

**CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS**  
City Council Special Workshop

City Hall  
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

**MINUTES**

Wednesday, March 4, 2026  
6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER 6:35 P.M.

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON\_X\_ WASSENBERG\_X\_  
MOGEN\_X\_ arrived 6:39 P.M. MAY\_X\_ MIELKE\_X\_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN\_X\_ NELSON\_X\_ JOHNSON\_X\_

C. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Council Standing Rules & Roles Review

City Administrator Linehan provided an overview of the City Council Standing Rules, originally adopted in 2020, and the Council Code of Conduct and Advisory Committee Reference Guide (CCACRG), developed with assistance from the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) and adopted in 2022. These documents are adopted annually. Council Members expressed interest in reviewing and updating these materials, including consideration of a formal code of conduct to address expectations and potential responses to misconduct. Linehan noted that, under Minnesota statute, enforcement options are limited, with censure identified as one of the more formal actions available.

Council Member Mielke recommended incorporating remote meeting requirements into the document. Discussion followed regarding the "Council Role and Authority" section, where Mielke and Council Member May noted some confusion in the language, particularly around Item 2, and emphasized the importance of focusing on policy leadership and desired outcomes.

May asked whether Parts A and B could be combined. Council Member Wassenberg responded that the sections serve different purposes, with Part A establishing authority and Part B outlining expectations. Wassenberg suggested relocating Section 14B into Part A for clarity. May noted that Part B could align more closely with a code of conduct, and Wassenberg agreed that expectations outlined in the document could reference a future code of conduct.

Council Member Mogen questioned the distinction between the current document and a code of conduct. Wassenberg explained that the existing document provides general guidance, while a code of conduct would be more direct and include clearer corrective measures. Linehan added that the document also serves as a guide for a statutory Plan A city. Mogen expressed concern about redundancy across sections and emphasized that

authority is already established by statute, suggesting the document should focus on clarifying roles and expectations.

May observed that the content on page 11 closely resembles a code of conduct and overlaps with other expectation sections. Mayor Gustafson noted that the guidelines were originally developed in response to past Council challenges and were intended to complement the standing rules by explaining how Council Members operate. It was also noted that previous updates removed the requirement for a second motion in certain circumstances.

Council discussed agenda-setting procedures in detail. Linehan explained that staff prepare the proposed agenda to ensure continuity of City operations. Mogen suggested referring to it as a “proposed agenda,” since it is formally adopted by the Council at meetings. Agenda items may be submitted by staff, the Mayor, or two Council Members. May asked about lead times for submitting agenda items. Council reached consensus to revise the language to be less directive (avoiding “shall” and “must”) and to include a submission guideline of 10:00 a.m. on the Thursday before a Council meeting.

Additional revisions were discussed:

- Deleting the first two sentences under the communications and email section.
- Removing reference to “brand” in communications guidance, as noted by Mielke.
- Clarifying the appropriate use of City logo wear.
- Adding a section addressing remote meeting requirements.

Council engaged in an extended discussion regarding the value and necessity of a formal code of conduct. May strongly supported developing a code of conduct to establish clear behavioral expectations and provide guidance for addressing issues. Mielke expressed agreement with having a formal document in place. Mogen cautioned against creating overly prescriptive policies, noting that Council Members are elected officials with term limits and that not all potential scenarios should be codified. Mogen also noted that enforcement mechanisms are limited and that a code of conduct would still require Council Members to address issues directly. May emphasized that having a written framework could support those conversations and provide accountability.

Wassenberg indicated no strong preference but noted that the current Falcon Heights document is more detailed and structured, similar to a training manual, compared to other cities. Mogen described the current version as lengthy and, in some areas, repetitive of statutory language. May suggested that each Council Member bring forward proposed language for a potential code of conduct for future discussion.

Gustafson recommended adopting the current Council Standing Rules as presented. Mogen supported adoption with the understanding that further refinements may occur. Linehan clarified that all existing documents remain in effect until amended.

## 2. 2025 Goal Setting Document – Status Update & Review

Linehan provided an update on the 2025 Goal Setting Document, noting that in March 2025, the City Council and staff participated in a goal-setting session facilitated by DDA. Linehan explained that the document differs from a strategic plan in that it is less prescriptive, does not include formal metrics, and contains more open-ended goals. Staff have been using a project management system to track progress and updates. Linehan asked Council for feedback on whether any goals should be modified or added, noting that some conditions have changed since adoption, including the status of the Les Bolstad Golf Course.

Gustafson noted that the University has now made clear its intent to sell the golf course, and May suggested incorporating this into the redevelopment section with specific subcategories focused on the site. Mielke recommended adding the Larpenteur Avenue traffic study being conducted by Ramsey County. Mogen would like to be more proactive in educating the public around economic development and zoning, and expressed interest in being more involved in infrastructure discussions and emphasized the importance of advocating for resident needs, particularly related to walkability and bikeability. Mogen also noted a potential opportunity for legislative advocacy related to State Fair impacts. Linehan noted that Ramsey County is planning to hire an engineer to study and reconstruct Larpenteur Avenue and that many roads in Falcon Heights are under county or state jurisdiction. He added that expanding trail connectivity could be a valuable area for City input. Mielke suggested the Ramsey County Active Living Committee as a forum for these discussions, and May and Mogen emphasized continuing to advocate for these priorities.

