

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

MINUTES
April 23, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:04 PM
- B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON_X_ LEEHY_X_ MEYER_X_
MIELKE_X_ WASSENBERG_X_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN_X_

- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Leehy motions to approve the agenda;
Approved 5-0

- D. PRESENTATION

1. Presentation from Ramsey County Commissioner Garrison McMurtrey and County Manager Ling Becker

Garrison McMurtrey introduces himself; he represents District 3 on the Ramsey County board. He provides an overview of the Ramsey County Board, its role, responsibilities, and who they all represent. Next, McMurtrey points out some of the Ramsey County committee and commission assignments he has, as well as which other boards and associations he serves to represent Ramsey County. His priorities as a County Commissioner specifically are:

- Creating more deeply affordable housing
- Investing in economic development
- Ensuring county services are responsive to the needs of residents.

County Manager Ling Becker introduces herself and provides a background overview of herself and her career. She is passionate about providing pathways for young people to work in government as well as creating partnerships between cities and counties. She transitions into the vision, mission, and goals for Ramsey County. All the work is surrounded by residents and making sure their needs are met. Next, she provides an overview of the services the county provides. The departments are organized into four service teams and a strategic team. The strategic plan advances the organization's mission, vision, and goals, and Becker highlights some of the current strategic priorities of the county. She also provides updates related to transitions in county leadership, some of the budget uncertainties we face, and what they have been working on post-COVID. A lot of services are pushed to counties, creating large shifts in their budget. The county will be starting with their 2026-27 biannual budget. Becker highlights the new Environmental Center that opened on April 1 in Roseville. Lastly, she provides more information about redevelopment projects. The Rice Creek Commons project will start construction soon, which will increase the tax base. The County is also looking for

funding to create a park at RiversEdge along the Mississippi River. Ramsey County is also working on an initiative called Appropriate Response, which looks at sending other resources other than traditional law enforcement. Becker also touches on the Ramsey County Community Economic Development; they are working on legislation to expand its HRA authority to EDA.

McMurtrey further explains some of the priorities he will be working on in his new role, in relation to housing, economic development, and construction projects in his district.

Mielke would like to see pedestrian lights on Larpenteur.

Meyer is interested in learning more about the ripple effect on suburbs when downtown St. Paul gets revitalized. McMurtrey explains that St. Paul does not have a large tax base, as it houses a lot of government, non-profits, and religious institutions, which are tax-exempt. Spurring economic development in this area helps expand the tax base and can alleviate the stress on property taxes in the remainder of the county.

Leehy is thankful for the presentation and would like to learn more about the specifics of the pathways to homeownership. McMurtrey explains it is related to first-generation homeownership.

Meyer wonders how the county interacts with the State Fair and funding. The county will do more research to see what their involvement is.

Council thanks the County Commissioner and Manager for the presentation.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. March 5, 2025 City Council Workshop Minutes
2. March 12, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
3. March 12, 2025 City Council Special Workshop Minutes

Councilmember Wassenberg motions to approve the meeting minutes;
Approved 5-0

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

G. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. General Disbursements through 4/17/25: \$70,899.84
Payroll through 4/8/25: \$25,095.98
Wire Payments through 4/8/25: \$16,835.65
2. Approval of City Licenses
3. Approval of Charge Order with American Environmental and Budget Amendment for Sewer System Maintenance
4. Approval of Transfer of \$100,000 from Fund 426 to Fund 313
5. Approval to Award Contract to GoodPointe Technology for Pavement Condition Assessment

Councilmember Meyer motions to approve the consent agenda;
Approved 5-0

Linehan explains the transfer is happening from the project funds to debt services. The project from 2021 is completed but has leftover funds and those were dedicated to the debt service. The city has been extending contracts in 3-year increments with American

Environmental for sewer maintenance. This year they completed maintenance on the entire sewer system. They had to do more extensive cleaning of tree roots, as well as maintenance of the lift station at Coffman St. and this is not included in the contract, hence the change order. Maintenance helps prevent backups.

