

**CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS**  
Regular Meeting of the City Council  
City Hall  
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue  
**MINUTES**  
March 8, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:07 p.m.
- B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON\_\_X\_\_ LEEHY\_\_\_\_ MEYER \_\_\_\_  
WASSENBERG \_\_X\_\_ WEHYEE\_\_\_\_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN\_X\_\_

- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- D. PRESENTATION  
1. Saint Paul Fire Department - Annual Report

After taking roll call, it was determined that the City Council did not have a majority council. Business could not proceed and it became an unofficial meeting of the Council.

Mayor Gustafson explains that the City of Falcon Heights began contracting their fire services with the City of St. Paul on January 14, 2021. Our initial two-year contract is now in its automatic renewal phase. To recap the first two years of services provided to the City by the St. Paul Fire Department, the Administrative Deputy Chief, Stacy Hohertz, will present.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says they've enjoyed providing services and being invited to City events, as that's important to continue to build relationships with residents.

St. Paul Fire is an all-hazards fire department; they have the ability to provide fire protection, emergency medical services and response to hazardous materials.

There's a total of 435 firefighters, with 115 firefighters staffed daily. The term "firefighter" here means sworn personnel of various ranks. There are 15 operating fire stations, with two of them within 2 miles of the city center of Falcon Heights. There are 25 staffed fire apparatus, 15 ALS ambulances, 3 BLS ambulances, a hazardous material team, an advanced technical rescue team and fire investigators that are on duty 24-hours per day.

In 2021, there was a total of 934 responses within the City. If you look at a breakdown of those numbers, 763 were EMS and 171 were fire.

In 2022, that run volume went up to 1,209 responses. 1,019 were EMS and 190 were in the area of fire. The breakdown is that about 84% were medical and 16% were fire in 2022. We saw an increase of 34% in medical (from 2021 to 2022) and an 11% increase (from 2021 to 2022) in fire. Medical alarms are also included in the fire response.

The heat map shows where the bulk of the calls came in. The SE corner of Falcon Heights is a bit of "hot spot."

Deputy Chief Hohertz showed a breakdown of the way runs came in and the incident type. The largest component of types of fire response was "assist invalid," which is a person down, needing a lift. The next largest would be "alarm system activation," and then going on to a wide variety of incidents after that.



Next, Deputy Chief Hohertz shows response times as they are captured in their CAD system. First, is the call processing, which is when the 911 call is received and units are dispatched. The turnout time is a measurement of the time once the call is received and the personnel reach their vehicle/apparatus to leave the station. The Travel time is when the vehicle leaves the station and arrives on the scene. Then, vertical time is when the apparatus arrives and the time it takes personnel to arrive at the patient's side or the fire. These components are combined to reach a Total Response Time. The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) has set a standard Total Response Time of 9 minutes and 20 seconds. St. Paul Fire's current average response time is 5 minutes and 58 seconds, which is well below the national standard. They want to maintain that standard in 2023, to provide the best service, as fires grow in intensity within a short period of time.

Deputy Chief Hohertz asks if there are any questions.

Councilmember Wassenberg asks if Hohertz can go back to the heat map slide.

City Administrator Linehan says that the "hot spot" in the SE corner appears to be the State Fair; it must be pulling in State Fair data as well.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says that the data does include the State Fair.

Mayor Gustafson asks for confirmation whether St. Paul Fire has a contract with the MN State Fair and the University of MN within our area.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says that is true.

Councilmember Wassenberg says that the next "warmest area" (after the area of the MN State Fair), is the area of Falcon Crossing.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says that she does see that property come through quite a bit.

Mayor Gustafson agrees and says quite a bit of calls from there are for medical assistance. As Deputy Chief Hohertz referred to the calls, it's "assisting invalids."

Hohertz says they don't control the terminology; it's assigned during the dispatch. Sometimes, they arrive with intentions of finding something benign and it's serious and vice versa. But, that's why you always want the response time to be quick, because you don't always know what you're coming into.