Wassenberg questioned whether goals that have not yet been started should be removed if they are no longer priorities. Discussion followed regarding the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), with Linehan clarifying that the CIP is an existing budgeting tool rather than a communications document. Linehan also noted the value of developing a comprehensive parks and facilities master plan, particularly in light of the new park building. May suggested integrating this work with potential redevelopment at the golf course site. Linehan added that these planning efforts could inform one another.

Wassenberg questioned the goal of updating ordinance language to reflect both the needs of the city and the business community. Mogen noted that the Planning Commission has already been reviewing City Code, and Linehan added that staff generally evaluate ordinances from a business perspective. May referenced related work by the Environment Commission on green business ordinances.

Additional discussion included opportunities to better promote new and existing businesses, including providing clearer information on licensing, solicitations, and regulations. Linehan emphasized the importance of updating street project planning during non-construction years.

Administrative Services Director Nelson asked Council to identify priority areas and potential target timelines to help staff track and demonstrate progress. Linehan reiterated that the current document does not include formal metrics or a defined roadmap and asked whether the goals remain relevant. Wassenberg expressed appreciation for the document while acknowledging that some goals may not be fully achievable.

Council discussed reporting and implementation timelines. Mogen requested updates on goals that have not yet been started, as well as additional information on potential implementation of a single-hauler trash system, including timeline and legal considerations. Wassenberg wants to ensure staff are supported around goals that may not have been started yet. Linehan noted that Ramsey County partners with organizations that assist municipalities with organized waste and recycling systems.

Council reached consensus to receive a progress update in six months and to revisit the goal-setting process in the future.

Linehan wonders if these goals are relevant; are there other goals the council wants to focus on? He adds that some might never be fully accomplished.

May suggested removing certain goals that have not advanced, including preteen and teen programming. Nelson asked whether extending timelines may be preferable to removing goals entirely. Gustafson suggested using surveys to better understand youth needs and interests in parks and programming. May noted that participation levels in Falcon Heights may not support standalone programming, given the availability of options in neighboring communities. Mielke asked about a citywide survey, and Nelson noted that a survey is planned for 2026, with a shorter recreation-focused survey potentially conducted separately.

May also noted limited inclusion of Climate Action Plan and Environment Commission priorities within the current document and suggested adding a dedicated section to better reflect these efforts.

### 3. Towing Reimbursement Policy

Linehan made revisions to the Towing Reimbursement Policy based on prior Council feedback. Wassenberg suggested that reimbursement requests be reviewed administratively by the City Administrator. Mogen recommended adding eligibility language requiring applicants to certify that they have not received compensation for the same expense from another source. May asked for clarification on eligibility in cases where the vehicle owner is also the driver. Linehan responded that eligibility is based on vehicle ownership and that incidents may occur outside City limits.

Mogen questioned whether the policy serves a clear public purpose and expressed concern about the City's authority to provide reimbursement based on financial hardship. Wassenberg suggested including "and/or" language to better support Falcon Heights residents. Linehan noted that any reimbursement program must meet a public purpose standard and would require review by the City Attorney.

Discussion followed regarding the original intent of the policy, which was to allow vehicles to be towed to a resident's home; however, Linehan explained this is not feasible under the City's contract with the St. Anthony Police Department (SAPD). Both Mogen and Gustafson expressed concern about whether reimbursement in these cases meets a public purpose standard.

Linehan explained that, unlike larger cities such as Minneapolis and St. Paul, suburban police agencies contract with private towing companies, and the City does not receive

revenue from impound lots. Instead, towing fees are collected by the private company. Linehan added that there are administrative and legal complexities to implementing a reimbursement program and that additional input from the City's auditor may be necessary. Gustafson noted that towing companies may accommodate alternative drop-off locations if arranged and paid for in advance, provided the individual is not under arrest or detained.

May expressed interest in moving the policy forward with revisions, including removing references to financial hardship, medical events, family incidents, and unforeseen circumstances. May suggested focusing eligibility on situations involving residents impacted by acts of violence. Mogen proposed adding language specifying incidents related to federal immigration enforcement where individuals are later released.

Further discussion and potential revisions will be brought back for Council consideration.

#### 4. Other / Future Topics

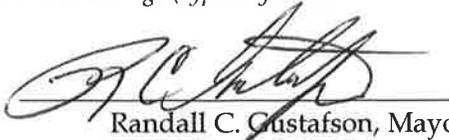
Linehan explains this was a practice from last year to show upcoming agenda topics. Rebuilding Together will present at the next workshop. He explains that Wassenberg has done a review of alleyway captains, in charge of plowing contracts, and wonders if there is support to bring them, as well as Public Works, to an open house. Wassenberg explains that it was nice to get feedback but is unsure if an open house would be necessary or if email conversations would suffice. Linehan noted that Public Works is interested in incorporating additional guidance into City Code, including clarifying that items placed within alley right-of-way areas that are damaged during plowing would not be the responsibility of the City. May responded that existing nuisance enforcement already addresses items encroaching beyond property lines. Linehan also noted that Chief Spiess will be presenting the annual report.

#### D. ADJOURNMENT: 9:41PM

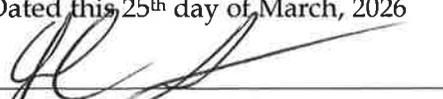
Mogen motions to adjourn the meeting;

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](mailto: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 25<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026

  
Jack Linehan, City Administrator