

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Regular Meeting of the City Council
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

AGENDA
September 11, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

B. ROLL CALL: Vacant ___ LEEHY_X_ HARRIS_X_
MIAZGA_X_ GUSTAFSON_X_

STAFF PRESENT: THONGVANH_X_

C. PRESENTATION

1. Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce - Shannon Watson (Director of Public Affairs)

Shannon Watson

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) visits city partners in Washington, Ramsey, and Dakota counties every two years to provide updates. It allows opportunities for support and partnerships. SPACC is a value proposition to Falcon Heights such as an advocate, convener, connection maker, supporter, advisory, and communicator. We are about promoting and expanding opportunities for businesses to create healthy partnerships. SPACC presents and partners with over 120 events per year with the goals of educating, elevating, advocating and celebrating events that are valuable to business members and elected officials.

We are partnering up with eight other east metro chambers to offer annual leadership awards, and it will take place in Vadnais Heights in October. In addition, we are presenting a panel on reputation risk on October 30 at Como Zoo, and the annual session preview and east metro elected officials meet and greet will be on November 14 in Roseville.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. August 7, 2019 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes
2. August 28, 2019 City Council Meeting Minutes

Approved 4-0

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Public Hearing to Consider Fire Inspections for High Density Residential and Businesses

City Administrator Thongvanh

It was introduced at the June 5, 2019, City Council Workshop. The Fire Marshal inspects rental units in single-family, duplex, and triplex properties. This licensing program currently leaves out a large percentage of the city's population, all high-density rental buildings and businesses not currently inspected. In addition, the Fire Marshal provides fire inspection for the City of Lauderdale on businesses and high-density residential. City Staff feels that it is important to

protect the health and safety of residents and the public who visit our businesses and live in our community.

The Fire Marshal will only inspect the common areas of the high-density rental buildings and businesses.

Mayor Gustafson opened the public hearing.

Kevin Schleif, Stouts Pub Owner (1611 Larpenteur Ave W)

In order to get insurance for any business, you have to be inspected. Once the insurance receives the report, they will inspect the business as well. We use a private entity to check Ansul systems, fire extinguishers, tags, water line and more. We want to make sure it is up to date. Why are we paying twice for a fire inspection? Can the approved vendor submit the inspection report once a year to the city? I left a message to my broker to see if the city inspection will be approved by the insurance company.

City Administrator Thongvanh stated that the city has an approved vendor to inspect the equipment and the Fire Marshal inspects the footprint of the building, right signage for capacity, and lockboxes. The city inspection is different from vendors because we are not looking at the system but the whole business in terms of health and safety.

Michael Poeschl (Falcon Heights Fire Marshal) stated that the city inspects the egress, ingress, lockbox, occupancy, and building footprints because the fire vendors do not inspect it. In addition, we do not get the report from the fire vendors, which is why we are providing this service to help the damage expense of a fire situation. We can also provide a letter to insurance companies to meet their needs.

John McDonald, Property Owner (1490 Larpenteur Ave W)

If an insurance agent or representative from the company visits my building, can they submit the report for a fire inspection? The insurance agent does a walkthrough, reviews the signage, smoke detectors, CO2 detectors, and safety of the building.

City Administrator Thongvanh advised Mr. McDonald to contact the insurance company if the city's inspection will be valid for them. The city is reliable for all businesses and ordinances.

Hawa Samatar (1550 Larpenteur Ave W)

Last week, our building had a very high level of carbon monoxide, and tenants were not notified by management to leave. I would like to know what this proposed ordinance and amendment can do to make sure that everyone is safe. The garage and walls are leaking and flooding, and the parking lot is not safe for residents to catch the Metro Mobility bus.

City Administrator Thongvanh stated that this issue is broader than the ordinance. Ms. Samatar came to the City Council workshop on Wednesday, September 4, and city staff and I looked at the problem. A resident's CO detector went off, as the owners hired a contractor to power wash their garage and were using a gas powered washer. In addition, they put tape over the CO sensor, which would not allow the sensor to activate the fans. When the Fire Department arrived, they took off the tape and

activated the fans, opened the garage and advised residents to leave the units. They tested the area and it was greater than 300 ppm. Once it was clear, the test was back at 20-30 ppm.

