



DRAFT

Approved: June 12, 2023

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MAY 15, 2023
5:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor Grant called to order the City Council Work Session at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Grant, Councilmembers Brenda Holden, Emily Rousseau, Tena Monson and Tom Fabel

Absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault, Public Works Director/City Engineer David Swearingen, Assistant Public Works Director Lucas Miller, Community Development Director Jessica Jagoe, Deputy Clerk Jolene Trauba, HR Green Regional Director John Morast, Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council Members Kevin Olson and Joe Fowler

1. PUBLIC INQUIRIES/INFORMATIONAL

Donna Wiemann, 1406 Arden View Drive, stated that at last week's City Council meeting a TCAAP informational open house was discussed. It was stated that there wasn't enough information at this time to move forward with an open house. She strongly disagreed. She passed a list of 13 potential topics to have at an open house to the Council members. She said there are many TCAAP components that could be presented now. It was also stated at last week's meeting that the earliest an open house would probably be held was late August. She felt there were many facts about TCAAP that could be stated without checking with the County Board and without a lot of preparation time. It seemed to her that Arden Hills residents are being precluded from what is happening until the City Council and the County Board are very close to making an agreement about the development.

Linda Swanson, 1124 Ingerson Road, congratulated City Administrator Perrault on the new addition to his family. She stated her previous question hadn't been answered and asked where did the 1,700 - 2,200 density range come from? Who brought the number to the table? What is the basis for this range? What other numbers have been brought up? Is this what the JDA's research is going to be based on? She asked Councilmember Fabel why they are keeping the JDA advisory meetings closed, she understood they were under no obligation to open them but the City Attorney has said they can be open. She didn't understand why they were keeping this

information secret from the residents of Arden Hills and she'd like to know specifically the reasons why.

Gregg Larson, 3377 N Snelling Avenue, stated there have been a number of instances in the recent past where agendas have been a point of contention at Council meetings because of a lack of prior agreement on specific agenda items, issues related to who establishes the agendas and what items are appropriate for Council consideration. He said according to the League of Minnesota Cities, administrative as well as legislative responsibility is the ultimate responsibility of the Council as a whole. With the exception of serving as the presiding officer at Council meetings, they Mayor's powers are no greater than any other councilmembers. He quoted from the Minnesota Mayor's Association handbook "The weak mayor has no extraordinary power to individually make administrative decisions for the city". Mr. Larson felt it was the Council, not the Mayor, that should be making decisions about regular meeting agendas. He added that the process the adapt for adding agenda items should be addressing applicability, prior discussion, notice, and support of a Council majority at a work session.

2. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC INQUIRIES

A. Response to April 17 Work Session Public Comment

City Administrator Perrault spoke in response to an April 17 question posed by Ms. Swanson, who asked the same questions tonight. He noted the 1,700 - 2,200 unit discussion was proposed by Councilmember Fabel and Commissioner Frethem agreed that would be a good range to look at. The rationale is the sentiment among the JDA advisory committee and the developer that the site can handle additional density beyond the 1,460, or at least be explored, and they should look at different scenarios of what that potentially looks like. They chose to look at a range of numbers and scenarios surrounding that.

Councilmember Fabel added that a study is all that's being done, trying to understand how much the property can handle and what the city can handle economically and socially.

Mayor Grant said the original AUAR contained two scenarios, the anticipated scenario was 1,500 or less. Council chose an arbitrary number of 2,500 or so if the number ever went to 1,501 or higher the AUAR wouldn't have to be redone.

Councilmember Monson arrived at 5:11 p.m.

3. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Arden Manor and Floral Park Improvements

HR Green Regional Director Morast began reviewing his presentation of Arden Manor and Floral Parks. He gave a project overview of each park. He explained the process used to receive public input.

Councilmember Monson stated she had worked with staff to reach people with English as a second language and felt we should have a policy with ways to get information to Spanish speakers.

Councilmember Holden said she had worked with a 50 year resident of Arden Manor who lives next to the park. That resident talked to kids that came to the park and brought information to others in the neighborhood.

Mr. Morast reviewed the project process, public involvement, and park equipment layout for Arden Manor Park.

Councilmember Holden said there were families with different aged kids and asked if there would be benches installed.

Mr. Morast replied there are different levels of equipment for different ages, and there are benches planned for the perimeter of the equipment areas.

Mr. Morast discussed the equipment for Floral Park.

