

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

MINUTES
April 8, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON_X_ MAY_X_ MOGEN_X_

MIELKE_X_ WASSENBERG_X_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN___ MYHREN_X_

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

D. PRESENTATION

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. March 25, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

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

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

G. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. General Disbursements through 4/3/26: \$215,965.77
Payroll through 3/26/26: \$23,743.71
Wire Payments through 4/3/26: \$16,212.28
2. Approval of Resolution 26-25 Authorizing Application for the Livable Communities Development Project Grant Program for Fairway Commons
3. Approval of Resolution 26-26 Authorizing Application for the Livable Communities Small Area Planning Project Grant Program for the Les Bolstad Golf Course Redevelopment Master Plan
4. Approval of Comcast Agreement for Wi-Fi Installation at Community Park
5. Approval of Resolution 26-27 Declaring the Public Works 2010 Elgin Crosswind Street Sweeper as Surplus to Sell to Purple Wave Auction
6. Approval of Resolution 26-28 Accepting the Resignation of Joe Morseth from the Parks and Recreation Commission and Declaring a Vacancy
7. Approval of Resolution 26-29 Appointing Caitlin Klæui to the Community Engagement Commission

Mayor Gustafson motions to approve the consent agenda;
Approved 5-0

H: POLICY ITEMS:

1. Consideration of Fairway Commons Planned Unit Development Amendment Proposal

Community Development Coordinator Myhren presented the proposal to amend the existing Amber Flats Planned Unit Development to Fairway Commons. She explained that this was not a reversal of the existing PUD but rather swapping out the plan. The existing Amber Flats PUD would remain in city code even if this proposal were denied.

Myhren provided background on the location, noting it would be roughly in the same location as Amber Flats was proposed, with potential for moving the entrance about 60 feet east to align with existing drives. She reviewed the purpose of PUDs, which allow flexibility in site design, conservation of land and open space, and deviations in standards.

The proposal comparison showed Amber Flats at 96 units versus Fairway Commons at 110 affordable senior living apartments. Fairway Commons would have 116 parking spaces (44 surface, 72 sublevel) and a maximum height of 45 feet 6 inches, potentially increasing to 49 feet 6 inches with 9-foot ceilings, written to allow up to 50 feet for flexibility.

Myhren reviewed city code requirements, noting that Fairway Commons meets most requirements. The project meets density requirements at just under 40 dwelling units per acre, meets setback requirements from residential property at 153.5 feet from Hollywood Court, but is slightly under the requirement for 80% underground parking with 72 sublevel spaces where 88 would be required.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on March 24th with a few residents attending, mostly concerned about traffic and safety requirements. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval to City Council.

Myhren outlined numerous conditions including tree maintenance, snow storage limitations, open space preservation, electric vehicle charging stations, height restrictions, setback maintenance, parcel combination requirements, parking agreements, and on-site property maintenance staff.

Marty O'Connell from Velair Development presented on behalf of the developer. He provides background on Velair and the development team. They are experienced in providing affordable senior housing.

The Fairway Commons proposal includes 110 age-restricted units with a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units over one level of enclosed underground parking. Common amenities will include outdoor patio with grilling stations, community room, library and craft room, fitness center, package room, and four EV charging stations. Unit features include quartz countertops, in-unit washer and dryer, adjustable thermostats, and LVP flooring.

O'Connell explained the site layout, noting preservation of existing parking easement for 54 stalls for Amber Union use, while providing 116 parking stalls for Fairway Commons. The building footprint and general layout closely follows the previously approved Amber Flats PUD design.

The development will actively explore implementing geothermal heating and cooling systems. If implemented, this would eliminate exterior metal louvers and potentially

add one wellhead in the northwest corner of the site, which could be screened with landscaping.

Housing will have rent and income restrictions tied to housing tax credits, averaging 60% area median income limits. Rent ranges are projected at \$648-\$1,100 for studios, \$1,300-\$1,500 for one-bedrooms, and around \$1,800 for two-bedrooms. Age restrictions require at least one household member to be 55 or older, with all members 40 or older.

The management plan includes long-term ownership requirements (minimum 15 years), access control via resident fobs, extensive security camera coverage, on-site property manager and maintenance technician, and coordination with local police department before opening.

