

***ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – JANUARY 26, 2021  
MINUTES***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Sheri Bukkila, January 26, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Blvd NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Valerie Holthus (remote), Jamie Barthel, Ted Butler, and Randy Nelson

Councilmember absent: None

Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson  
City Engineer/Public Works Director, David Berkowitz  
Community Development Director, Joe Janish  
Associate Planner, Jake Griffiths  
Community Center Manager, Erick Sutherland  
Others

***DISCUSS NIGHTINGALE ST NW AND VETERANS MEMORIAL BLVD  
NW/PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OPTION***

The City Council is requested to discuss a possible improvement of a compact roundabout at Nightingale Street NW and Veterans Memorial Boulevard NW to provide a safe pedestrian crossing and provide traffic calming in the area.

Mr. Berkowitz explained a compact roundabout is designed for a 50-mph road with peak volume. Mr. Berkowitz stated it is his opinion that a compact roundabout is worth looking at to provide safe pedestrian crossing and calm traffic. Mr. Berkowitz stated a compact roundabout will slow traffic down from 50 mph to 25-30 mph, provides a safe pedestrian refuge, and creates shorter crossing distances. Mr. Berkowitz stated another option is the HAWK system and feels they are not very popular due to the lack of data on them. Mr. Berkowitz explained the cost is lower for a compact roundabout than for a regular roundabout. He stated the cost is approximately \$200,000 - \$600,000. Staff is looking for direction on pursuing a compact roundabout at this location.

Councilmember Barthel asked if there was a cost savings if this roundabout was constructed at the same time as the roundabout at Nightingale Street and Crosstown Boulevard. Mr. Berkowitz

stated it could save money.

Councilmember Butler stated the Nightingale Street and Crosstown Boulevard roundabout is slated for 2024 with construction in 2025. The downside is pushing it out four years.

Councilmember Holthus asked if it would be a problem if the trucks drove over the center island. Mr. Berkowitz stated it is doable if the truck slows down to 35 mph. He stated semi-truck traffic is not common in that area. Councilmember Holthus referred to slide 8 in the staff report showing a semi driving over the central island. Mr. Berkowitz stated the island would be designed to be driven over. He stated staff watched videos and attended webinars to deliver this information. Mr. Berkowitz stated he does not anticipate public works trucks having difficulty with this roundabout and they would plow it clean.

Mayor Bukkila stated she likes the roundabout being in both sections. She said having them consecutively creates awareness and slows speeds down.

Councilmember Butler asked if the section between the roundabouts could have reduced speed limits. Mr. Berkowitz replied MNDOT sets the speed limit and the City would ask them to review it.

Mayor Bukkila stated she drives these quite a bit and said driving habits change and help traffic run smoothly. She asked about roundabouts on intersections at where City roads meet County roads. Mr. Berkowitz stated the County would not support this on a County road, but since the intersection comprises completely of City roads, a compact roundabout is an option. Mr. Berkowitz said the City has talked to Lennar about constructing roundabouts along Prairie Road.

Councilmember Butler stated it is good to have some consistency throughout the City because people get used to it. He stated there is \$200,000 in the CIP for this intersection. He said he is open to looking at the feasibility of a roundabout and compare it to the feasibility of a HAWK system. He said he is concerned putting it off 4 years because people have been asking for it for some time.

Mayor Bukkila stated the unknown is the cost, but she likes that 3 intersections where they have discussed roundabouts are all tied to Crosstown Boulevard: Crosstown/Nightingale, Crosstown Boulevard/Crosstown Drive and Nightingale/Veterans Memorial Boulevard. She would like to see cost savings and commented on how it can impact the tax levy.

Councilmember Butler stated he would like to get an estimate on the cost savings. Mr. Berkowitz replied the rule of thumb is 10% reduction on bundling projects. Councilmember Butler stated he would love to get all three intersections done in 4 years.

Council reached consensus to explore the compact roundabout and HAWK system, as well as constructing three roundabouts along the road.

***DISCUSS REPAIRS TO PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING***

The City Council is requested to discuss repairs needed to the old Public Works Building and direct staff on how to proceed.

