

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

MINUTES
January 4, 2023
6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:42 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON__X__ LEEHY__X__
 MEYER__X__ WASSENBERG__X__ WEHYEE__X__

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN__X__ SORENSEN__X__

C. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Police Services Contract Consultant - Deliverable #1 Review

Jack Linehan, the City Administrator, states that on September 28th, the City Council approved a contract with The Center for Values-Based Initiatives (CVBI) to conduct a three-part analysis of the services and satisfaction with the law enforcement services provided by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office (RCSO). To start this process, CVBI President Matt Bostrom conducted three focus groups from November 28th - December 1st at City Hall. The focus groups were open to any interested Falcon Heights residents and were widely publicized. In total, 16 participants provided feedback on the services provided by the RCSO and shared what they believe the characteristics of the officers patrolling Falcon Heights should be. Matt will present the findings of the focus group, and seek additional feedback from the City Council before Deliverable #1 is finalized. In addition, if Council Members want to set up one-on-ones with Matt, let Linehan know so that he can set it up.

Matt Bostrom, President of the Center for Values-Based Initiatives introduces himself, thanks the City Council and believes what they are doing is good governance. Bostrom also states that there are a lot of patterns within the answers that the residents gave.

Council Member Wehyee asks what the process is in how you got these characteristics.

Bostrom says that he didn't define these characteristics, just organized them. There is a remarkable pattern with residents in Falcon heights that he hasn't seen anywhere else. Also, that there was a good distribution characteristic. Every group talked about a spectrum of balance which is what you want. In addition, Bostrom explains this is a rubric that can be used for hiring someone based on those characteristics.

Council Member Wassenberg asks if it is common to select individual officers.

Bostrom states it's not that's it uncommon; most cities just don't think of it.

Linehan mentions that, with the Sheriff's Office, he has broached this, but they have such low staffing currently. The Sheriff's Office currently does not have flexibility for the City to choose certain Officers.

Bostrom states that what you have here is a rubric for any public staff member, not just police officers.

Council Member Leehy says that the City should be you using these questions even for commissioners.

Council Member Wassenberg asks how do these themes correlate with these attributes?

Bostrom says the values are easier to understand and to hire from than themes.

Council Member Wehyee asks how do you distinguish between themes and values because I view them both as big picture concepts.

Bostrom states these are the types of things that you discern from a conversation and from their background.

Bostrom: my objective here is to outline the next steps in the project.

Linehan says this is the first of three phases. Talk about participation 16 responses. One thing we can consider if we add things in to this report and bring for review to the community.

Mayor Gustafson states what this will do in an RFP for police services is say these are the City's values and what the City is looking for in a public servant.

Bostrom says that he believes that all of the City Council should review these themes and values and add this document so it is a shared document between the residents and the City Council.

Council Member Wassenberg asks if the City Council could see other cities' RFPs.

Linehan says yes, they are public record. However, most cities in our area have forever contracts either with their department or with the county. In addition, Staff can also use GIS and randomly select residents for a survey to get a better representation from the community.

2. Prosecuting Attorney RFP

Linehan states for the past twenty years or more, the City has utilized the legal services of City Prosecutor, Katrina Joseph, now of HJ Law. As the contract had not been bid in many years, the City Council approved releasing an RFP for prosecuting attorney services on November 9th. The RFP was published on November 14th, and

closed on December 14th. In total, the City received one proposal from a qualified firm – Kelly & Lemmons. HJ Law was invited to submit a proposal, but the City did not receive a response from the incumbent. Kelly & Lemmons is an experienced firm that provides prosecuting attorney services for seven Minnesota cities, including most of the contract cities of the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office. These cities include: Little Canada (since 2008), North Oaks (since 2011), Shoreview (since 2012), Arden Hills (since 2012). It is proposed that Joseph Kelly serve as the City's Prosecutor. Mr. Kelly is well regarded among cities and the Sheriff's Office as an effective prosecutor. The City Council is asked to review the RFP and provide guidance on whether to approve a contract with Kelly & Lemmons, or whether to reject all proposals and continue with our current prosecutor.

The City Council agreed unanimously to include the item on the following agenda for consideration.

3. Climate Emergency Resolution

Linehan states many cities around the state have adopted Climate Action Plans addressing the pressing issues of climate change. At the July 6th Workshop, the City Council directed the Environment Commission to revise the Climate Emergency Resolution. Specifically, it was requested to include: an acknowledgement of the City's ongoing efforts and leadership in the area of climate commitment and not commit the City to completing a Climate Action Plan, but to explore it. This was requested due to the unknown costs of a Climate Action Plan. The Environment Commission reviewed the feedback at their October meeting, and approved the attached resolution at their November meeting. If the resolution is agreeable to the City Council, it will be included on the January 11th City Council agenda.

Council Member Meyer states that as the Council goes forward working on an action plan, Council Member Meyer wants keep in mind that the cost of energy has increased and wants to continue to help lower income residents with energy costs.

Council Member Leehy states that she wants stay clear of mandates. Also, Council Leehy would like to make some changes to the wording.

Council Member Wehyee says that he thinks something is lost by changing the wording.

Council Member Leehy states that she is okay with losing that. Council Member Leehy has been opposed to using climate emergency since the beginning.

Council Meyer says that he wishes the Council could react to it with using words that create alarmism and is split on keeping this language.

Council Member Leehy states that she can't vote for something that says we are in a climate emergency. Leehy states that she is all for resiliency and the environment.

Mayor Gustafson makes suggestions to the wording that everyone is in concurrence with.

4. 2023 Fee Schedule

Linehan states that the City historically has approved the fee schedule as a resolution. However, it should be an ordinance. The City has not changed its fee schedule for building permit fees since 2004. The City is updating the fees to what the State of Minnesota adopted.

Council Member Wehyee asks whether the Council approve the fee schedule and the ordinance together or separate?

Linehan says that it will have to be separate.

D. ADJOURNMENT: 9:42 p.m.

Mayor



Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor

Dated this 25th day of January, 2023



Jack Linehan, City Administrator

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.