

LAUDERDALE CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Lauderdale City Hall
1891 Walnut Street
Lauderdale, MN 55113

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Tuesday, May 27, 2008

Mayor Dains called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Council members present: Lara Mac Lean, Denise Hawkinson, Karen Doherty, Clay Christensen, and Mayor Jeff Dains.

Mayor Dains asked for any additions, deletions, or changes to the meeting agenda. Members did not have any additional items to add to the agenda.

Council member Hawkinson moved to approve the agenda. Council member Doherty seconded the motion and it carried.

Council member Doherty moved approval of the May 13, 2008, City Council meeting minutes. Council member Christensen seconded the motion and it carried.

Council member Christensen moved approval of the claims totaling \$28,795.36. Council member Hawkinson provided the second and the motion carried.

Mayor Dains asked if members of the public wished to address the council. No one present wished to address the Council.

Council member Doherty moved the Consent Agenda accepting the PCIC minutes and approving 2008 rental-housing licenses. Council member Mac Lean seconded the motion and it carried.

Heck provided the Council with an update on the sound-wall project. He stated MnDOT would let bids in late June with projected start date August 1, 2008.

Heck provided information on the issue of compost material in the alley right of way behind residents located on the 1800 block of Eustis and Malvern. He stated staff looked at the area and took photos that are included in the packet.

Doherty asked where the material would be disposed of if removed. Heck responded staff would contact Ramsey County to get authorization to drop the material off at the County compost site.

Council member Doherty moved to remove the material from the alley right of way. Motion second by council member Mac Lean and carried with all voting yes.

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Mayor Dains introduced the request by Mr. and Ms. Schultz for the City to repair the slope of their front yard. They stated they are unable to mow or maintain grass on the slope because the road and utility improvement project in 2002 increased the slope.

Heck stated he and the engineer visited the site and the engineer sent a landscape architect to examine the site. According to the construction documents, the slope changed from a 2.5:1 to 2:1 and 2.2:1 to 2:1. Heck indicated the engineer provided a letter from the engineer outlining several possible options.

Mayor Dains began the discussion by stating he would like a legal opinion on what the city's obligation is in this matter before making an offer or decision on the issue. He desired a legal review because similar past situations resulted in litigation.

Mr. Schultz told the council the problem began close to 15 years ago when the city graded the area and then exacerbated the problem during the 2002 project. He said he applied sod and seed and nothing works and he is unable to mow or maintain the area. He feels the city bears some responsibility due to the street project.

Council directed staff to contact the city attorney and obtain information relating to the city's legal obligations in the matter, possible future liabilities, legal release, and other potential issues.

The Council then discussed using a facilitator to improve council and staff communications and identify roles and responsibilities.

Council member Mac Lean did not feel the need to spend \$2,000 on a facilitator and thought Council and staff could work something out on their own. She commented that the Council could work through the position descriptions, etc.

Council member Christensen stated he liked the idea of an outside, neutral party to work with the Council and staff if that is what's needed. He felt things were going well.

Council member Doherty stated she felt things were going well and if she has a problem or an issue, she contacts the Administrator and discusses the issue.

Council member Hawkinson said she could go either way and felt \$2,000 was quite a bit of money and asked if the process included all staff and council. She indicated it would not work well if this did not include all staff.

Mayor Dains asked staff Bownik and Butkowski their view and impressions on the issue.

Bownik stated he knows other cities use facilitators to conduct council retreats and thought the idea has merit.

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Butkowski indicated she can see the benefit of the process and echoed an earlier comment that there needs to be commitment and participation of the parties to make the process effective.

After additional comments, Mayor Dains stated he sensed the council was not comfortable at this time with using a facilitator, but now that the cost is known, the Council can revisit the issue later.

Council member Doherty asked if the initial question had been answered regarding the Council / administrator roles and responsibilities. She also indicated the Administrator did not have an opportunity to express his view.

Heck said he understood the issue involved the role and responsibility of the Administrator and that Council may have felt some of the decisions made by the administrator were decisions the Council should have made. He felt the issue of what the Council felt was their role and that of staff needs to be defined so all are on the same page and felt that is why Council requested copies of position descriptions.

After additional discussion, Council indicated the desire to have a work session type meeting with a mediator to assist in facilitating discussion on staff / council roles and responsibilities. The council directed staff to gather information on this type of arrangement and possible costs. As an example, Mayor Dains suggested former Mayor Gehrz from Falcon Heights.

Bownik presented information on the maintenance of the social room floor, lobby and hallway. He indicated the areas need stripping, sealing, and waxing. After the process is complete, staff can maintain the waxing process.

Discussion ensued on whether this process should have been part of the installation. Council directed staff to review the installation documentation and determine if this process was part of the installation.

The Council entered the work session part of the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Heck provided an update on the possible redevelopment of 1.5 acres along the south side of Larpenteur Avenue. The Council directed staff to work with the consultant and develop a list of possible options for the Council to review at the June 24 meeting.

The Council reviewed the draft lighting policy. Council did not have any questions or comments. Council member Christensen pointed out a typo in the title.

Bownik presented information on potential improvements to the Council chambers technology and video production capabilities. He told the council he met with CTV15 and

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they provided recommendations on equipment, including a couple of televisions for presentation purposes. Bownik also indicated staff suggested the possibility of remodeling the chambers.

The council directed staff to include the information in the 2009 draft budget for consideration.

Council member Hawkinson moved to adjourn the meeting. Council member Doherty seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian W. Heck
City Administrator