Mayor Gustafson asks if everything is dispatched out of downtown. Hohertz says they dispatch for the entire county.

Mayor Gustafson points out the growth of calls from 2021 to 2022 and wonders if that's typical growth.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says two years of data isn't a great way to pinpoint the reason for growth. But, state fair attendance may have gone up from 2021 to 2022, for example. Fire calls aren't significant at 11% more.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says that, although the number of responses would be much higher, the percentages are fairly similar to what they see within Saint Paul also.

Mayor Gustafson asks about the daily staff of 115 firefighters on duty and wonders if EMS is part of that daily number.



Deputy Chief Hohertz says that each person on Saint Paul Fire are dual-role, cross-trained. So, everybody is a firefighter and everyone is at least at the EMT Basic level. Then, there's about 1/3 that are trained at the paramedic level. That is why we can do the ALS and BLS because that higher level of training within about a third of our department. That allows them to be flexible and respond to a variety of things.

Councilmember Wassenberg asks how staffing has been the last couple of years, as other places are seeing some challenges.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says they have not seen the same degree of turnover.

Mayor Gustafson asks about the stress of the job and the mental health toll.

Deputy Chief Hohertz says they see more and more people with PTSD but they have a health and wellness committee, a cancer task force, a peer support team with a social worker embedded in that team if it needs additional referrals, and two service dogs. We try to be proactive because we know it's a national trend and that police and fire are seeing it in great quantities. We do a lot of collaborative work with Regions and have great medical direction from them.

City Administrator Linehan states that they'll post that presentation along with the report online.

Mayor Gustafson thanks Deputy Chief Hohertz and said that contracting fire services out with the City of Saint Paul has really worked out well for the City, for our residents, for our budget and for the response time.

Councilmember Wassenberg said he feels like they are in great hands.

City Administrator Linehan had a meeting with Chief Inks as well to talk about the service levels and the continuation of our contract. Both parties are in agreement that there will be no changes to the contract, that the initial two-year agreement will continue to roll over annually until either party says otherwise, and there are built-in increases of 2.25%. We also discussed how we can help them. We've offered the potential use of our bays for daytime staffing and we have a compressor that is no longer utilized. At a future meeting, we will bring a recommendation to surplus that item to sell it to St. Paul Fire to use for training. It's mutually beneficial in the sense that the City no longer uses the compressor and will get some revenue from it. And, the St. Paul Fire Department will use it for training to provide better service to the City.

- E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
  - 1. February 22, 2023 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

The Council did not have quorum in order to approve minutes.

- F. PUBLIC HEARINGS:
- G. CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. General Disbursements through: 3/3/23 \$75,645.95
  - Payroll through: 2/28/23 \$24,319.54
  - Wire Payments through: 2/28/23 \$16,148.38
- 2. City License(s)



3. Amendments to the Mounds Park Academy Revenue Refunding Note Series 2014
4. Commission Assignment Adjustment
5. Joint Powers Agreement & Court Subscriber Amendment with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
6. Met Council TBRA Grant Funds Release

The Council did not have quorum in order to approve agenda items.

H: POLICY ITEMS:

I. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Wassenberg shares an update from the joint meeting that occurred on Monday, March 6, with the Parks and Recreation and Community Engagement Commissions. He said the meeting was well attended with either 14 or 15 present. The meeting started by discussing various elements of the Spring Together event that will be held at Curtiss Field, from the flyer to the budget, to how to best serve ice cream; taking into consideration how best to bring residents together, particularly in that part of town, and how to have fun and to learn from residents while we're there. From there, the Community Engagement Commission exited and the Parks and Recreation Commission continued the meeting, talking at lengths about the summer programming and how that's going to be executed. And, we decided on the 2023 commission goals, narrowing it down to 10 goals. We also discussed having a Parks and Recreation corner in the weekly newsletter.

