

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

AGENDA
September 26, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER:
- B. ROLL CALL: LINDSTROM LEEHY N/A
MIAZGA GUSTAFSON
- STAFF PRESENT: THONGVANH

C. PRESENTATIONS:

1. Appointment of Pamela Harris to the Vacant City Council Seat and Oath of Office Ceremony

Mayor Lindstrom

The Review Committee consists of Council Member Miazga, James Wassenberg Chair of Environment Commission, Shirley Rieder Chair of Community Engagement Commission, John Larkin Chair of Planning Commission, Olivia Demerath from Parks and Recreation Commission, and lastly myself. The Review Committee interviewed 11 applicants, and then identified four finalists, and the City Council interviewed them. After the process and reviewing each candidate, the City Council selected Pamela Harris.

Sarah Chambers (2170 Folwell Ave)

She sent emails to City Council and Mayor regarding the vacant seat. I was pleased to see 11 residents applied for the opening position. It shows a lot about our community and active citizens that we have in Falcon Heights. However, I do not support Pamela Harris who stated that she would not run for re-election again. In the Lillie Suburban newspaper, she said it was time for new faces and perspectives, and it was a stressful year referring to policing and the killing of Philando Castile. I did not expect to see her run again shortly after her statement and be appointed. It does not feel good and not a good process.

Brian Olson (1592 Roselawn Ave W)

Appreciates the Mayor for showing the roster of who was in the Review Committee. However, Brian expressed that a new council appointment should be made solely through the Elective Officials on this council.

Paula Mielke (1868 Arona St)

Paula agrees with Sarah Chambers' speech about bringing in new changes. The city had a chance to bring in diversity, and a refugee immigrant representing the renters and the 5 percent of the Somali population. Hawa Samatar ran in 2017 but the timing was not right. She also supports Kay Andrews who spoke about the injustice of the police force towards her grandsons on July 27. She is very disappointed that the City Council and Mayor appointed Pamela Harris who did not show support to the community and citizens.

Isaac Mielke (1868 Arona St)

He felt that the City had not learned anything or change. He is very disappointed with the directions City Council is doing to the city. Isaac thinks that the Task Force is a sham and City Council and Mayor only pick "long time" friends. Pamela Harris does have experiences but "not all good experiences are good experiences." Isaac hopes Pamela Harris, Council Member Randy Gustafson, and Mayor Peter Lindstrom do not run again.

Bruce Mielke (1868 Arona St)

Bruce agrees with everyone's speech regarding the appointment of Pamela Harris. "It sounds slimy, and residents are not sure if you asked her or she decided for herself. Neighbors, my family, and other residents were not surprised or shocked that she was selected. It is a bad choice." Bruce also stated that citizens knew Pamela Harris could not win the election last year so she decided to leave the Council and now she is back again. "I was very disappointed at Pam. She was very disrespectful to the Castile family and the residents of Falcon Heights. I will speak for many residents whom I know and prefer Pam to not be in this role. We did not appreciate when you were here before and would not like to see you here again." He would like the two new Council Members to take more leadership and will not be swayed away by Pamela Harris.

Council Member Gustafson

The City is in the process of putting the budget and Comprehensive Plan together in the next 3 to 4 months. The Council needed someone who is going to be up to speed and get it done right away. Pamela Harris' leadership helped Falcon Heights' first Comprehensive Plan, evolved the Planning Commission, budget, policing inclusion, and built a welcoming community.

Council Member Miazga

The interviewing process was not easy and had many questions. The interviews were combined with questions and quantitative scoring. The second round of interviews there were different questions, quantitative scoring, feedbacks and public hearing for the four finalists. The interview questions consist of community engagement, leadership, and policy issues. It was completed in a respectful and professional setting. As a new Council Member, he appreciates the push from residents to be more direct and open.

Council Member Leehy

Clarifies that no one elects someone to the council hoping everyone will answer yes. Each council members has their skills, strengths and will not be swayed by each other but to be part of a process to improve the City. Council Member Leehy expressed her confidence in her seat and assured the audiences.

"I am confident of the Falcon Heights Council and our Taskforce inclusion recommendations which you know I fought arduously to be implemented. We as a city will become a culture of a caring community of friends that have unity with diversity. It is my passion, and it is our current mandate that is like a flowing river of hope. It may be a bumpy ride at times, but I am determined we need each other in our city. No one, people, group, or personality can accomplish the last in the good that most of us want to see. This is my commitment to you all."