Councilmember Holden wondered if there could be additional parking at either park.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said they are looking at adding parking at Floral Park as part of the 2024 PMP, and it would have to be discussed with Arden Manor management to see if there was space there for more parking.

Mr. Morast asked what colors the Council would like the equipment and shelters to be.

After discussion the color scheme of Forester was agreed on and the Council would defer to HR Green for the shelter colors.

Mr. Morast asked what colors the Council would like the basketball and tennis/pickleball courts to be.

After discussion it was decided to use the same colors on the courts as are at Hazelnut Park, which are green with different colored striping.

Mr. Morast noted there would be several benches, bike racks, picnic tables, grills and coal bins, and dog waste facilities added to each park. He explained the site construction process at each park, including the new trail at Floral Park.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen stated there may be angled or parallel parking added to Floral Park, and he will be discussing that with the PMP.

Councilmember Rousseau asked if the new trail will have an impact on existing flower beds.

Mr. Morast said the trail will be exactly where it is now, just rounding out the square corners.

Mr. Morast reviewed the estimated construction costs and next steps. He would like to get authorization to advertise for bids at the next Council meeting, with the bid opening on June 5, and contracts awarded on June 12.

Councilmember Monson asked how they were estimating construction costs.

Mr. Morast stated they looked at other contracts and bumped the unit prices up to accommodate the size of the jobs. They tried to get as many real-world numbers as possible.

Discussion ensued regarding extending the bid timeline and the overall budget.

Mr. Morast noted they must use the CDBG funds this spring/summer.

Councilmember Holden wondered if the bids came back over budget if the ICWC could do a portion of the work.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen didn't think there would be a line item they would gain from by using ICWC, but they could look at trail improvement costs.

Mayor Grant stated the trail portion could be a bid alternate. He was looking to have some flexibility in case the bids come in high. They could have the bids come in as one and separate parks because of the CDBG funds at Arden Manor.

Councilmember Holden felt the parks need to be redone and if the bids were over \$20,000-\$30,000 she would be OK with it.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen commented that they could take the color choices to the PTRC meeting the next evening for a vote, and the formal approval from Council would be at the next regular meeting.

City Administrator Perrault stated the bid structure will need to be ready for the next meeting.

B. Ribfest Discussion

Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council Member Olson stated he was representing the Yellow Ribbon Committee. They have 15 trade affiliates around the state, and the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council oversees their administrative policies. The Yellow Ribbon objective is to make sure they are partners with their service members, veterans and families to be sure they are taken care of before, during and after deployment. They plan to use the proceeds from a ribfest to react to requests from Yellow Ribbon communities. They established a 501(c)3 called Building Strong Communities.

Mr. Olson said they are proposing a competitive ribfest with members of the various labor unions, yellow ribbon communities, and yellow ribbon organizations at the headquarters of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division in Arden Hills, Saturday, September 16. They have approval from the National Guard. There will be parking on the east and back of the National Guard complex with 415 paved spots and some unpaved areas. The event site plan includes space for up to 30 rib competitors, 20 sponsors in 10X10 tents, and two stages for music and entertainment. One stage would be specific to the military, and one for other entertainment and festival announcements. They hope to have some sport team mascots and other personalities. There will be static displays of equipment used in the construction trades, the Army National Guard recruiting, the Ramsey County Sheriff and local fire department. They intend to have a beer and refreshment tent.

Mr. Olson acknowledged they will need to provide proof of insurance and a permit from the State of Minnesota to hold a 50/50 raffle. They will be working with a Ramsey County licensed caterer

for beer and other refreshments. They will get a Minnesota Department of Health temporary food license for sanitation and serving. They are aware of the noise ordinance in the city, and they will contact the Ramsey County Sheriff and Lake Johanna Fire Department for safety assessments and requirements.

Mr. Olson noted they would like to place signs in the area to invite the public. They are accepting bids for a sanitation plan for portable toilets, sanitation stations and trash. They are hoping this inaugural event will bring people to Arden Hills to learn about labor trades and the military.

Mayor Grant asked if they were hoping for this to be an annual event at the Red Bull facility.

Mr. Olson said that would be up to the commanding general, but they hoped it would be.

Mayor Grant asked what they meant in their letter by “underrepresented communities”.

Mr. Olson said that references diversity, equity inclusion and belonging, and they reach out to all communities that may not have considered an opportunity in the trades.

Mayor Grant asked if the funds would be used locally or throughout the state.