Mayor Gustafson thanked Public Works, as that was a heavy snow! Councilmember Wassenberg said they were exercising great care to carefully place the snow. Mayor Gustafson said they did it with just two people and their experience showed!

Mayor Gustafson mentions how he and councilmember Wassenberg attended the League of Minnesota Cities Elected Officials training conference the weekend of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. It started on Friday and went all day long. Then, more followed on Saturday. I think everybody was looking at their policing costs, the services and the challenges. And, a key initiative this year is the mental health of our police officers and how can we get help built into the system. Then, THC ordinances and how they are trying to monitor that so that cities still have involvement and some control. We looked at health care provisions that are going through, the changing demographics of the state and how that's impacting what we're doing.

Councilmember Wassenberg said there was very good online coursework and presentations. And, that it was also nice to just interact with other councilmembers and to talk about challenges and best practices with them.

The League is organizing a day at the capital tomorrow (March 9). Councilmember Leehy and City Administrator Linehan will both attend. City Administrator Linehan says that the City Day on the Hill is an all-day session. In the morning, there is one on cannabis and the current proposed legislation. It will be helpful to see what the state is doing. Then, we have two afternoon meetings with our local legislators. We'll talk about some of the priorities of the City Council and the City. Specifically, Community Park. The City applied for a bonding bill in 2020 and it made the governor's list of approved bonding. At the end, it was pulled from the final approved list. At the time, the City applied for \$1 million in bonding funding and we'd like to try to submit again and work with our legislators moving forward. That support from the state would





help get us a better park and help our residents with the tax levy. As the Mayor mentioned, we'll also talk about protecting local government aid. The City typically gets about 20% of revenue from local government aid. That's down from the past, prior to 2011. Maintaining that and increasing it helps protect our residents and allows us to offer the service that we offer since we are the frontline of government. We find it every day. If our residents have an issue with the state, the federal government or the city, they call the city first. We hope the state recognizes that we're helping their mission as well.

We will have a City Council retreat next Saturday, March 18, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The morning will focus on our organizational operation and Staff will present updates from their departments. In the afternoon, we'll focus on some of our strategic goals. These meetings are open to the public and we'll have it noticed if anyone wants to attend. Matt Bostrom from the Center of Values-Based Initiatives will walk us through his study. He'll present the final results of his study on Wednesday, March 22, at our City Council meeting, which will be live. If residents participated in the survey or the study group, the meeting will be a chance to hear the results of the study.

Right now, we are down two full-time staff members and we're recruiting for those positions. The Administrative and Communications Coordinator position closed last Wednesday. We're interviewing five people and our goal is to fill the position as soon as possible.

We have our maintenance worker position as well for someone that has a background or interest in driving heavy equipment, wants to work for the City doing public service and have benefits like a pension. We have that position on our website and at City Hall. We encourage people to apply. It's a great opportunity and an important position for our City. We also have our Summer Program Coordinator, which is a key position to help plan our summer programming. Our previous Summer Program Coordinator is finally graduating and moving on to another role. It's been a busy winter and we have more snow in the forecast. Administrator Linehan issued a reminder that whenever 2" of snow or more falls, the City will be out plowing. Finally, there will be a public hearing at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting. It's for the Ruggles Path Easement Vacation. Notices are going out this week to residents within 500 feet of the subdivision plot. Although they'll come from Roseville, they are for the City of Falcon Heights.

Mayor Gustafson restates that we'll have a public hearing in two weeks and we'll also be able to go through our full consent agenda then.

J. COMMUNITY FORUM:

*Please limit comments to 3 minutes per person. Items brought before the Council will be referred for consideration. Council may ask questions for clarification, but no council action or discussion will be held on these items.*

K. ADJOURNMENT: 7:53 p.m.

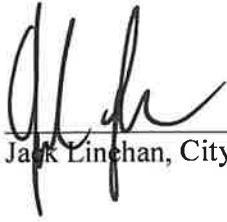
There was not quorum so no motion needed to adjourn.



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Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor

Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2023





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Jack Linchan, City Administrator

