

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

MINUTES
July 8, 2026
6:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 P.M.

Gustafson called to order.

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON_X_ MAY_X_
MIELKE_X_ MOGEN_X_ WASSENBERG_X_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN_X_

C. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Noise Ordinance / Parking Violations Amendments (6:00 P.M.)

Linehan introduced two related items: a proposed noise ordinance amendment and a new car alarm parking violation provision.

Noise Ordinance. Linehan explained that the city's existing noise regulations are limited and difficult to enforce. The current public nuisance language—described as essentially unenforceable by the city attorney in 2020—was proposed for removal. The new draft ordinance (proposed Sec. 22-48) would establish defined prohibited noises and hourly restrictions for domestic power equipment, refuse hauling, construction activities, and radios/music devices. The draft language was originally prepared by the former city attorney and modeled on ordinances from comparable cities.

Gustafson noted a typographical error ("devise" instead of "device") appearing in the draft. Wassenberg identified an additional misspelling of "exempt" in section b(1). Linehan acknowledged both and indicated the draft would be corrected.

Council discussed several substantive changes to the proposed hourly restrictions. The draft, as written, proposed hours of 7:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. on weekends for most noise-generating activities. Members expressed general agreement that 9:00 a.m. was too late a start time on weekends for construction and equipment noise. After discussion, the Council reached consensus on the following revised framework: weekday hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. for construction, power equipment, and refuse hauling; weekend and holiday hours of 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. for the same categories; and radios, music devices, and similar equipment to be permitted until 10:00 p.m. on both weekdays and weekends, given the different character of that type of noise in residential settings.

Mielke advocated for adding "leaf blowers" explicitly to the list of domestic power equipment, noting that leaf blowers generate more resident complaints than several items already listed, such as garden tillers. Council agreed. Mielke and May also expressed support for a dedicated page on the city website summarizing quiet hours, how to report noise, and links to the relevant code sections. Linehan indicated staff was willing to develop that resource.

Council noted that animal noise provisions are addressed separately under the city's animals chapter and are not part of this ordinance, though Mogen raised a question about whether barking dogs are regulated during daytime hours as well. Linehan confirmed that the animals chapter addresses this under the public nuisance framework.

Mogen raised a broader concern about the fragmented nature of the city's noise-related code provisions, which are spread across multiple chapters. He asked whether the city attorney could be engaged to review the code for consistency and redundancy as these new sections are added. Linehan acknowledged the concern, noting the city's code last underwent a comprehensive rewrite in the 1990s.

Car Alarm Parking Violation. Linehan described the second component: a proposed addition to Chapter 46 (Sec. 46-27, new item 10) that would make it a parking violation for a vehicle to emit noise from a security alarm or horn for more than a specified continuous or intermittent period. The provision would authorize towing under existing Sec. 46-26. The draft proposed a four-hour threshold, modeled on provisions in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Rochester, and Duluth.

May and Mogen both favored reducing the threshold from four hours to two hours, arguing that four hours is an unreasonable burden on neighbors and that the two-hour window still provides sufficient time for an officer to document the violation, attempt to contact the vehicle owner, and allow the owner a reasonable opportunity to respond.

Wassenberg agreed, noting that the clock would begin upon officer observation, not from when the alarm first sounded, and that officer discretion would remain a practical factor in borderline cases.

The Council reached consensus on a two-hour threshold.

Council also discussed a formatting error in the draft, in which the proposed car alarm provision appeared as a sub-bullet under item 9 (snow removal) rather than as a separate item 10. Linehan confirmed this was a drafting error and would be corrected.

Staff was directed to bring a revised draft of both the noise ordinance and the car alarm parking violation to a future regular meeting, incorporating the changes discussed.

2. Pay-by-Mobile Parking Pass Distribution for Ineligible Properties (6:30 P.M.)

Linehan provided background on the city's Pay-by-Mobile parking system, which was implemented for streets near the Minnesota State Fair. Under the current policy, one parking pass is mailed to each household abutting a Pay-by-Mobile designated street, with a second available upon request and up to two additional passes available through a variance application. In 2025, the city approved 35 variances, the majority for residents on Hoyt Avenue, Larpenteur Avenue, and Snelling Service Drive—streets not directly on the pay-by-mobile network but whose residents were affected by the program. Staff sought Council direction on whether to proactively mail passes to those impacted households going forward, or to maintain the variance application process.

Mielke noted that a significant gap in 2025 was that residents on affected streets received no communication whatsoever—not even a letter explaining the program. She recommended that, at a minimum, a letter be sent to those areas explaining the program and offering a path to request a pass if needed, noting that in practice only a small number of residents in those areas had sought passes.

Wassenberg and Gustafson expressed a preference for treating residents equitably: if the city is effectively removing the parking that a resident normally relies upon, that resident should receive a pass automatically, without having to seek a variance.

May concurred, framing it as: residents whose street parking is taken away by city action should be mailed a pass, while other residents in the broader area should receive a letter and be able to apply.

Mogen raised a concern about the number of passes per household, questioning why households should receive up to four passes, particularly if some are passed along to visitors or guests who have no direct parking need. He proposed that any pass beyond the first automatically mailed one should require registration of a license plate to the address, which would also integrate more smoothly with the new license plate scanning system being introduced for parking ambassadors this year. The scanning system will allow ambassadors to verify compliance electronically rather than relying solely on physical passes in windows.

Linehan clarified how the 2025 variance process worked for third and fourth passes: applicants were required to provide a license plate number, which was then registered in the ParkMobile system for the duration of the fair at a cost of one dollar per vehicle to the city. This approach was used for residents on Hoyt and Larpenteur who applied for variances.

May noted that residents had expressed strong interest in retaining flexibility—specifically, the ability to place a physical pass in any vehicle rather than tying it to a registered plate—in part to accommodate State Fair party traditions that many households observed. She indicated she was comfortable with households receiving one

or two passes for their own vehicles and suggested the Council not over-restrict a tradition that residents value.

Council discussion turned to Falcon Town Square apartments, where residents relying on street parking face a distinct issue: tenants whose names are not on the lease, or who drive vehicles not registered to them, cannot register their cars in the building's private lot and therefore cannot access free on-site parking during the fair. Council members noted this issue had been raised with Falcon Town Square management on multiple occasions, and Linehan confirmed that conversations had occurred, but the property had not yet established a plan. Council expressed that the property needs to develop a workable solution before the 2026 fair.

Given the complexity of the discussion and the approaching deadline for pass distribution in mid-to-late July, Linehan requested that the item be continued and added to the July 22 agenda for further direction. Council agreed.

D. ADJOURNMENT: 7:05 P.M.

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.

Dated this 22nd day of July, 2026



Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor



Jack Linehan, City Administrator