Mr. Olson said they would be used throughout the state, using the network of Yellow Ribbon organizations.

Community Development Director Jagoe stated that based on tonight’s Council feedback staff would keep working with them to get the necessary permits and site plan review.

Councilmember Holden noted this would be a good year for this event because Scoops for Troops isn’t happening. She suggested having golf carts to shuttle people that have to park far away, and they will need to be sure there is enough handicapped parking.

Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council Member Fowler said they would have parking lot volunteers and they could designate more handicapped parking toward the front. They could also have some kid friendly games.

Councilmember Rousseau was disappointed to hear how much of the event would be a career fair. She thought it would be a great idea for Arden Hills to have a festival. She would like to know more about their 50(c)3 and how much of the funds raised would go to programs versus marketing and initial set up.

Mr. Fowler said BSC (Building Strong Communities) has been around for about five years, they made it a state-wide diversity and inclusion program about three years ago. They just graduated 68 people out of the program and have been so far able to guarantee 100% placement in the trades. Beyond the Yellow Ribbon has a separate steering committee but is also under the 501(c)3. BSC is specific to the trades. The military sees an opportunity to have possible recruitment efforts at the event geared toward citizen soldiers who are part-time military. The same type of people that make potentially good apprentices and potentially good Guard members.

Mr. Olson added that he would benchmark the event more like a community event similar to Touch-A-Truck where people could come in to see things they wouldn't otherwise get an opportunity to see.

Councilmember Rousseau mentioned that the Arden Hills Starbuck's had recently become a Military Family Store and they might be willing to donate coffee.

Councilmember Fabel felt this was a fabulous event and encouraged them to come back anytime they needed help from the City. He hoped it would become an annual event for the trades and military.

Mayor Grant asked how they would be advertising.

Mr. Olson said staff had suggested ideas such as cable access, the City newsletter and other formats we can provide. He asked Mayor Grant if he would be a celebrity rib judge.

Mayor Grant replied that he loved barbeque so they were on. He stated they wanted to be welcoming and show appreciation to the Red Bulls.

Councilmember Monson commented that having enough picnic tables would be important, children like stickers and face painting, and stroller parking would be appreciated.

Councilmember Holden noted that Dave Anderson from Famous Dave's/Old Southern BBQ may be another good person to contact, and Betty McCollum is also a big supporter of the National Guard.

Mayor Grant suggested that along with using NineNorth to advertise, they could also use them to take some shots that could be used after the event to use as a draw for next year. They might want to have some overflow parking as the number of people attending could surprise them.

Mr. Fowler added this is not primarily a recruitment event, it is primarily a fundraiser and rib tasting and it will be a family friendly environment.

C. Boston Scientific Donation/Dog Park Discussion

Assistant Public Works Director Miller stated Boston Scientific recently approached PTRC members with a request to donate \$5,000 and volunteer labor for agility equipment for larger dogs at Perry Dog Park. The estimate from Wisconsin Playground is a little over \$5,500.

Councilmember Rousseau asked if they could ask the Arden Hills Foundation to make up the difference.

Mayor Grant said they could approach the Foundation for that donation. He asked if they were getting a fire hydrant or the fence silhouette, he was hoping the fire hydrant.

Councilmember Monson asked what the next steps would be.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said the PTRC is hoping the donation and volunteer work would be accepted by Council.

Councilmember Holden said she would like to see a plaque acknowledging the equipment was donated by Boston Scientific.

Mayor Grant felt that should be up to Boston Scientific.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said once they have the final package and price they will bring it to Council for approval. PTRC will need to choose the colors. Staff would like a full package of what equipment they'd like and who will cover the costs.

Mayor Grant thought this would be a great way to make the area look more like a dog park. He directed staff to move forward.

D. Youth Commissioner for Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee (PTRC)

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen stated that at the April 18 PTRC meeting a motion was passed to pilot a youth committee member position and Council feedback was requested.

Councilmember Holden thought they had always been open to youth. She thought legally they couldn't appoint youth to statutory commissions, and wondered if they were going to create separate categories for all the committees.

Mayor Grant said he wasn't aware of any age discrimination language in the applications. Some committees you may need to have some depth of knowledge but members weren't limited by age.

Councilmember Rousseau thought a three-year term was a limitation for that age group and would like to have a one year term for the school year. Someone could come in for the open seat as well, but this would give youth a chance to work with their school schedule.