Mayor Lindstrom Moved, Approve 4-0

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. September 12, 2018 City Council Meeting Minutes

Council Member Gustafson

There are some minor typos and will need to be corrected.

Mayor Lindstrom Moved, 4-0

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Ordinance Amending City Code Chapter 22 Section 20 Notification; Deadline for Removal

City Administrator Thongvanh

Ordinance Amending Section 22-20, Notification and Deadlines for Removal, allows a quick response by staff to address problems within the properties for nuisance abatement throughout the year. This includes snow-shoveling, grass, and weeds.

Ordinance 18-18 amending the City Code Chapter 22 Section 22-20, recommending approval from City Councils to change certified mail to regular. The reason for this is that certified mail can be rejected and will have to ask staffs to go to the post office and drop it off. It takes a lot of staff time to travel back and forth.

The door hanger will help reduce staff time to draft letters and the cost of mailing. This will also allow for quicker notifications and abatement for nuisances. Letters can take a few days to arrive, and by the time residents receives it, they already have done it and will call City Hall to complain.

Whereas, the door hanger makes it faster to respond with code violations. A great example can be when Paul left door hangers to residents who violated the code. The residents called the City Hall within 10-15 minutes asking questions or did not know they violated City Codes. In addition, it will help educate residents about code violations and abate it quicker.

Council Member Gustafson Moved, Approved 5-0

2. Emerald Ash Borer

a. Ordinance Amending City Code Chapter 54 Concerning the Removal of Trees, Shrubs, and Other Plants

b. Resolution Adopting the Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness and Management Plan

City Administrator Thongvanh

In 2012, there was a request to remove Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and replanting program. EAB was shown within the borders Falcon Heights at the University of MN Campus. On May 23, 2012, the City accepted the 2010 to 2014 Community Forest Bonding Grant for the EAB Removal / Replanting Program. A month later, the City and DNR met, and the City was rewarded with \$95,000 toward its Emerald Ash Borer removal and replacement program.

The City was not able to fully complete the program; however, the DNR amended the original grant agreement and extended the deadline to the end of June 2015 to complete the removal and replacement program. The DNR was also willing to provide additional grants for a total of \$150,000.

Upon completion of this agreement, the city will receive the remaining balance of \$13,564.23.

Amendment #2 expired on June 30, 2015, and the proposed Amendment #3 will allow the City to complete the project and submit reimbursements until December 30, 2015.

In order to complete the program, the city must adopt an EAB Preparedness/Management Plan and the amend our City Code Article II Planting, Maintenance, and Removal Ordinance. The MN DNR has approved both the proposed Plan and proposed Ordinance.

Council Member Leehy Moved, Approved 5-0

F. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. General Disbursements through: 9/20/18 \$74,949.97
Payroll through: 9/15/18 \$19,413.06
2. Resignation of Tim Sandvik, Deputy Clerk/Recreation Supervisor
3. Resignation of Paul Moretto, Community Development Coordinator
4. Extend Recycling Contract with Tennis Sanitation, LLC
5. Annual Designation of Polling Places
6. Job Description and Title Change from Deputy Clerk/Recreation Supervisor to Assistant to the City Administrator

Council Member Harris

Would like to thank Tim Sandvik and Paul Moretto for the time and service at Falcon Heights.

Both of them has helped the city in many ways and is sad to see them leave. City of Victoria and Vadnais Heights will benefit from both of their skills and dedication.

Council Member Gustafson

Approve the Consent Agenda with a correction of each letter regarding the gender term.

Council Member Gustafson Moved, Approved 5-0

G: POLICY ITEMS:

1. Adopt and Certify the 2019 Preliminary Levy

City Administrator Thongvanh

The City is required to complete the preliminary levy budget by September 30 for the Ramsey County.

- 1) There are no levy limits imposed by the Legislature for the 2019 Budget.
- 2) An amount of \$2,941 increased the amount of LGA state aid by the Legislature for the budget year 2019. LGA will increase from \$600591 to \$603,532 in 2019.
- 3) Fiscal Disparity distribution dollars for 2019 increased by \$69,339 over the 2018 level.

The 2019 proposed increase on a median value home is estimated to be \$198 per year or \$16.50 per month. The budget hearing will be on Wednesday, December 12, 2018 at 7 pm at Falcon Heights City Hall Chambers.

The 2019 Preliminary Levy chart can be view at Falcon Heights website under the agenda.

Mayor Lindstrom

Over the past few years, City Council researched grants for inclusion efforts and has been successful on some. The grants helped us do more initiatives projects. Sadly, the City did not receive the Bush Foundation grant. However, in the budget that we are looking for this upcoming year, we will be setting aside \$30,000 funds. It will be the first time that we have done that for our inclusion efforts.

