



**DRAFT**

Approved: August 14, 2023

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**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
JULY 24, 2023  
7:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor David Grant called to order the regular City Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor David Grant, Councilmembers Tena Monson and Tom Fabel

**Absent:** Councilmembers Brenda Holden (excused) and Emily Rousseau (excused)

**Also present:** City Administrator Dave Perrault; Public Works Director/City Engineer David Swearingen; Community Development Director Jessica Jagoe; Finance Director Gayle Bauman; and Assistant to the City Administrator/City Clerk Julie Hanson

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mayor Grant** requested the agenda be amended to add Items 8H and 8I to the Consent Agenda.

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Monson moved and Councilmember Fabel seconded a motion to approve the meeting agenda as amended. The motion carried (3-0).**

**2. TCAAP/RICE CREEK COMMONS UPDATE**

**City Administrator Perrault** stated the Joint Development Authority held a special worksession on Tuesday, July 11. He noted the JDA Advisory Committee has not met since. He reported a full recording of the JDA worksession can be viewed on the City's website and minutes would be included once approved in August. He explained the JDA discussed upcoming community engagement, the project roadmap and the format of the advisory committee meetings. He noted the JDA was planning to host a comprehensive community engagement event in October. He explained the JDA would meet next on Monday, August 7. He noted advisory meetings would now have a virtual link on the City's website for members of the public to listen in and the next one was scheduled for the following Thursday.

**Mayor Grant** asked when the JDA Advisory Committee would meet next.

**City Administrator Perrault** explained this group would meet next on Thursday, July 27.

**Councilmember Monson** stated she believed the discussion the JDA had at the worksession about community engagement was really good. She encouraged those interested to watch this meeting.

### 3. PUBLIC INQUIRIES/INFORMATIONAL

**Mary Henry**, 3521 Ridgewood Court, explained Arden Hills will receive updated financial projections for Rice Creek Commons this fall. It was her hope this information, along with further market study information, would give the Council added lenses on how to consider the housing goals for this project. She commented on a research study by Robert Alexson noting local zoning almost always works to freeze land use. She encouraged the Council to thoughtfully consider residential zoning within Rice Creek Commons. She reported the neighborhoods that were created in Arden Hills in the 1940's and 1950's look the same as they did when they were developed. She indicated she would not be around in 50 years but she hoped the new neighborhoods would be walkable and environmentally efficient with sufficient density. She trusted that the Council would have the City's best interests at heart because the zoning of this project would be the City Council's legacy.

**Gregg Larson**, 3377 North Snelling Avenue, explained the Council made a significant change that he wanted to recognize, which was to clean up the narrative that went along with public comment. He thanked the Council for taking this action.

**Linda Swanson**, 1124 Ingerson Road, indicated she had an issue, noting not all of the questions she had raised had not been answered by the City or staff. She reported given how secretive the JDA Advisory Committee is, she recommended the full City Council have a worksession to discuss what the City and residents of Arden Hills want. She suggested a TCAAP public engagement event be held in August or September and not October. She feared if the City waited to do this meeting after October, too many decisions will have already been made by the JDA. She encouraged residents of Arden Hills to remember that Tom Fabel is not registered with the American Bar Association, nor the State Bar Association. She indicated it would be unlawful for Councilmember Fabel to render any legal advice. She urged the Council to continue holding the State of the City in September or October because this event kept the City moving forward and was not deemed an event for looking back.

**Kathy Sukke**, 1286 Karth Lake Circle, reported at the Council worksession last Tuesday, Gregg Larson, mayoral candidate, who lost to Mayor Grant, suggested the State of the City be held in January. She explained this event was typically held in the fall. She noted Gregg Larson was not the Mayor, but he ran with other members of the slate on transparency, openness and inclusivity. She discussed how things have changed over the past seven months with secret JDA Advisory meetings. She believed it would be nice if City Administrator Perrault wrote things down from the JDA Advisory meetings. She expressed concern with how the thumb property was being sold and developed, noting the zoning had changed half-way through this process. She feared this was not a transparent process. She recommended a visible audit function be created for TCAAP to keep the public apprised of the accomplishments and progress being made on this project. She encouraged the Council to hold a State of the City event this fall because it would assist in informing the

public about the TCAAP project. In addition, she recommended the Council hold a TCAAP Open House this fall, along with an accurate traffic count. She discussed how a Costco development on the thumb property could impact traffic and noted this would mean an additional one million trips into the northern portion of Arden Hills. She commented on how a Costco would hurt the proposed small businesses the Council wanted to see developed in the Town Center area. She reported the new target density was 2360, which was an increase of 900 units. She stated this would increase the population of Arden Hills by 2100. She stated diversity, equity and inclusion means no more secrecy buried in future January meetings but rather that the Council begin bringing all conversations to light in the interests of the public, who elected the Council to serve.