Councilmember Monson asked if the youth would be an additional member or one of the normal number of members.

City Administrator Perrault said that would be up to the Council to decide, but as an example, Shoreview allows them as an additional member with voting rights. So, in our PTRC there would be the 12 standard positions and an additional youth member.

Councilmember Monson felt it was important that they support youth positions and the ordinance be changed to reflect that the positions are for during the school year for people in high school or college. She would like the position to be in addition to the regular number of members.

Councilmember Holden asked why they wouldn't amend the ordinance to say that every committee could have a youth position for one year.

Councilmember Rousseau thought that might be a good idea. She wondered if there could be a non-voting youth member on a commission.

Councilmember Holden recalled the city attorney stated they couldn't have anyone under 18 on a commission due to statutory requirements.

Councilmember Rousseau asked for clarification about the Economic Development Commission.

City Administrator Perrault said the ordinance calls it a commission, but he could confirm with the city attorney.

Mayor Grant felt having youth on committees was a fine thing, but he didn't see the need to limit the term as a sophomore or junior may wish to serve longer.

Councilmember Rousseau didn't think they would be limited as they could also serve as a regular member.

Mayor Grant said that was essentially his point. He felt youth could provide valuable insight on certain committees such as PTRC. Or they could join a committee simply to learn about it. He noted that students would come from Mounds View High School, Irondale, and Roseville.

Councilmember Fabel noted there were also private schools that had Arden Hills residents attending.

Further discussion ensued. It was determined to get clarification from the city attorney which committees/commissions would be eligible to have a youth member.

City Administrator Perrault asked what age group they would like to limit it to, noting Little Canada and Shoreview limited it to high school students that live in or go to schools in the city. Would they like to expand to Bethel and Northwestern Universities? One-year term or longer?

After discussion it was decided to limit it to high school sophomores, juniors and seniors, for a one-year term.

Councilmember Holden suggested that if someone who is a sophomore or junior applies they should encourage them to take a regular open position leaving room for someone else to take the one-year youth position.

Councilmember Monson thought voting rights should be dependent on the committee.

City Administrator Perrault was anticipating EDC and PTRC. He wouldn't include the fire board, Karth Lake, or the personnel committee and noted the communications committee no longer has a public member.

E. Economic Development Commission (EDC) Discussion

Community Development Director Jagoe stated the EDC was suspended in 2021 due to inactivity and the limited resources of the Community Development department. A Senior Planner has been hired so Staff is asking direction on resuming the EDC and recruiting members. Currently only one member is still interested in participating, there are nine total positions available; four would need to be Arden Hills residents and five could be non-residents that are business owners within the community. If the Council would like to re-establish the committee recruitment could begin in June and July and potentially begin meeting in August.

Councilmember Holden thought one of the reasons the committee quit meeting was that businesses they interviewed weren't asking for help and there wasn't anything major for them to do. She wondered if the three items listed in the memo would be enough to keep them busy.

Councilmember Fabel felt the Economic Development Commission shows that the city is open for business and ready for new ideas to come in.

Councilmember Rousseau said the group could also talk about the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and create and strengthen partnerships between public and private agencies.

Councilmember Fabel thought it would be an opportunity to work with the unnamed grocery store to figure out what we'd like to see in their building and assist them in finding a good use.

Mayor Grant stated they own the building and will be subleasing it, and may not want our assistance.

Councilmember Monson said she would add a communications strategy to the list, how COVID has changed business and what can the City do to help, business recruitment and TCAAP.

Mayor Grant said restarting the EDC is not a problem, they could potentially interface with TCN's manufacturing cohort, but he wasn't sure what kind of involvement they would have with the Gateway Visitor's Bureau other than financial information about our two hotels.

Councilmember Holden felt it was fine to re-instate the group but felt we hadn't had any problem saying Arden Hills was open for business.

Mayor Grant felt the biggest item would be business retention and employment.

Community Development Director Jagoe commented that the EDC could join in the Gateway sign discussion, and if they are reactivating the commission they need to appoint a Council liaison.

Councilmember Rousseau volunteered to be the liaison to the EDC.

F. Agenda Setting Discussion

(This item was discussed after Item 3G.)

City Administrator Perrault stated there isn't a right or wrong way to set agendas, some cities have a formal policy, some cities have a very formal policy and some cities have no policy. He included the language that Falcon Heights uses as an example of a formal policy. Currently, the Mayor generally has prerogative over Council items but does ask for additions at the start of a meeting.