Council Member Leehy

It is disappointing that the City did not receive the Bush Foundation grant. We have been working consistently to find money for us to do the implementation and create new activities and aspects within our City. I am also pleased that we could add \$30,000 to the new line item for community implementation, and community inclusion. Last year, we promised everyone how we would use the funds to implement inclusion, and I am glad to be here to see it through.

Council Member Gustafson Moved, Approved 5-0

H. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Member Miazga

- The Community Survey's last day is Sunday, September 30. So far, there are about 300+ but the numbers can go higher than that.
- Comp Plan public meeting was a success. Many of the residents spoke about Snelling service route, and City Administrator Thongvanh will be receiving emails regarding those matters.
- Working with Hawa to do another Comp Plan event at 1550 Larpenteur Avenue but she is currently out of the country. Plan B is to work with Mayor Lindstrom while Hawa is gone.
- Next Planning Commission meeting is on Wednesday, October 3, 7:00 pm City Hall for public inputs on a variance request.

Council Member Leehy

- Community Survey can be done online or mail it back to the City Hall. The survey was sent together with the City Newsletter, and it was posted on E-weekly newsletters and social media.
- The Cultivating a Caring Community event is on Friday, October 5 at 7pm - 9pm. Invitations were sent out to those who have been engaged in the community in the last year-and-a-half. City Council want to keeps propelling things forward so please check your email for that invitation and we look forward to your responses.
- Currently working on another survey but this one will be different. This survey will be a small and quick one for residents, commuters, and guests. Falcon Heights is in the middles of significant cities, and people pass our city every day. The survey is called "Survey on the Spot" and will provide more details in the next City Council meeting.

Council Member Harris

- Is happy to be back on the City Council and appreciates it. I would like the people in the community to know that the reason why I came back is to fulfill the remaining months Joe Brown Thunder has left in his term. I am not planning to run for re-election. I volunteered to go back to help the Council. I am happy to be here and serve with the new Council Members that I have not served before. Thank you, everybody, and thank you, everyone, who made comments.

Council Member Gustafson

- Would like to thank Pamela Harris for volunteering and serving in the City Councils again.

- Community Engagement Commission meets on October 15th, 2018 at 7pm. Commissioners have been working hard on editing the Neighborhood Liaison Packet and are in its final steps. Monday, December 10 is Human Rights Day.
- Wednesday, October 3rd, 7:30am - 9am is Coffee with A Cop at Caribou Coffee 3354 Rice St in Little Canada. Another Coffee with A Cop event will be held at the Underground Cafe in November, and it will be in the late afternoon. More details will be out later.

City Administrator Thongvanh

- The Cultivating a Caring Community event is on Friday, October 5 at 7pm - 9pm. It will be at the TIES Building and reception starts at 6:30. Presentations begin at 7pm - 9pm, and there are three guest speakers. The Keynote speakers are from the Dayton Ohio seminar that John Thompson and I attended. We also brought Ken Morris who is one of the co-facilitators for the Task Force. He will do mini training that focuses on a caring community. Invitations have been sent out and the last day to RSVP is October 1.
- The Curtiss Field basketball court will be postponed. It has been raining in the past few days and weeks. We had about 5 to 6 inches of rain at Curtiss Field and would like to remind everyone that the park was once a pond. Once the pipes fill up, the water will rise, and that will create problems. We do not want to build it then have issues such as cracks. Public Works will resume the installation after we resolve the problems.

I. COMMUNITY FORUM:


Sarah Chambers (2170 Folwell Ave)

Sarah is disappointed that the Councils voted yes to have Pamela Harris in the City Council seat. She expressed that the City Council seat where it serves the community and citizens and Pamela Harris did not do that during the incident.

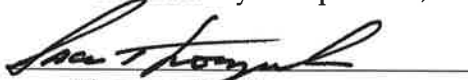
“We had the murder of Castile, and there were a lot of concerns in the community. We know from the emails that the Press requested and Pam was advising other members of the Council to not to reply to citizens who had concerns. But instead to channel everything through the City Administrator.”

Sarah hopes the people who applied for the City council vacancy seat will not be discouraged and to run again next year. Paula Mielke was a great candidate and hope she runs again. She looks forward to the next election.

J. ADJOURNMENT: 8:15 P.M.


Peter Lindstrom, Mayor

Dated this 26th day of September, 2018


Sack Thongvanh, City Administrator