The Parks area of the old Public Works Building (South side, constructed in 1972) needs repair. The current issues are degradation of the hollow metal door frames and window frames and cracking and degradation of adhesion of concrete and insulation veneer of the precast concrete panels. The City worked with an architect and discovered the building is structurally sound however needs repair. The architectural company gave options of selective demolition and renovation for \$1.3 million or full demolition and new construction for \$1.7 million.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the building would be in place for around 15 years before moving next to the new Public Works Vehicle Maintenance Facility per the City Campus Master Plan. He presented another solution of replacing windows and doors, installing new hoods, and covering a portion of the building with an insulated panel material at a cost range of \$135,000 - \$150,000. Mr. Berkowitz identified \$250,000 has been allocate for this project in the 2021-2025 CIP budget.

Mayor Bukkila stated the options are to not use the space, demo the building, or repair it. Mr. Berkowitz stated the condition will only get worse if the City does not address it.

Councilmember Butler asked if it was a 2021 project or further out. Mr. Berkowitz replied it is in the CIP for 2021.

Mayor Bukkila asked if this proposal stabilizes the building or just fixes the existing cracks. Mr. Berkowitz replied it will protect it, cover it, and it will not get any worse.

Council reached consensus to move forward with staff's recommendation to proceed with repairs.

***DISCUSS SANITARY SEWER CLEARWELL/LIFT STATION BYPASS CONSTRUCTION***

The City Council is requested to discuss and direct staff on how to proceed with the design and construction of a diversion lift station (Coon Creek Trunk Lift Station #11) at Hanson Boulevard and Coon Creek. The Coon Creek Lift Station Bypass has been identified in the City's Sanitary Sewer plan for over 15 years knowing that when development begins to occur on the east side of the railroad tracks south of Crosstown Boulevard the lift station will need to be constructed. The project is not in the 2021-2025 CIP however development fees have been collected over the years anticipating this construction and are available in the Sanitary Sewer Trunk Fund.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the Coon Creek Watershed had a role in this. Mr. Berkowitz

stated the City will need to get a permit from them but this project deals with sanitary sewer where the Watershed focuses on storm sewer.

Councilmember Butler asked Mr. Dickinson to talk about the funding source and what condition these funds will be in after this project. Mr. Dickinson stated the Trunk Fund will be close to \$7 million at the end of this year. He said the City has built up the fund in preparation for this project and for expanding the sewer into the Rural Reserve in the future. He stated the Trunk Fund is healthy.

The Council supported moving forward with this project.

***DISCUSS POTENTIAL OUTDOOR PICKLEBALL COURT LOCATIONS/PICKLEBALL STUDY/21-15***

The City Council is requested to discuss potential outdoor pickleball court locations. Staff has begun working with the consulting firm of WSB on the Outdoor Pickleball Court Study. The first important step in the study is to determine a few potential site locations. Key components for the site location is proximity to other activities, ease and cost of parking and noise consideration as the impact to the plastic ball is quite loud.

Mr. Berkowitz reviewed possible locations and explained the pros and cons of each. He stated staff and consultants looked at Andover Elementary, Terrace Park, Fox Meadows Park, Andover Station Ballfields, Pine Hills North and South Parks, Rose Park, and Rum River Elementary. Mr. Berkowitz explained the best location for the courts is on the City Campus. Staff identified three locations on the City Hall Campus and feels the best location is north of the Public Works Facility as it has great parking and is located in the center of the City.

Councilmember Butler asked how this would fit in with the City Campus Master Plan and if the playground could still be moved. Mr. Berkowitz replied moving the playground is still in the Master Plan and the pickleball courts would not impact that, as the playground is identified to be further south on the site.

Councilmember Butler stated the courts should be located next to good parking.

Mayor Bukkila stated she likes Pine Hills North.

Councilmember Holthus asked if staff looked at Hidden Creek North as a potential location. Mr. Berkowitz stated it was looked at early on and they felt it was too close to neighbors.

Councilmember Barthel asked if the Prairie Knoll paved rinks were an option. Mr. Berkowitz stated the dimensions and space of a rink and pickleball courts generally are not compatible. He explained pickleball courts need fences in between them. Councilmember Barthel asked if it

would be less expensive to use the rinks. Mr. Berkowitz replied it would be less expensive.

Councilmember Holthus asked if staff looked at Wild Iris Park. Mr. Berkowitz stated the park has wetland and there is not sufficient space. Mayor Bukkila stated it is too close to a residential neighborhood.

Councilmember Barthel stated he would like to see the hockey rinks be used as pickleball courts at Prairie Knoll and City Hall Campus.

Councilmember Butler stated he would like staff to look at Prairie Knoll, Pine Hills North, City Hall Campus, and Andover Elementary.

Councilmember Holthus stated she likes the City Hall Campus the best.