Councilmember Holden said in the last 10-15 years the mayors have always asked if anybody wanted anything on the agenda and items have always been put on, so she didn't feel it was "mayor's prerogative" as she's never heard a mayor say they wouldn't allow something on the agenda.

Mayor Grant added the timeline actually goes back to the mid-1990s. The unwritten rule is that if they want something on the agenda as Council you send it to the mayor, and if you want something on the agenda as staff you send it to the city administrator. There have been a couple of cases where it hasn't been clear which agenda items were wanted on, but as long as it's understood it gets on the agenda. He doesn't filter requests; if you want it on the agenda it will be on the agenda.

Councilmember Fabel stated we've had several problems with agenda setting in the several months that we've been here.

Mayor Grant asked who was "we".

Councilmember Fabel replied it was the Arden Hills City Council. He said on at least two occasions he's requested items be put on the agenda that were not added and he had to bring them up once the meeting started. As Mr. Larson pointed out in his comments, the establishment of an agenda is for the Council, there is nothing in law or any ordinances that would give the Mayor any different status than any other councilmember. He felt they should give all councilmembers equal access to the agenda, and he was partial to the Shoreview policy with some modifications. Shoreview's policy says items must be submitted to the city manager by Tuesday of the week prior to the meeting, he would add that there should only be matters brought by councilmembers that require action to take a vote. Regular council meetings are for the purpose of making decisions, other things would go to work sessions. Secondly, he would add that notice be provided to all councilmembers whenever another councilmember makes a request for a matter to be added to the agenda, and the location and sequence on the agenda be established by the city administrator. Finally, when there is a request to add an item to the agenda it would require the majority of the council to add it.

Councilmember Holden said then they should have a meeting on the Thursday before the Council meeting to discuss what goes on the agenda. She gave the example of a storm coming through and are they going to wait seven days before they authorize clean up. The mayor of Shoreview goes through the agenda with the city manager, and helps with the administration of the agenda. If they are all going to be involved with it then they should have a meeting prior to the meeting to decide what's going to be on the agenda.

Councilmember Rousseau asked if there was a storm issue would staff put something on the agenda?

City Administrator Perrault replied that staff could put it on, and in a bad storm situation there would likely be a declaration of emergency by the Mayor.

Councilmember Rousseau felt the open house item on the last agenda wasn't thoughtfully put together so she was concerned if they put it through they would miss the environmental aspect or the school situation. She thought that could have been pushed to a work session.

Councilmember Holden said she put that on the agenda as an action item. If they were going to move forward with an open house they needed to plan it. Why have staff spend time planning it only to bring it forward and have it voted down?

Mayor Grant noted it wasn't voted down, it was voted meaningless because of when it would be scheduled. He felt they were having this discussion because someone lost an election. Any councilmember should be able to put an item on an agenda. A couple of emails from Councilmember Fabel weren't well written and on one occasion the City Administrator was confused about which agenda it should be on, and in once case he was confused about what agenda it should be on. He felt the councilmembers should be able to put an item on the agenda whether the rest of the Council is fully on board or not. As a council they should be discussed and accepted or rejected. They were elected to represent the people, not to thwart other councilmembers on a 3-2 vote. There will be things on agendas they may not be in favor of but they shouldn't be trying to thwart the will of the council, other councilmembers or the mayor.

Councilmember Monson said she would like to see a more formal process. She liked the idea of items going to the city administrator the Tuesday before, and to make sure the item is an actionable item. She thought the TCAAP open house would have been a perfect discussion for a work session. No one was thwarting anybody, there was a different council and three have a different preference on how to set an agenda. She thought it was not uncommon to have a deadline for an item so staff didn't have to scramble at the end.

Councilmember Rousseau felt they need to move forward past negative comments like "thwarting" or about somebody losing an election.

Mayor Grant agreed that a deadline is a good idea. His comment involving thwarting was based on Councilmember Fabel's comment that items should go on the agenda based upon a council majority.

Councilmember Fabel stated that what he said was an additional item the day of the meeting should require the majority of the council at the meeting.

Mayor Grant said that the practice of pulling consent items to discussion items is recognized because someone may have a reason to pull it.

Councilmember Holden asked why pulling off consent should be any different, if they have questions they have ample time to follow up with staff. She would like a definition for "actionable". For example, being in favor or not of an open house was actionable to her.

