoy stated the location would work from a public safety standpoint, but asked that if the Council approved the request they require the trailer be removed two weeks before construction is complete.

Motion by Betts, second by Wallace, to approve the request to place a semi-trailer on Drake Drive with the requirement that the trailer be moved 7 days before the end of construction. Ayes: Betts, Johnson, Spencer, Wallace, Wenck. Nays: none. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

9. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE REPLACEMENT OF THE CARD ACCESS EQUIPMENT.

Hirsch stated the City, WHPS and Maple Plain Fire Department need a new card reader system because the current system can no longer make new cards.

McCoy added the current card access system for the Maple Plain Fire Department is the old system from the former WHPS location in Maple Plain. The system currently being used by Independence and WHPS has software that is no longer supported and if the system breaks down it cannot be repaired unless the person who services the system can find spare parts from somewhere else. It would be less expensive to purchase a new card access system if Independence, Maple Plain Fire Department and WHPS all purchase a system together. A new system would allow the City to hand out cards instead of keys to access the building. The keys can be programmed to allow access only for certain periods of time and would track access into the building. Three bids were received for the project. McCoy recommended moving forward with the Denex system, which is not a proprietary system.

Johnson asked if the door into the City office would be affected and if a different card would be needed for the front door and the office door.

Hirsch responded the card access into the City office would be a part of a new system. The cards could be programmed to allow access into both the Community Center and the City office.

McCoy stated WHPS has a used server that would work for the access system.

Hirsch stated she would recommend using money originally budgeted for new doors in the Community Center and wait to replace the doors another year. The City did not have a problem this winter with the building heaving from the frost, so the doors do not need to be replaced this year.

Wenck asked if the City has had security problems.

Hirsch stated the City office was broken into a couple of years ago.

Wenck asked if the new card access system is a need or want.

Hirsch responded the new system would be a need in probably a year or so if the system breaks down, but at this point could be considered a want.

Wenck asked what happens if the City does not purchase a new card access system.

Hirsch responded the City would be in a tougher position because the system would need to be replaced immediately.

Wenck asked if keys could still be used.

Hirsch responded keys could still be used. She noted she did not know how a system malfunction would affect WHPS and the Maple Plain Fire Department.

Wenck asked if the item had been budgeted.

Hirsch responded she has \$10,000 in the budget to replace the Community Center doors, but that project can wait another year because this one is more pressing.

McCoy stated the project would save the City, WHPS and the Fire Department money by purchasing a system together. He noted the Fire Department is planning to move ahead with the project, so it would cost the City more in the future to replace the system.

Motion by Johnson, second by Betts, to move forward with the purchase of card access equipment. Ayes: Betts, Johnson, Spencer, Wallace. Nays: Wenck. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

10. NITE TO UNITE (REPLACES NATIONAL NIGHT OUT) – NEED NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY HOST/HOSTESSES.

McCoy stated WHPS is looking for residents who are willing to host a party in their neighborhood. Anyone interested should contact WHPS.

11. APPROVAL TO CANCEL THE TUESDAY, JUNE 8 CITY COUNCIL MEETING DUE TO THE LACK OF AGENDA ITEMS.

Johnson stated there is nothing for the June 8 Council agenda.

Hirsch stated a work session also needed to be scheduled to discuss the approaches for the Lindgren Lane and Independence Road project assessments. She noted no decisions regarding the assessments would be made during a work session.

Hirsch and the Council discussed their schedules during the month of June.

Motion by Betts, second by Wenck, to move the date of the June 22, 2010 Council Meeting to June 29, 2010. Ayes: Betts, Johnson, Spencer, Wallace, Wenck. Nays: none. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

The Council decided to hold a work session at 7:30 a.m. on June 18, 2010.

Motion by Betts, second by Wallace, to cancel the June 8, 2010 Council meeting due to a lack of agenda items. Ayes: Betts, Johnson, Spencer, Wallace, Wenck. Nays: none. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

12. OPEN/MISC.

Carole Peter

Peter spoke on behalf of the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission (PSCWMC) to update the Council on the Commission's budgeting process. The second generation plan for the Commission was completed in 2009. The Board of Soil and Water Resources requires the plan be updated again for 2012, which means it must be completed in 2011. If the total cost of the update were included in the 2011 budget, it would result in an increase of about \$16,000 in the City's contribution. The PSCWMC is looking at various options to deal with the situation, including asking the Board of Soil and Water Resources (BSWR) to extend the due date of the plan update so that the cost can be spread over multiple years. The Commission is also looking into extending the due date of the third generation plan in order to partner with another watershed to help offset some of the costs of the update.

Johnson asked what the third generation plan would include.

Peter responded the second generation plan looked at resources in the watershed. The third generation plan includes specific implementation procedures.

Wenck questioned the overall cost of the plan and the timing. Updating the plan is only required every 10 years. However, many grants require the plan be updated sooner, so the PSCWMC could miss out on some funding.

Betts asked how much the City of Independence currently pays to the PSCWMC.

Spencer stated the City contributed approximately \$27,500 in 2010. The 2011 PSCWMC budget without the plan update is expected to stay the same or see up to a 1.3 percent increase.

Wallace stated that if the City is facing decreasing revenues, then the PSCWMC needs to be aware of that issue.

Johnson stated the problem includes BWSR, which is the agency mandating the update.

Spencer stated BWSR wants the PSCWMC to update its second generation plan sooner in order to be more specific. If the PSCWMC can extend the update process, it would allow the inclusion of the TMDLs in process.

Betts asked what the outcome of spending money on the plan would be, which is what most taxpayers are concerned about. She suggested better publication of the PSCWMC's work.

Johnson noted that the PSCWMC had a hard time finding property owners who would participate in projects for which there was grant funding.

Peter stated she would tell the PSCWMC that the Council does not want to see huge budget increases now, wants more concrete examples for what the money being spent is paying for, and wants input on further budget discussions. She stated the PSCWMC would be discussing the issue at its next meeting.

13. ADJOURN.

Motion by Spencer, second by Betts, to adjourn the City Council meeting at 8:45 p.m. Ayes: Betts, Johnson, Spencer, Wallace, Wenck. Nays: none. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted by Christina Scipioni, Recording Secretary