The property owner is on notice for this incident. City staff will contact residents to find out which units are leaking before we address the issue to Sherman Associates.

Donald Sobania, Owner of 1510 Larpenteur Ave (1510 Crawford Ave)

When the former Fire Marshal did the inspection, it was part of our property taxes. It did work because he will point items that needed to be fixed. I want to state that the city can be on a slippery slope to the apartment managers. There is a place for inspections but be aware of the slippery slope of taking care of every need to every person and how they will perceive it.

Council Member Leehy Moved, Approved 4-0

F. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. General Disbursements through: 9/05/19 \$34,648.36
Payroll through: 8/31/19 \$20,210.08
2. Approval of City License(s)
3. Promotion of Colin Callahan to Senior Public Works Worker
4. Appointment of Jeffrey Guertin to the Falcon Heights Volunteer Fire Department

City Administrator Thongvanh

Colin has been with the city since 2001 and has great knowledge of the city. He is a valuable employee to the city and always helps the residents. He has shown excellent judgment, strong work ethic, willingness to work on new projects, and a great team player.

Jeffrey Guertin

I appreciate your consideration and time. I look forward to joining the fire department team.

Council Member Harris Moved, Approved 4-0

G. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Strategic Planning Proposal

City Administrator Thongvanh

HueLife has been discussed at numerous city council workshops and retreats. The goal is for HueLife to develop an initial plan to guide staff and the city council for the next two to five years that will be integrated into the Long-range Financial Plan. HueLife will provide a two-day session to look at different aspects of the organization, environmental scan data, practical visioning, strategic direction, and implementation timeline. In the last workshop, the city council discussed inviting one member from each commission and elected candidates to be a part of the strategic planning process.

The city council held several workshops to discuss the 2020 proposed budget and will see a preliminary budget levy at the next meeting. In addition, the city council must adopt the preliminary budget at the end of September. The city is currently at 6.9% levy raise, and in the last two years, we had 24% per year. It is a huge difference because the city is doing several

long-range planning activities for the community, which helps maintain our Triple-A bond rating.

Council Member Miazga Moved, Approved 4-0

H. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Council Member Miazga

- NYFS “A Taste of Northeast” event is on Thursday, October 10, at 5:30 pm. Advance tickets are \$30 and \$40 at the door. You can purchase tickets online at www.nyfs.org or me. I still have three tickets left.
- I drafted a resolution calling on the city to oppose racist and xenophobic language. The resolution was introduced to the council in the August workshop and was pushed to the Community Engagement Commission (CEC), which was passed unanimously. The resolution was present at the September workshop and it was a 1-3 vote.
- The Falcon Heights Sustainable Actions Fair was a great turn out. The Environment Commission did a wonderful job.
- The Environment Commission is still drafting the native landscaping pollinator ordinance and will be at the workshop soon. The commission unanimously voted to have a compost site in Falcon Heights and will be at the workshop.

Council Member Leehy

- Parks and Recreation Commission meeting is on Monday, October 7, at Community Park (2050 Roselawn Ave) and the meeting starts at 6:30 pm.
- On September 5th, I was invited by the University of Minnesota to visit St. Anthony Falls Laboratory, and it was the 80th anniversary. It is a unique laboratory, and it was a great opportunity to visit the place.

Council Member Harris

- Planning Commission meeting is on September 24, 7pm at City Hall.
- In the September workshop, we discussed a new website for the city, and I am excited about it.

Mayor Gustafson

- CEC meeting is on September 16, 5 pm before the Neighborhood Liaison event at 7 pm. We will discuss Human Rights Day. Everyone is welcome to attend the Neighborhood Liaison event.
- City Administrator Thongvanh and I are still in the process of finding a fire chief for the fire department. We are exploring different options.
- I want to thank city staff on their work to revamp our website and am excited about it.

City Administrator Thongvanh

- The website will be coming to the next September meeting for the city council’s approval.
- The basketball hoop will be delayed again due to the rain. It will cost the city about \$2,000 worth of concrete, and we do not want the rain to damage it.

I. COMMUNITY FORUM:

J. ADJOURNMENT: 8:54 P.M.

Randy Gustafson, Mayor

Dated this 11th day of September, 2019

Sack Thongvanh, City Administrator