Councilmember Fabel said actionable is something that would require a vote to make a decision. Discussion items are what they do at work sessions.

Councilmember Holden said so if they want an open house for TCAAP, the answer would be yes or no and is actionable.

Councilmember Fabel replied it could be, if there was a certain date you wanted an open house on it would be actionable.

Councilmember Holden said then the game is if you're willing to do it that day or not and it gets voted down.

Councilmember Monson said the game was that Councilmember Holden put on an item that hadn't been discussed by the Council, and put it on as some kind of political stunt to try to make

them vote it down and show they don't like the public which has been her game for a while. They had a lot of ideas to add to it but the work session is the perfect place to have a discussion and if they decided on a scope and wanted to vote on it that would have been fine. A discussion to discuss timing and how to pull it in with the JDA should have been at a work session rather than wasting time and resources of staff and taxpayers to talk about it at a regular meeting. She didn't want to get into a discussion of this game or that game.

Councilmember Holden stated she has brought it up because there are people contacting them wanting to know what is going on. She has brought it up three times and it's been thrown off. She contacted the City Administrator well in advance, gave him a list to pick several items from and wanted to see if anyone was interested in having an open house.

Mayor Grant suggested they try to not make this a discussion about that item, but about adding items. He noted there are actually not that many items that are added by Council. He felt councilmember items should be added to the agenda even if it were just for discussion. Time at a work session that is being televised with staff in attendance is arguably not more or less costly, but there is nothing to say that anyone shouldn't have their item on the agenda if they think it is an important item.

Councilmember Holden said she wanted an open house on the agenda because there are so many people with questions. Councilmember Monson is looking at it as a dig on her.

Councilmember Fabel suggested that if someone wanted to discuss something it should be put on a work session as they are discussion sessions. Council meetings should be those items that they need to make a decision, and put on the agenda well in advance. So things on the agenda are either coming from staff or have advance notice, or an item approved to be on at the meeting. But if they want a discussion item put it on the work session.

Mayor Grant noted that he has always asked if there were any corrections or additions to the agenda at the beginning of a meeting. He's never said are there corrections or additions where we can get three votes and have a discussion on the item just to add it to the agenda. They have had Council meetings go 30 minutes just on agenda approval and he'd like that to end. He thought that adding items the day of would probably be a mayoral decision, but he is permissive so would probably allow anybody to request it.

Councilmember Fabel stated there are at least three people saying they'd like a more formal process and he can put a proposal together and bring it to the next meeting for a vote.

Mayor Grant suggested he put that together himself.

Councilmember Fabel said he might have one too.

Mayor Grant said that would warrant a discussion that should be had rather than have competing proposals.

Councilmember Fabel said we are the ones who are bringing the motion to make a change.

Mayor Grant asked who is we?

Councilmember Fable said he supports it and Councilmembers Monson and Rousseau are supportive of it.

Councilmember Holden stated the problem she has was that if she goes to the grocery store tomorrow and someone starts talking to her about a problem, instead of bringing it up at the next meeting to tell staff and ask for resources, she would have to wait four weeks for the next work session where they would discuss it. Which means one action item brought forward by a resident will take at least six weeks when it could be done just by adding it to the agenda to discuss it. She didn't understand how they could think that would be right. She supports a deadline for agenda items but she now wouldn't submit an item unless it were an action item as defined by Councilmember Fabel.

Councilmember Monson said Councilmember Holden was OK with a Tuesday deadline but requesting to have discussion times, not just actionable items on the council meeting.

Councilmember Holden said she is not supportive of the definition of an actionable item as it exists now. And they should restrict sharing of the information to come from the City Administrator and not from individual councilmembers going to other individual councilmembers, which hasn't been happening and is a big concern.

Councilmember Monson thought it was interesting that Councilmember Holden felt something would have to go to Council rather than work with staff on items.

Councilmember Holden felt she wasn't privileged enough to tell staff what to do with their resources.

Councilmember Monson agreed that if an item comes from a resident there shouldn't be four weeks if there needs to be a decision, but wanted the items on the agenda to be actionable as much as possible. So maybe there could be a residential concern standing item.

Councilmember Holden said that to her the action item is the decision of staff resources. That's why when she brings forth something like the open house it's because it will make work for them, and it's up to the Council to decide if it should happen.

Councilmember Monson said she understood what their role was in directing staff. She wondered if anyone else had any ideas about having a standing item on the agenda if they need to have a discussion item at a meeting that a resident has come up with.

