

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
City Council Workshop
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
April 5, 2023
6:30 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:42 p.m.
- B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON__X__ LEEHY__X__
 MEYER__X__ WASSENBERG__X__ WEHYEE__X__
- STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN__X__ NELSON__X__

- C. POLICY ITEMS:
1. Law Enforcement Contract Discussion

City Administrator Linehan shares that the Ramsey County Sheriff drafted a response to us.

Councilmember Leehy says that we'd still interact with Ramsey County so it's important not to burn any bridges; we're in a similar boat to 2021. On July 11, 2017, St. Anthony gave notice to Falcon Heights that they were not renewing their services with us.

Councilmember Wassenberg says he (Bostrom) took feedback from the community to distill it down to 4 basic principles or areas of focus.

Councilmember Leehy says she appreciates that he took feedback from the City.

Councilmember Wassenberg asks about the RFP (Request for Proposal).

City Administrator Linehan says that if we did go out to RFP, \$21,000 is not budgeted for, so we'd either need to pull from other things or amend it.

Councilmember Wassenberg asks what that amount would cover.

Linehan says that Bostrom would assist with the preparation of solicitation and act as a representative of the City. Linehan must ask the attorneys if an RFP is needed because this is a service provided versus a good.

Councilmember Meyer is curious if there's an opportunity for further conversation with Bostrom.

City Administrator Linehan says he'll bring a contract to the Council but didn't want to add it to the agenda unless we were interested in going in that direction.

Councilmember Leehy asks if we need to determine tonight if we are contracting with CVBI as the consultant or seeking other options.

Councilmember Linehan says yes, that is the direction Bostrom is seeking.

Councilmember Wehyee/Meyer both ask what incentive Bostrom has by getting a contract.

Councilmember Leehy adds that Bostrom will help open doors for us.

City Administrator Linehan says things would go differently if he were to cold call police departments.

Mayor Gustafson states that it's helpful to put what we've learned into actionable items. How to do it? This is what the community is expecting.

Councilmember Wassenberg thinks we could be somewhat flexible, but having a community officer that residents have a connection to is important.

City Administrator Linehan sees the benefit of this is having some say in who patrols our city.

Councilmember Leehy feels like the City is split on whether they want to see officers patrolling streets.

City Administrator Linehan says he'll add Bostrom on a future agenda and try to get a Zoom scheduled to discuss options.

Councilmember Leehy says that, depending on the timing of our rollout, there are grant funds available if we're doing some type of new model.

2. Inclusion Efforts

City Administrator Linehan says this is a continuation of an item they didn't get to on the Council's retreat agenda. A lot has been done in the past ten months or so. But, he knows they can do better. Linehan received a proposal from Third Sphere, which he shares with councilmembers. Linehan wants to keep inclusion efforts in the forefronts of our minds.

Councilmember Leehy says Third Sphere looks at what's feasible and says it's not a cookie cutter plan.

City Administrator Linehan shares there is \$30,000 in our inclusion budget every year and he wants to make sure we keep inclusion efforts moving forward. He tells Council that no decision is needed tonight. He adds that we also have an internship available again that the City recently started

doing. We could make the Administrative Intern an Administrative and Inclusion Intern. This is another option.

Councilmember Wassenberg asks it was essentially workshops and training for key staff, Council, commissioners, etc.

Councilmember Leehy says that working with this organization would help us develop a plan.

Councilmember Wehyee asks if there's a goal we're attempting to reach or if it's just thought of an ongoing process.

Councilmember Leehy says there would be measurable markers for goals / our plan that the organization would help us develop.

Mayor Gustafson says that part of this process would be to develop goals but to develop ways to measure it too.

Councilmember Leehy says it helps us with personal growth and development, but also helps with community awakening.

Councilmember Meyer says it's very abstract at this moment. Once we go on that journey, how do we have actual opportunities to connect and interact?

Councilmember Wassenberg asks if we have a list of inclusion goals that we previously set.

Mayor Gustafson says the task force document is as close as we have to actionable goals. He adds that the internship would be a great opportunity for a student.

Councilmember Wehyee asks about page four of the Third Sphere document. The DEI isn't defined. How does Third Sphere define DEI? What do they mean by diversity and inclusion? Wehyee says that on page four, there are some actionable items the Council may want to reconsider or redefine because some are out of our control.

City Administrator Linehan explains that this presentation was an example of one specific to an educational setting.

Councilmember Leehy adds that it's similar to how Bostrom helped us with policing services. Third Sphere would get a sense of our community and get feedback. Then, they'd put something specific together for the City.

Councilmember Wassenberg says that it's important to know what we want out of it.

Councilmember Leehy says Ramon (Dr. Ramon A. Pastrano) offers experiences or field trips to create awareness as well.