**Linda Swanson** stated it was insulting to stand at the podium and have Councilmember Tom Fabel laughing in your face. She encouraged Councilmember Fabel to view the meeting and to watch his behavior.

#### 4. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC INQUIRIES

None.

#### 5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None.

#### 6. STAFF COMMENTS

##### A. Transportation Update

**Public Works Director Swearingen** reported Lexington Avenue would have a short term closure on Red Fox Road in order to allow the City to complete watermain work. He explained the west side closure would begin Thursday, July 27 through Thursday, August, 3. He stated Ramsey County has stated Lexington Avenue will have all lanes of traffic open by Tuesday, August 1.

**Public Works Director Swearingen** provided the Council with an update on the roundabout project. He stated Phase 2 has been implemented, which included the closure of the north leg through the remainder of July and August. He noted the south lag would remain closed for gas main work. He reviewed the detour routes that would remain in place throughout the roundabout project.

**Councilmember Monson** asked if the roundabout would be substantially complete by the time school starts.

**Public Works Director Swearingen** explained the roundabout project should be paved the last week of August. He noted work on the Lindsey's parking lot would not be done until next spring.

##### B. Night to Unite Update and Proclamation

**Assistant to the City Administrator/City Clerk Hanson** stated Night to Unite will be held on Tuesday, August 1 from 5:00 to 9:00 pm. While the formal registration deadline was Friday, July

14; interested parties may still register as the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office will try its best to accommodate, but cannot guarantee, a visit by a deputy for late registrations. She noted that as of July 15, there were 19 registered events and said the list was published on the city's website and provided to the City Council. She referenced the proclamation showing Council's support of Night to Unite.

**Mayor Grant** read a portion of the proclamation and noted he as well as the other Councilmembers supported the proclamation.

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Fabel moved and Councilmember Monson seconded a motion to approve the Night to Unite Proclamation. The motion carried (3-0).**

## 7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. July 10, 2023, Regular City Council
- B. July 10, 2023, Special City Council Work Session

**Mayor Grant** noted minor corrections were made to both sets of minutes and these corrections were provided to the City Clerk.

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Monson moved and Councilmember Fabel seconded a motion to approve the July 10, 2023, Regular City Council meeting minutes as amended; and July 10, 2023, Special City Council Work Session meeting minutes as amended. The motion carried (3-0).**

## 8. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Motion to Approve Consent Agenda Item - Claims and Payroll
- B. Motion To Approve 2023 2nd Quarter Financials
- C. Motion To Approve Data Practices Policy Annual Review
- D. Motion To Approve Resolution 2023-037 Appointing EDC Commissioners Ted Brausen, Julie Gronquist And Jud Murchie
- E. Motion To Approve Transfer Fund Balance From General Fund To PIR Capital Fund
- F. Motion To Approve Lake Johanna Fire Department Capital
- G. Motion To Approve Resolution 2023-038, 2024 PMP – Accept Feasibility Report & Order Improvement Public Hearing
- H. Motion to Accept Resignation of the Finance Director
- I. Motion to Authorize Recruitment for a New Finance Director

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Monson moved and Councilmember Fabel seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as amended and to authorize execution of all necessary documents contained therein. The motion carried (3-0).**

## 9. PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

None.

## 10. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

## 11. NEW BUSINESS

### A. State of the City Planning

**City Administrator Perrault** stated Council discussed the State of the City event at its previous worksession. He stated Council will need to decide on the timing of the event, and that it has been held in the September the last number of years. Should Council want to hold the event in the fall, Staff will need that direction this evening to prepare and have a draft presentation ready for the August worksession. He reviewed topics Councilmember Rosseau relayed at the previous worksession regarding topics for the State of the City. He requested the Council further discuss the timing and provide staff with direction on how to proceed.

**Mayor Grant** asked when the JDA would be hosting a public engagement event.

**City Administrator Perrault** explained the JDA hoped to hold this event in October.

**Councilmember Fabel** stated several weeks ago Gregg Larson made a compelling argument that the State of the City should occur after the first of the year, when the City would be able to review its accomplishments from the preceding year and what would be accomplished in the coming year. He noted the State of the Union always occurs at the beginning of the year, along with the State of the State. He strongly recommended the City hold the State of the City in the same manner, and that it be held after the first of the year. He suggested this meeting be held on a Saturday morning in January at City Hall.