O'Connell outlined key benefits including 110 units of new senior housing, increased commercial demand, projected \$80,000 annual property tax increase, and a one-time bond issuance fee of \$50,000-\$60,000 to the city. No city financing assistance is requested beyond acting as bond conduit.

The development schedule anticipates construction starting in July 2026 with completion in mid to late fall 2027.

Council members expressed appreciation for the investigation of geothermal heating and cooling, the company's willingness to work with the city and planning commission, and the provision of affordable senior housing to meet community needs.

Councilmember Wassenberg Motions To Approve Ordinance And Summary
Ordinance 26-03 Amending Chapter 113 Of The Falcon Heights City Code
Concerning Amber Flats Planned Unit Development;
Approved 5-0

2. Approval of Resolution 26-30 Authorizing the Execution of a Real Estate Purchase Agreement for 1407 Larpenteur Avenue and 0 Larpenteur Avenue West

Linehan presented the proposal to authorize execution of a real estate purchase agreement for the property commonly known as Get Pressed at the corner of Larpenteur and Albert. The property has a long history as commercial use with significant environmental challenges from its past as a dry cleaner and fuel station with sealed underground tanks.

In 2023, the city obtained a Brownfield Assessment Grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, providing about \$100,000 worth of environmental assessment services through Bay West. The assessment found pollution contaminants in soil samples, with MPCA creating a response action plan estimating \$370,000 in cleanup costs.

The current owner brought forward two informal proposals to the Planning Commission - first for 12 townhomes, then 10 units - but could not make the numbers work without grant funding for environmental cleanup. MPCA and partners suggested the city acquire the property for fair market value.

The city hired a professional appraisal firm that determined the property would be worth approximately \$675,000 if clean, but valued at \$300,000 given the needed \$370,000 cleanup. After negotiations starting in July, the city agreed to the appraised value of \$300,000, plus outstanding taxes and closing costs up to \$25,000.

Linehan explained the city has identified funds from healthy fund balance and general capital reserves to pay cash. The long-term use hasn't been fully determined, with the

primary goal being environmental mitigation and cleanup, potentially starting with demolition and creating clean green space while developing longer-term plans.

Mogen noted that while purchasing property without a specific plan and uncertain financial outcome was challenging, it was in the public interest due to necessary cleanup, blight issues, and potential for better future development that wasn't happening under private ownership.

Gustafson acknowledged the difficulty of the decision without a forward plan but expressed confidence the city could recoup costs by accomplishing cleanup that the private sector couldn't manage.

Councilmember Mogen motions to approve Resolution 26-30 Authorizing the Execution of a Real Estate Purchase Agreement for 1407 Larpenteur Avenue and 0 Larpenteur Avenue West;
Approved 5-0

I: INFORMATION / ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mogen and Mielke attended a Strong Towns presentation at the University of Minnesota.

Mielke and Wassenberg attended a ribbon cutting of Any Lab Test Now. Mielke also encourages residents to attend the Sustainability Fair on April 18 at City Hall from 11Am to 2PM.

Wassenberg announces that Northeast Youth and Family Services is celebrating their 50th anniversary. They are having an annual fundraising on May 6 at 11:30AM.

May notes there will be mattress recycling available again. Residents can make appointments starting on April 15 through the City website. The Environment Commission will meet next week, to discuss the implementation of the Climate and Energy Action Plan. May and Wassenberg are working on selecting representatives for the Les Bolstad Golf Course Redevelopment Community Advisory Committee.

Gustafson explains that the Parks and Rec Commission is planning on hosting a music event at the University Grove sometime in June. Additionally, there will be Spring Together on May 16 at Curtiss Field, and Ice Cream Social on July 16. August 4 is Night to Unite. The City will also be hosting a Fall Fest again in October.

Linehan adds that the Spring and Summer Newsletter is at the printer and will be hitting resident mailboxes soon. Additionally, another installment of Discover Falcon Heights will go live on the City's Facebook this week focused on providing more information about the Sustainability Fair. Public Works is cleaning at the Curtiss Field and they will be repairing the planter boxes and decorative lights along Larpenteur Ave. W. Staff is also participating with the Sustainability Fair to shred documents.

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.

K: ADJOURNMENT: 7:59 PM

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

Dated this 22nd day of April, 2026



Jack Linehan, City Administrator



Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor