

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

**MINUTES**  
July 13, 2016 at 7:00 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:03 pm
- B. ROLL CALL: LINDSTROM \_\_X\_\_ HARRIS \_\_X\_\_ BROWN THUNDER \_\_X\_\_  
FISCHER \_\_X\_\_ GUSTAFSON \_\_X\_\_
- STAFF PRESENT: THONGVANH \_\_X\_\_
- C. PRESENTATIONS:
- D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  
1. June 22, 2016 City Council Meeting Minutes Approved
- E. PUBLIC HEARINGS:
- F. CONSENT AGENDA:  
1. General Disbursements through: 7/05/16 \$134,033.63  
Payroll through: 6/30/16 \$21,217.48  
2. Approval of City License(s)  
3. Accepting MPCA Sponsorship Grant  
4. Accepting the 2015 Year End Audit-Falcon Heights Fire Relief Association

Council Member Harris Moved, Approved 5-0

- G: POLICY ITEMS:  
1. City of Lauderdale Fire Contract  
City Administrator Thongvanh stated that there are four key components in the Lauderdale Fire Contract: the capital share for the newest fire truck, readiness to serve, fire inspections, and fire protection. The City of Lauderdale equates to about 30% of the total calls. The revenues fluctuate from year to year because the readiness to serve calculation is based on total market value of the City of Lauderdale and a multiplier. One of the future goals is to make revenue sources more stable. The goal is to get consensus from the Council to authorize the City Administrator to move forward in reviewing the contract. There is an inflation variable in the other contracts to create stability.

Council Member Gustafson Moved, Approved 5-0

## H. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

### Council Member Fischer:

This has been a tragedy. He has received a number of messages from residents that are both sad and angry. The conversation is broader than our city and should be broader than policing. We need to do the hard work of building broader and more inclusive communities. This is bigger than a police problem, but speaks to how we treat people who are different than ourselves. We need to know, befriend, and care about people who are different than ourselves. We need to speak out, and open our ears and hearts.

### Council Member Harris:

She has been a lawyer practicing in labor law. She has a heart for the issue of discrimination, but in her position as a Council Member she believes it's important to be cautious about any statements that are made. Over ten years as a council member she has never received negative feedback on St. Anthony PD. She trusts the independent investigation to present the facts and to see what the St. Anthony PD suggests for next steps.

### Council Member Brown Thunder:

This event has been a tragedy for everyone involved. This event is not representational of Falcon Heights. He echoes the comments from his fellow colleagues, and he pledges to listen and move forward with the facts.

### Council Member Gustafson:

He agrees with his colleagues. We need to continue a peaceful exchange while we allow the professional outside investigation to follow its course so that we can learn the facts.

### Mayor Lindstrom:

He echoes what the Council Members have said. This has been the ultimate tragedy for our small city. In this process we should not rush to make any quick decisions in terms of immediate changes to policies, procedures or contracts. The council will look at those things but that is to be determined in weeks ahead.

### City Administrator Sack Thongvanh:

He also wants to echo what has been said by the Council Members. This has been a trying time and staff is there to do their job, listen, and take feedback.

## I. COMMUNITY FORUM:

### Sarah Chambers- 2170 Folwell Falcon Heights:

She gives her condolences. She identifies with Obama's words to forge consensus, fight cynicism, and find the will to make change. There must be oversight of law enforcement and study of best practices. We need statistics on who is being stopped. We need feedback from not only residents and SAPD, but surrounding cities and persons affected.

Kristine Miller- 1640 Victoria St. N St. Paul:

She wants to make the neighborhood safe for everyone. How can we ensure that police are ready to constantly check their subconscious racism every day?

Joan Dao-2025 Fairview Roseville, MN:

Silence is not an option. If this is the first time the Council is hearing about racism, police stops, traffic stops, or the fear of police, you are not listening to your citizens and their stories. How are you reaching out to people who are different than you and making a conscious effort to learn about them and their culture?

Philip Sellow- 1588 Vincent St. Falcon Heights:

The City Council acts as a civilian oversight board. We have no contractual right to oversee our police, and he finds that unacceptable.

Steven Carpenter- 1871 Larpenteur Falcon Heights:

What concrete steps had the City or Council taken in the last week? Why did we rotate out police forces? Based on hiring a public relations person, it looks like the top priority is how this appears.

Mayor Lindstrom- Response:

This is the first Council Meeting since the event aside from the Special Meeting. The Special Meeting took place to authorize the City Administrator to hire a public relations person, and the Council has opted to not hire a public relations person.

Tom McNinch- 1508 Iowa Ave. W Falcon Heights:

He experienced an encounter with the police as they were stopping at his neighbor's house. They asked him if he would go inside, and he feels he made a mistake for not watching. He urges the Council to think about whether or not the police failed to live up to the standards of the community.

Melissa Stone- 1656 Garden Ave. Falcon Heights:

She concurs with what others have said. She urges the council to take the energy that has been generated from this event, and think about a way to continue that engagement. What do we want in terms of public safety? What are our goals? What makes sense for Falcon Heights?

Dave Bishop- 1765 St. Mary's St. Falcon Heights:

He has been a resident for 33 years. He stated that he doesn't see this as a racial issue. He has been stopped three times in the city limits, and his two sons have been stopped in the city limits as well. All have been asked to take breathalyzers. He says that we are a catalyst to do something different, and figure out a different way to interact with those who are keeping us secure. He says to find volunteers nationally or locally, and appoint a committee. Have these volunteers address how to create a new relationship with suburban police.

Josie Griffin- Minneapolis Resident and UMN St. Paul student:

It is completely routine for an African American man to be stopped on Larpenteur. This impacts the Evolution Department of the University of Minnesota's recommendation to potential

students. There is a need to inform prospective black students that they run the risk of being harassed right outside of the school.

Chuck Laszewski- 1713 St. Mary's St. Falcon Heights:

He says the Council should take action that's definitive. The Council should begin to take steps to ending the contract by 2017. This one act has permanently left a bad name for Falcon Heights. As a business man, if a vendor did something terribly wrong, the contract should be cut. If this is not happening immediately, an RFP should be in place for when the investigation is completed in order to begin the process of terminating the contract.

Charles Johnson- 1718 Lindig St. Falcon Heights:

He thinks this is a problem that requires action. We should be able to write a contract that will stop the harassment. Larpenteur and Snelling are known as the area to be stopped and frisked. We don't need law enforcement, we need peace officers.

Melissa Stessel- 1795 Fry St. Falcon Heights:

She wants to thank her neighbors for speaking up. She has been horrified by what has occurred, and then the silence. She wants the Council Members to add their voices. We don't have to solve things internationally or nationally. We have international attention, and that's an opportunity.

Katie Mercer-Taylor- 2231 Folwell Ave. Falcon Heights:

She wants to express care and condolences. She shares the sentiments as many that have already spoken. This racist policing has been done in her name, and that's not ok. Neighborhoods Organizing for Change has an open letter from the board on their website. They state, "For too many in our community, our current law enforcement system simply does not keep us safe... We must envision, build, and publically fund radical alternatives to community safety."

Rebecca Montgomery- 2222 Folwell Ave. Falcon Heights:

She has been a resident for 10 years and she serves on the Environment Commission. She's asking that we take action. We need to use this event as a way to examine how we do business in this city. Examining the policing and the contract, and reforming the way the policing happens. Being an example, leader, and symbol of how things we can do differently. We need to act to change the system that has inherent bias.

Bruce Mielke- 1868 Arona St. Falcon Heights:

He would love to see something at the Ice Cream Social, at least a table or an event in regards to what is being heard.

Christine Baumler- 1871 Larpenteur Ave. Falcon Heights:

She is heartbroken and angry. What she is not hearing tonight is a sense of urgency. She teaches in the Art Department at the UMN. She invites community members and international students to her home. She has asked people to take risks to visit her community. She would like to hear some stronger acknowledgement of action. We need to take a stronger stand and be clear about the concrete steps that we are going to take on the procedures to policing the community.

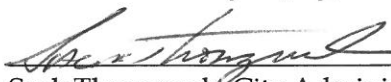
Mayor's Response:

He is deeply upset and hurt about the event that has taken place, and he's not ok with it. We need to look closely at how we are doing police operations. This is not a call for anything immediate right now. We need to know about the breakdown of arrests, citations, who is being pulled over, who is being frisked, and to look at 21<sup>st</sup> century policing. He thinks we would be best served if we had a diverse group of people that look at where we're at and how we can improve.

J. ADJOURNMENT: 8:12 pm

  
Peter Lindstrom, Mayor

Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2016

  
Sack Thongvanh, City Administrator

