

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

MINUTES
May 3, 2023
7:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:42 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON__X__ LEEHY__X__
 MEYER__X__ WASSENBERG__X__ WEHYEE__X__

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN__X__ VAN DER WERFF__X__

C. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Law Enforcement Contract Discussion

City Administrator Linehan introduces the discussion as City consultant Bostrom of the Center for Values-Based Initiatives (CVBI) teleconferences with the City Council to discuss the next steps in soliciting responses from potential law enforcement agencies.

City Councilmembers discuss possible policing options and collaborations with different neighboring enforcement agencies to police the City of Falcon Heights. City consultant Bostrom used community input to write down ideas for policing and wants to talk through the options. He emphasizes he will discuss any potential agencies with the City Council.

City Administrator Linehan suggests discussing the most obvious options for agencies.

The council discussed various options with nearby agencies and provided direction on which agencies to solicit responses, and which agencies to not request proposals.

City consultant Bostrom states this discussion is very helpful for him as well as for the enforcement agencies to help them determine if they are able to provide their policing services in Falcon Heights and handle calls within a timely fashion.

Bostrom highlights differences between options:

Option 1 – Expand service area to include Falcon Heights. Very feasible for neighboring agencies. The city would be responsible for paying when officers are needed in Falcon Heights.

Councilmember Leehy asks a question in regards to traffic enforcement: Who would take the Larpenteur/Snelling portion? City consultant Bostrom states that from his previous experience as Sheriff, he knows agencies always come to an agreement in who is responsible.

Option 2 – Community/School Resource Officer

Recently retired officers, wanting to work another 5 to 10 years, but not with a traditional Sheriff's office. Most of these officers check the boxes that the City of Falcon Heights would look for in its officers.

36-hour shift Tuesday through Thursday, at school, children see officers. Will also visit council meetings to show availability. And they drive all streets throughout the day, GPS provides accountability; preventative patrol.

With nearby agencies, there's no need to train, as their officers are already familiar with the area. Falcon Heights would only need to interview the person they would want. Affordable option.

After hours, follows Option 1.

Bostrom stresses these are official officers.

Wassenberg states it reduces need for officers from other agencies to patrol.

Bostrom states that Falcon Heights has the ability to choose their officer and have the officer be present at meetings and at school to show support of the community and high visibility.

Wehyee asks if cost would be similar as Option 1.

Bostrom states it would cost more than Option 1. There would be an extra expense for the part time licensed officer to be present.

Leehy comments that should we go down Option 2, it benefits the schools and helps them get familiar and embrace the officers so that they are not intimidated by the police officers.

Potential of several retirees wanting to apply, would we be able to hire multiple officers?

Bostrom answers it would be ideal to hire two or three officers. Provides more flexibility to stay later at night if needed.

Option 3 - Manage peak times such as at State Fair. Segment of and have dedicated parking enforcement officer based on events. More costly; it would resolve a number of parking enforcement issues. More strategic traffic enforcement than Options 1 and 2. Would be written in contract to have 1 car patrol streets each day of the year.

Invite officers to city events to show visibility.

On a monthly basis, receive report from your local officer at a council meeting.

Bostrom states he would need to do more research into reports to determine costs.

Wassenberg states that he does not want to get caught up in numbers at the moment.

Leehy asks how Option 3 differs from the other two options.

Option 3 would cover everything in Options 1 and 2. Stipulate the assignment for parking enforcement officers during a certain time rather than using regular police calls for parking enforcements. Would want to add traffic enforcement to avoid accidents and resident complaints.

Proactive, once-a-day police visit.

Attend city events and city council meetings.

Option 3 is a very cost-effective option. Compared to our current contract, we would have to pay for 3 FTEs rather than our current contract allotment of 6 FTEs. Can be seen as a package deal for both Falcon Heights and the agency the city selects.

Leehy asks if we could select officers. Bostrom states you will get to know some of the officers, as most are assigned to areas. For city events and council meetings, wants input in selecting the officer who is familiar with the area.

Linehan states it would be great to have a community officer; worries that agencies are not able to provide that. But, option 1 would be a more feasible option, and is very similar as what we have in place now and would provide us with good service.

Wehyee thanks Bostrom and states while he likes Option 1; he is curious about Option 2 as it is unique and wonders how we would explain this to the community. Option 2 is his most favorite.

Bostrom states these options are very feasible as agencies would not have to hire more officers and would allow them to agree to assisting the City of Falcon Heights. In discussions with the chiefs of the agencies, Bostrom will lead with Option 2.

Leehy is in favor of Option 2

Gustafson states that Option 1 is what we are experiencing now for services. Currently we get 1 hour a day. Option 1 would already provide this.

Leehy asks if the officer in Option 2 would build relationships with local business and multifamily homes.

Bostrom states that Option 2 would allow for that. During the week, they can stop in at businesses, restaurants and apartment buildings. This also allows more visibility of officers in the community.

Leehy is concerned about Friday through Monday, when the community police officer is not there, would that create a spike in crime?

Bostrom states calls for service are generally during afterhours. He thinks it's not noticeable and there will be a liaison there during administrative hours; a policing liaison officer.

City Administrator Linehan states we're currently using a retainer model with the Sherriff's office. These options discussed are taking a more as-needed, cost approach. He notes that we also have the option to select a more hybrid approach. This would allow to save on the budget while meeting the policing demand.

Gustafson states we can pay more for the parking enforcement officer during the State Fair.

City Administrator Linehan states this discussion has provided a good direction on how to create a strategy for him and City consultant Bostrom to approach the different potential enforcement agencies. He will keep the City Council updated on the discussion.

2. ARPA Update

City Councilmembers and City Administrator Linehan discussed options on the allocations of the ARPA funds.

City Administrator Linehan states it was recommended by the City auditor that the ARPA funds be allocated to non-procurement expenditures.

City Councilmembers agreed with City Administrator Linehan to allocate the ARPA funds towards the Metropolitan Council sewer charges.

D. ADJOURNMENT: 9:15 PM

Council Member Wassenberg
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 3rd day of May, 2023



Jack Linehan, City Administrator