

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

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 5 2025
6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:33 PM

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON_X_ LEEHY____
Eric Meyer arrived at 7:24 PM.
MIELKE_X_ WASSENBERG_X_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN_X_ JOHNSON_X_

C. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Continuation or Recap of the 2025 Council Goal Setting Session

Wassenberg expressed support for organizing topics into groups, suggesting that each group could be discussed during a dedicated workshop. Mielke emphasized the importance of prioritization in the process. Linehan outlined the next steps, which include a consultant review and presenting a rough draft at the April workshop. Following that, specific goals will be prioritized and assigned timelines.

2. State Fair Task Force (SFTF) Recommendation on E-Meter Street Parking

Linehan summarizes that the SFTF and the City Council met in February to discuss the implementation of E-Meters. The current proposal focuses on the Northome and Northeast Quadrant Neighborhoods – areas with existing free, one-sided street parking. Streets with existing permit-only or no-parking designations would remain unchanged. A map of the proposed areas was shared. Hamline Ave. and Larpenteur are excluded due to them being county-owned roads. Falcon Woods would remain a free, unrestricted parking area except for its existing permit zone. Other residential permit parking areas are only applicable during the workweek and are open on the weekends.

The Task Force and ParkMobile recommend issuing one complimentary 12-day pass per household through the ParkMobile app, valid across all parking zones. Residents would register a vehicle (tied to a license plate) to claim their pass. The thought is to allow residents to purchase extra passes, potentially at a discounted rate. A one-day parking pass would be \$25. Police and parking ambassadors would enforce compliance using license plate recognition. Non-registered vehicles may be ticketed.

There was discussion about the logistics of distributing codes:

- **Wassenberg** suggested mailing the codes proactively to all eligible addresses.
- **Linehan** noted that requiring residents to pick up codes would reduce misuse but increase staff workload. Mailing codes could be easier and promote higher utilization. Currently, they get an individualized letter with permits. Could use the

same idea and the city generates codes. Residents will sign-up through the app which will require them to fill in their license and registration.

- **Gustafson** emphasized that requiring residents to come to City Hall for a basic pass could create complications and long lines before the fair. Instead, only require in-person visits for additional passes and make available to request online as well.

Mielke explains the logic behind the program. People can't use ParkMobile to find open spaces. People will still drive around to look for parking spots. The fair charges for parking, so why shouldn't Falcon Heights. Other cities can add a sales tax to increase revenue, but Falcon Heights doesn't have a large commercial base. Wassenberg adds this would also encourage the use of park and rides. Mielke points out the complimentary resident pass would not guarantee a spot on the street; it will also not be tied to a zone and makes parking for residents available in all zones. Linehan adds the paid parking for fairgoers is only valid for one day.

There was also a discussion about zone management and enforcement:

- **Wassenberg** wonders how zones should be set up, and what kind of technology is needed to read plates for compliance.
- **Linehan** explains ParkMobile suggests 1 zone per block. Keep in mind the more zones, the more codes need to be generated, making it more cumbersome. ParkMobile can supply plate-reading technology for the ambassadors.
- **Mielke** wants to use ParkMobile's expertise on determining zones and pricing.
- **Gustafson** notes data from the pilot year could help refine zones and enforcement in the future.
- **Meyer** wonders if ambassadors are paid positions.
- **Linehan** explains ambassadors will be city employees, and would support enforcement and assist fairgoers, modeled after the St. Paul ambassador program. They can be an extension of SAPD. They will verify vehicles through the app, help guide visitors, and report violations to police.
- **Meyer** suggests scheduling ambassadors in shifts, having a supervisor and designated break areas (potentially coordinated with churches or local businesses).
- **Gustafson** notes pairing them up for safety and ending shifts at 8 PM.

The council continues to discuss details for the ambassadors, what kind of information is needed from Park Mobile before the public hearing, and having a rep available. They also discuss creating a FAQ.

The council and Linehan discuss revenue, costs, and future planning:

- A flat \$25 daily parking fee is proposed, with no added service fees. ParkMobile takes ~20% to cover marketing and administrative costs.
- Proceeds will go toward administrative overhead and the city's capital improvement fund, ultimately helping to reduce the tax burden.
- Examples of capital uses include roads, sewer upgrades, and parks.
- Tickets for violations will be \$100 and processed through the court system.
- Vehicles will only be towed if they create a safety hazard or remain unmoved for over 48 hours.
- The Council will need to adopt an annual ordinance establishing State Fair parking dates.

The Council stresses the need to keep the program simple and minimally disruptive in its first year. If successful, it may expand in the future. The emphasis remains on balancing revenue generation with convenience for residents and operational efficiency for staff.

3. Release of Request for Proposal (RFP) for Classification and Compensation Study Consultant

Linehan proposes releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a classification and compensation study and asked the Council for clarification on the desired scope. He emphasized the importance of fair and equitable compensation, noting that the city is currently the only one in the area without an established classification and compensation system. Without pay ranges, it's difficult to complete the required pay equity reports for the state.

The proposed study would evaluate positions – not individuals – and recommend a point system or scale based on job descriptions.

Key questions for the RFP scope:

- Should the study be limited to full-time employees only, or should it also include part-time, seasonal staff, council members, and commissioners?
- Should the consultant also analyze the city's benefits package? Including this would increase both the cost and complexity of the study.

Council Discussion:

- **Meyer** asks how much has been budgeted for the study.
- **Mielke** suggests that the benefits analysis could be postponed until next year and that the city might gather benefit comparison data from other cities in the meantime.
- **Linehan** responds that data from the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) could help benchmark benefits.
- **Gustafson** points out that compensation includes both salary and benefits, and external insight could be valuable.
- **Wassenberg** questions whether analyzing benefits was worth the additional cost, noting not all employees fully utilize them.
- **Gustafson** responds that the rising cost of benefits makes them a critical part of total compensation and worth examining.
- **Mielke** proposes asking for both options in the RFP, itemized separately, so the Council can decide based on cost.

Linehan adds that excluding benefits would simplify the study, but notes it's still important to understand what benefit offerings could make the city a more competitive and attractive employer. However, benefits analysis can become complex and time intensive. While pay equity remains the top priority, implementation could be costly depending on the findings.

The council agrees that classification and compensation data is important.

4. Future Agenda Topics

Linehan explains the goal-setting session will determine a number of future workshop

topics. There is also a public hearing scheduled for license revocation for a Falcon Heights business depending on communication received from the MN Department of Revenue.

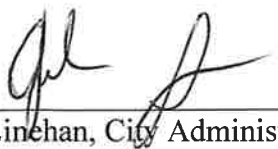
Mielke inquires about the upcoming community meeting regarding Dino's. Linehan explains that the meeting is intended for immediate neighbors to provide feedback on a potential drive-through proposal at the business's current location. Before moving forward with a formal application, the business is seeking preliminary input to gauge neighborhood sentiment. The process would involve a traffic study and the combination of adjacent lots, but the business owner wants to hear from neighbors first before committing to those expenses. The meeting will take place at City Hall. Linehan emphasizes that this is an informational meeting – residents will not vote, and the final decision rests with the business owner based on feasibility and community input. Gustafson notes that the proposal would likely require a variance or Planned Unit Development (PUD). Mielke expresses some concern, referencing the denial of Buhl's Caribou Coffee drive-through in the past.

D. ADJOURNMENT: 9:02 PM

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 23rd day of April, 2025


Jack Linehan, City Administrator