Councilmember Fabel said they currently allow councilmembers to give a speech at the end of a meeting and Councilmember Holden takes full advantage of that and she could continue with whatever information from the person she was talking to.

Councilmember Holden thought that again defeated the purpose. At the end of the meeting they wouldn't make a decision or dump it on staff, so then it would have to wait until the next meeting. The definition of actionable to her is directing resources.

Councilmember Monson asked if Councilmember Holden could put something on the agenda that was written in an actionable way.

Councilmember Holden said not everything is written that way now.

Councilmember Monson wondered what it would take for Councilmember Holden to support how this would work so it also works for residents. She attempted but maybe someone else want to work with Councilmember Holden to find a solution.

Councilmember Rousseau thought they should consider continuing the conversation with the League of Minnesota Cities.

Mayor Grant stated that if an actionable item is to spend more than the city administrator's spending limit then it needs to be specified up front in a motion; \$7, 500 unbudgeted or \$10,000 budgeted.

Councilmember Monson said she didn't have an opinion on that but thought he was circling back around actionable being what staff couldn't make decisions of on their own, so if staff felt they needed direction that would be actionable.

Mayor Grant said he was trying to get out of making motions to spend city funds that would go beyond a certain dollar amount.

Councilmember Monson said Councilmember Holden mentioned that a lot of actionable items use staff time.

Mayor Grant said he would consider that to be an expenditure of funds. Councilmember Rousseau's comment was not lost and this is scheduled to be a part of the discussion with the League of Minnesota Cities. Everyone seems to agree on having a deadline and a fiscal policy to articulate how much money is in a proposal, but they are still not all there on how things get on the agenda. He wasn't sure that he was comfortable with two or more councilmembers needing to approve an item to get on the agenda. He asked if they were comfortable taking this to the League.

Councilmember Fabel said he was open to discussion but there may also be a motion coming up at the upcoming meeting.

Mayor Grant asked if they could agree that as a council they need to agree before bringing it forward.

Councilmember Fabel said they had substantial consensus now.

Mayor Grant asked if Councilmember Fabel was saying they were going to do the same 3-2 vote.

Councilmember Fabel said he has tried to be easy about it but he wanted to change the way in which the agenda is established. It has been run by the mayor for a long time and he has found that unsatisfactory since he has been on the Council, and felt it would be better managed if they proceed in a more formal manner, along the lines of some other cities. He thought it should be put out there to see if the Council wants to accept a change or not. Council could say the they're happy having the mayor run everything. He has seen the Mayor exercise prerogatives putting things on agendas that he regards as political discussion and not allowing other things to be put on the agenda that he wanted put on. He recognizes that will diminish some of the prerogatives the Mayor has had in the past and enjoyed.

Mayor Grant asked if Councilmember Fabel could read his mind. He asked Administrator Perrault if Councilmember Fabel had ever requested something that didn't end up on an agenda.

Administrator Perrault stated he didn't want to be drawn into the conversation. Council can move forward with a policy if they want or discuss with the League but he preferred staff be left out of it.

Mayor Grant said Councilmember Fabel's items have always been put on an agenda. He recommended taking this to the League for discussion.

Councilmember Holden stated they are a political body, so every discussion is political. Spending money is political, what they do in the parks is political, what they do with the streets and sewers, if they spend money or not spend it is all political.

Mayor Grant felt everything on this agenda was political. He asked that Councilmember Fabel not put this item on the agenda until after having a discussion with the League of Minnesota Cities. He thought that would be a fair and equitable way to do it. This is on the list of things the League wants to work on with the City.

Point of order – the meeting was extended an additional half hour.

G. Juneteenth Discussion

(This item was discussed before Item 3F)

Mayor Grant explained that if the State declares Juneteenth a holiday, City Hall will be closed. If they don't declare an observance for this year, City Hall will be open. It has been the practice to bump any public business to the following day, which would be Tuesday in this case.

Councilmember Fabel wondered if they could bump the work session to Wednesday.

Mayor Grant felt they should hold off on the discussion of what to do until they declare it.

H. Nuisance Signs

Mayor Grant said the ground has thawed and signs are popping up all over the town. There isn't a policy about picking up nuisance signs. He would like support to add it to the Public Works policy. He said there is someone being paid on Saturday to check on lift stations, they could also pick up nuisance signs.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said it would be a collaborative effort with Ramsey County to take signs out the County right-of-way.