Councilmember Wehyee wonders, using Bostrom as an example, if we could find someone willing to help draw the ideas out.

Councilmember Leehy says that she thinks it would be similar to the task force. And, while it's nice that we got an award for creating a task force, Leehy says that she wants to show that we truly are a caring community. And, that we need an expert to give us a tool kit to move things forward. Maybe they recommend a particular survey be done at the three-year mark, for example.

Councilmember Wassenberg states that it might be helpful to read the task force documents prior to meeting and discussing further and to bring notes.

City Administrator Linehan says that he doesn't want to rush but he also doesn't want to push it out too much. He will get an updated list from this group and a bit more background. Then, Council can decide if that's the route we want to go.

3. ARPA Update

City Administrator Linehan says April 30th is the next deadline to report any ARPA expenditures. We haven't spent any of the \$604,000. Little Canada received one million dollars. One year, they spent half of it on their park. Right now, it's not assigned to a particular fund. Last year, we reported it as a loss. ARPA funds allow us to take up to ten million dollars and use it towards almost anything, except pensions, legal debts or any anti-government activity such as a protest. But, if you do sub-grants, then the reporting gets more complex. We could use it towards the 2023 PMP. We could use it towards the Ruggles Path. The more we dedicate ARPA funding towards, the more reporting.

Councilmember Leehy asks if it could be used for the park.

Linehan says yes.

Mayor Gustafson says we could put it towards four items, such as some towards increased law enforcement costs, the roadway to the school, etc.

Linehan states that, in theory, the purchase of the park could come from these funds.

Mayor Gustafson says that the funds benefitted the health and vitality of the community. We put in a sidewalk to the school as a public safety measure.

Linehan shares that they didn't want you to balance the levy, originally.

Mayor Gustafson states that we raised our taxes and have made efforts over the last eight years so that they would have money for our parks. This money allows us to do a sidewalk on Garden Ave.

Councilmember Wehyee asks why they need a compelling story to spend the money.

Linehan says that they legally don't need one. But, with tracking, articles often come out. You hear what big cities are doing. He adds that he'd put some towards the sanitary sewer since we lost significant revenue in 2020 when the State Fair was shut down, and the ripple effects on sanitary sewer funds.

Leehy thinks splitting it up to showcase actual losses is a good plan.

Mayor Gustafson believes there will be stories down the road about how ARPA money was spent.

Linehan says before he brings anything to Council, he just wanted to have a plan to bring to accounting first. On April 26th, he will bring a list to City Council.

4. No Mow May

Mayor Gustafson asks if we have to have public hearings to make No Mow May permanent.

City Administrator Linehan says yes, that it's best to make it an ordinance.

Councilmember Leehey says she doesn't think we have to go all through May.

Councilmember Wassenberg states that it's really just a matter of saying we're not enforcing code during that time for lawns.

Mayor Gustafson reminds councilmembers that it's also not mandatory to participate.

Wassenberg wonders how this ties into front yard gardens and natural grasses. So, he suggests adding the word "turf" before grass for clarity.

Councilmembers discuss the wording of grass going to seed.

Linehan asks if we want to do this as an annual resolution rather than an ordinance, which is permanent.

Councilmember Wehyee says that it had a good reception last year. Based on that, he thinks it makes sense to codify it.

Linehan asks for direction from councilmembers if this should be intended for residential only.

Mayor Gustafson says yes. That way, Public Works is exempt.

Linehan says he'll play with the wording and present it on April 26th to the Council.

5. Public Works Staffing Update

Linehan reminds Council that Public Works Director, Tim Pittman, will work his final day on Friday (April 7). This is the first Director position that the City has hired in sixteen years.

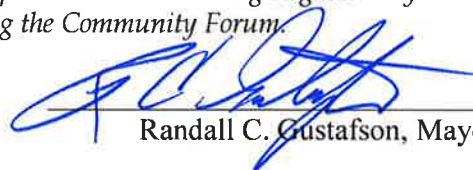
Linehan will offer the Interim Director of Public Works position for a period of three to six months.

Linehan also shared that he has an offer out for the vacant full-time Public Works position.

D. ADJOURNMENT: 9:27 p.m.

Council Member Meyer
motions to adjourn the
meeting; approved 5-0.

DISCLAIMER: City Council Workshops are held monthly as an opportunity for Council Members to discuss policy topics in greater detail prior to a formal meeting where a public hearing may be held and/or action may be taken. Members of the public that would like to make a comment or ask questions about an item on the agenda for an upcoming workshop should send them to mail@falconheights.org prior to the meeting. Alternatively, time is regularly allotted for public comment during Regular City Council Meetings (typically 2nd and 4th Wednesdays) during the Community Forum.


Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor

Dated this 5th day of April, 2023


Jack Linehan, City Administrator