H: POLICY ITEMS:

1. Approval of Resolution 25-36 Approving the Final Site Plans and Authorizing Release of Bids for the Community Park Renovation Project

Linehan explains staff has been working with WSB on finalizing plans for the Community Park Project and is ready to release bids for a contractor to assist with demolition and site work, such as the parking lot, and stormwater improvements. This bid will be open from April 24 to May 21 and managed by WSB through bidding software. Bids have already been awarded to vendors for the playground and the park shelter. Staff applied for the DNR grant and the award will be in mid-July; once that is known, the playground will be constructed. The project is on schedule, the final step is the construction of the playground. WSB completed another budget estimate, as plans are being finalized. Walking access will be improved, and gathering places, as well as a splash pad will be added. The splash pad will be a flexible space. There is an itemized list of the budget. To accommodate the grant timeline, all work relating to the playground is being bid as bid alternates, with the goal that we can award these after we know the status of the DNR grant. Staff continue to find ways to cut costs. The total project cost is \$2.47 million. Contingencies are built in to allow for unexpected price increases. The site prep work is very costly.

Mielke wonders about the timing of demolishing the old playground. Linehan explains the old playground will be open until the new one is ready. Once the new playground is up, the old playground area will create green space. Other amenities could use improvements in the future.

Leehy wonders about the installation of an EV charger. Linehan explains a lot of the electric wiring needs to be moved and updated. Once completed, the site is EV-ready. Linehan would prefer to apply for grant funding to install an EV charger, as to alleviate the cost for the city.

Wassenberg wonders about construction coordination. Linehan explains that the general contractor will coordinate the project with sub-contractors on timing. He is seeking clarification on the bid alternates. Linehan explains they will go out to bid but will not get awarded until more is known about the DNR grant. If the city does not receive the grant, they will have estimates to determine if they want to move forward with the items and fund them, or find cheaper alternatives for the rubberized surface, shade canopies, and ornamental fencing. Linehan also explains how the sewer will be upgraded.

Meyer wonders about how the splash pad will be a flexible space. Linehan explains the activator will be moved to the side. The features are the lowest water use and are inground. There is also an opportunity to upgrade the outdoor fitness equipment in the future.

Councilmember Mielke motions to approve Resolution 25-36 Approving the Final Site Plans and Authorizing Release of Bids for the Community Park Renovation Project;
Approved 5-0

I. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mielke notes the Environment Commission met and finalized planning for the Sustainability Fair on March 26, and Olivia, the GreenCorps Member has been working on mapping the city's tree canopy in GIS. The State Fair Task Force also met.

Meyer explains he attended the State Fair Task Force meeting. They continue to discuss how to make it more convenient for residents. The Planning Commission met and looked at City Code updates, to ensure some of the language gets updated.

Leehy mentions the Community Engagement Commission met and the next event will be Spring Together on May 17 at Curtiss Field from 3:30 – 5:00 PM.

Gustafson attended the Metro Mayor Association meeting.

Linehan had a pre-construction meeting with all organizations involved in the pavement management project for Falcon Woods and the Northome neighborhood. They are big projects but are scheduled to be completed prior to the start of summer. St. Paul Regional Water Services has replaced 6 lead lines. The contractor has been out repairing street lighting in the Grove neighborhood. The State Fair Taskforce finalized recommendations for the council related to the pay-by-mobile parking program. Staff are working with Goff Public on communications.

J. COMMUNITY FORUM:

Please limit comments to 3 minutes per person. Items brought before the Council will be referred for consideration. Council may ask questions for clarification, but no council action or discussion will be held on these items.

Kathy Weidler – 1755 Simpson St.

Kathy and some neighbors had questions related to the pay-by-mobile parking program

1. How will the system know parking is at capacity?
2. How were fair administrators involved?
3. When did ParkMobile get involved?
4. Who will be available to help with technical difficulties?

K. ADJOURNMENT: 8:58 PM

Councilmember Meyer motions to adjourn the meeting;
Approved 5-0


Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor

Dated this 28th day of May, 2025


Jack Linehan, City Administrator