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Fabel moved and Councilmember Monson seconded a motion to recommend the State of the City be held in January of 2024 on a Saturday morning at City Hall.**

**Mayor Grant** stated he did not believe Arden Hills could be compared to the State or Federal governments, or the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. He noted he called around to several other communities and learned many cities were not happy about attendance at their State of the City event. He reported he did not have any problem with holding the State of the City on a Saturday. However, he feared that this recommendation was being made based on one data point, which was that last year, the City tried to engage its businesses. He then reviewed the dates for the State of the City events since 2011. He asked how many State of the City events Councilmember Monson and Councilmember Fabel had attended in the past. He commented further on why he believed September was a good month for this event, noting residents were back from vacations and explained this may be a good time for the City to launch interest in TCAAP. He believed the September timeline also aligned well with the City budget and levy timeline. He feared that waiting until January would create an after the fact event rather than trying to gain input from residents. He encouraged the slate members to be transparent when it comes to the State of the City and not push it back to January.

**Councilmember Monson** stated she found this conversation interesting because she was neutral about the State of the City event. She indicated this topic has garnered a great deal of interest that was disproportionate, but this was the dynamic of the Council. She explained she could flip a coin on whether the event should be held in September or January. However, in the end, for the sake of not flipping a coin, she believed it was best to hold the State of the City in January when the Council would have more feedback to provide on TCAAP.

**Councilmember Fabel** thanked the Mayor for making his case for him. He explained the Mayor has defined a planning meeting, which was important. However, he believed the State of the City address was something different where the City should tell where it has been and where it will be headed. He was of the opinion it would be great to report on what has been done collectively for Rice Creek Commons at the State of the City. He noted the State of the City should not be a planning session, but rather he believed the meeting should be a report on what has been accomplished.

**Mayor Grant** thanked Councilmember Fabel for trying to twist his words. He explained he never said this was a planning meeting. Rather, he said he wanted to inform residents of what has been done and what the City was facing going forward. He encouraged Councilmember Fabel to go back and view previous State of the City events to see that all recent developments were discussed, along with covering topics that were relevant. He reported these events were not planning meetings, nor did he want to hold a planning meeting. He indicated this was a clever attorney trick where Councilmember Fabel was reframing an argument. He stated the last State of the City was held in September, which gave the Council a chance to look back 12 months. He explained for the past 12 years, the City has held its State of the City in September. He clarified for the record that the City was not delaying the TCAAP project, but rather the City defended itself and worked to move this project forward. He reviewed what has occurred from September of 2022 through September of 2023. He indicated he would continue to favor holding the State of the City in September and noted this event could be held on a Saturday.

**Councilmember Fabel** called the question.

**The motion to have the State of the City on a Saturday in January carried 2-1 (Mayor Grant opposed).**

## **12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **13. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Councilmember Fabel** stated he was hopeful the Council would be able to participate in the Ramsey County food scrap collection program. He explained this was a wonderful program where people can collect their food waste for environmentally friendly collection. He had hoped a collection bin could be placed at Arden Hills City Hall, but after speaking with the County he has learned this would be too costly. He commented on how the County hoped to move towards collecting food waste from all residents at some point in the future. In the meantime, he would like to see the City finding a way to collect food for Ralph Reeder at City Hall for those in need.

**Mayor Grant** suggested this item be placed on a future worksession agenda.

**Councilmember Monson** commented she was unable to attend the THC worksession. She explained she supported THC products being sold at tobacco licensed establishments. She recommended the Ordinance language be changed to support THC products being sold in the B2, B3 and Gateway Business Zoning Districts for retail plus service stations.

**Councilmember Monson** discussed how important home businesses were and stated she supported the Council revisiting its language within City Code surrounding home businesses next year or in 2025.

**Councilmember Monson** stated she was looking forward to the TCAAP community engagement in October.

**Councilmember Monson** asked if the ICWC could help with weeding or other restoration work in the community.

**Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen** reported staff had projects scheduled for the ICWC work crews through the remainder of the year. However, if the Council had projects in mind, they could let staff know.

**Mayor Grant** stated he attended the Penny Carnival at Perry Park. He thanked staff for their efforts in planning this event.

**Mayor Grant** explained he attended the Committee and Commission volunteer appreciation picnic. He thanked all of the Committee Members and Commissioners for their dedicated service to the City of Arden Hills.

**Mayor Grant** asked for the status of Ramsey County's project regarding a fence around the maintenance facility. He asked if this project was moving forward.

**Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen** explained the County just began putting posts in the ground for the fence this week.

**Mayor Grant** asked if the City has spent any money on the AUAR update.

**City Administrator Perrault** reported the City has not.

**Mayor Grant** reported food scraps are accepted at the Arden Hills compost site off of Hudson Road.

**Mayor Grant** thanked Finance Director Gayle Bauman for her tremendous service to the City of Arden Hills and wished her all the best in her new position.

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**ADJOURN**

**MOTION: Councilmember Monson moved and Councilmember Fabel seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried (3-0).**

**Mayor Grant** adjourned the Regular City Council Meeting at 8:04 p.m.

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Julie Hanson  
City Clerk

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David Grant  
Mayor