Councilmember Holden said some companies are now starting to attach signs to other metal signs, she didn't feel they should be using signs paid for by tax dollars to put their advertisements on.

Mayor Grant asked if it was acceptable to add to an existing policy or create a policy that says Public Works will pick up nuisance signs.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said they are currently using the code enforcement officer to pick up signs, to his knowledge that has worked well. Public Works has picked them up if they are out mowing.

Community Development Director Jagoe said Public Works when requested would remove some signs because they have trucks with flashing lights and it's safer for them.

Mayor Grant felt most of the signs go out in Friday night or Saturday morning.

City Administrator Perrault stated code enforcement picks up signs on a weekly basis. Do they want Public Works to pick up signs any time they are out and about? He didn't think that would be a great use of their time to stop every time they see a sign. Adding it to the Saturday responsibilities would probably make that a four hour call instead of two.

Councilmember Holden thought the current system isn't working. There are a lot of signs that Public Works drive right by every day.

Councilmember Rousseau said it sounded good to her and would defer to Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen about what needs to be done.

Councilmember Rousseau would support making it a part of policy to utilize Public Works to remove signs.

Community Development Director Jagoe said she was hearing a preference for Saturday removal or a more daily pick up as staff sees them.

Mayor Grant directed staff to write a policy and to pull signs in the County right-of-way.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen asked for some discretion depending on the task they are currently doing or going to.

Mayor Grant said that would be the exception rather than the rule.

Councilmember Monson suggested they track how many signs they pull and how much time it takes.

Councilmember Holden thought we should stop calling the businesses to tell them we have their signs.

I. Volunteer Recognition

City Administrator Perrault asked if the Council would like to put together a volunteer recognition policy that could include who they would recognize, how to recognize volunteers and if it would be limited to committee/commission members.

Councilmember Holden asked how they would choose one over the other? There are a lot of people that do a lot of volunteering that don't have name recognition.

Councilmember Rousseau said she would like to highlight that the activities are out there, and people are out doing this work. She asked members of the PTRC about George Kruse and they described all the things he does. They could pull in some of the buckthorn groups and used photos of previous seasons to recruit.

Mayor Grant said they had started recognizing businesses at one point and got feedback wondering why not us? He didn't know how they draw the line; they may recognize one person but run the risk of missing others. He liked the idea but felt it was a practical matter and they needed to be careful to not overlook people.

Councilmember Fabel suggested they let each councilmember acknowledge someone every so often as they are all aware of people deserving recognition.

Mayor Grant said then they need to figure out how do they recognize them? Do they put it in Arden Hills notes, invite them to the appreciation picnic or something else?

Councilmember Monson thought they shouldn't allow perfect to be the enemy of good, this is a good thing. They could do a special award for one volunteer or recognize all volunteers. There are probably other cities that have policies, maybe start there.

Councilmember Holden liked the idea of showing a picture of last year's volunteers to recruit, maybe they could say if you want recognition there's a form to complete. They also haven't been recognizing coaches and referees. When the Rotary does work it's usually just a picture of them doing things like painting the hockey rink. People could also nominate themselves by telling the city what they do.

Mayor Grant agreed they should look at what other cities are doing.

Councilmember Holden was against everyone choosing one person each quarter or year, as that could quickly get political. She liked the idea of looking at other cities.

Mayor Grant directed staff to bring more information back to the next work session.

J. Council Tracker

Not discussed.

4. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS

Councilmember Holden commented there were a lot of dead looking trees on Highway 96.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen stated that per contract, Margolis was scheduled to do four rounds of inspections over the next two years. They would be out mid-spring to early summer and any trees that die over the next two years will be replaced.

Mayor Grant thought some of the ones that weren't removed look like emerald ash borer may be progressing.

Councilmember Fabel would love to see the marketing money they were told about in an email from City Administrator Perrault to go toward the ribfest.

Mayor Grant said he'd had that discussion with the Visitor's Bureau. The money needs to be spent to attract people to the area and he will be passing the ribfest info to them.

City Administrator Perrault noted the Commissions and Committee Picnic would be July 18, and wondered if Council would like to order polo shirts along with staff.

Mayor Grant thought they should open ordering polo shirts to the full council.

City Administrator Perrault received an email from MMB, they are taking capital requests for next year's bonding cycle, due June 16.

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session at 8:30 p.m.

Jolene Trauba
Deputy City Clerk

David Grant
Mayor