Council reached consensus to look at City Hall Campus, Prairie Knoll hockey rink, and Pine Hills North as locations for the pickleball courts.

### ***DISCUSS PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE UPDATE***

The Council is asked to review the proposed property maintenance code update and provide direction to staff on if any changes are needed and how to proceed with amending the City Code. Mr. Griffiths stated the proposed amendment is a complete restructuring of the current City Code and combines all the property maintenance standards into one area. Mr. Griffiths outlined the summary of changes, highlighting the major changes. Mr. Griffiths stated Article C: Sober Housing Licensing is new to the Code and was written by the City Attorney. The City Attorney added this in preparation of potentially seeing Sober Housing in Andover.

Councilmember Barthel stated he likes having an agent within the State. He asked if existing out of state agents would be grandfathered in or if they would be required to identify an agent within the State. Mr. Griffiths replied there are about 5-10 landlords who live out of State and Council can determine whether they should be grandfathered in. Councilmember Barthel stated he is not in favor of a grandfather clause in this instance.

Councilmember Barthel asked if there is a limit to the number of licenses the City issues and if so, can one be set. Mr. Griffiths replied there is no limit at this time. Mr. Griffiths stated some cities have set a limit to the number of rental properties on a block. He explained the City Council has taken the viewpoint of property rights and if an owner wants to rent their property, they can. Mr. Dickinson stated there are limits when it comes to the number of group homes and it is set by state statute.

Councilmember Nelson asked how long the license was good for. Mr. Griffiths replied single-family and multi-family licenses are good for two years. Councilmember Nelson asked what the

inspection entails. Mr. Griffiths stated single-family rentals are inspected from the exterior and multi-family rentals are inspected inside and outside.

Councilmember Nelson stated Coon Rapids has a rental license that has an annual fee, but the inspection can be good for up to three years. He stated Section 8 housing has two inspections per year, one from the State and one from the City. He said rental property should be able to use the State inspection because it is much more in depth.

Mayor Bukkila stated the purpose of the license was to establish a record of ownership, so the City has information on how to contact the owner if there are issues with tenants or the property. She explained it was not intended to be burdensome but more cooperative. Mr. Griffiths stated the City has much fewer rentals than neighboring cities.

Councilmember Nelson inquired if staff asks the property owner about fire alarms while doing the outside inspections. Mr. Griffiths replied the property owner commits to a long list of requirements when applying for a rental license. He stated the renter can contact the City and ask for a more in-depth inspection if they have concerns.

Councilmember Nelson stated some homeowners do not report to the City that they are renting. Mayor Bukkila stated the City normally finds out through the neighbors.

Mayor Bukkila stated she was surprised there is not an item that deals with standing water attracting mosquitos. Mr. Griffiths replied he has not seen outside issues like that and if there is an issue, there are State Statutes that other agencies will address. Mr. Janish stated there are other areas in the City Code that can address issues like this. Mayor Bukkila stated it seems more practical that the City address the issue rather than reporting it to another governmental agency to address it.

The Council reached consensus to move forward with the proposed property maintenance code update and notifying rental property owners with the normal renewal process.

### ***DISCUSS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT***

The City Council is asked to review the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment and provide feedback to staff. Mr. Janish stated staff became aware that a potential development would not be able to meet the minimum net density of its respective district as established by the Comprehensive Plan due to sewer capacity issues. Staff discussed this with the Met Council and determined that a Comprehensive Plan Amendment may be the most effective way to address this problem.

Mr. Janish explained the amendment would give the City Council the ability to approve development of certain properties within the Transitional Residential district below 2.4 units per

acre provided certain criteria are met. The City Council would then need to reallocate the difference in housing units to another property in order to maintain an overall density of 3.0 units per acre. This would give the City Council flexibility to see infill type developments created at a density more suitable to the surrounding neighborhood and allow for development of properties that have sewer capacity issues. Under the proposed amendment, the City Council could also utilize excess density from any approved developments in the future and reallocate extra units to these properties. For example, if a development came in 10 units over the minimum density of its district, those 10 units could be reallocated to a different property so that it may develop at a lesser density. Mr. Janish presented the language in the amendment asked Council for their feedback.

Mr. Dickinson stated the properties that are going to present density problems are parcels with 10 acres or less. He said larger parcels have more flexibility and can reach higher density rates to make up for the smaller parcels.

Councilmember Barthel stated he is fine with the amendment because it gives Council flexibility.

Mayor Bukkila stated she does not like it when the City has worked so hard to reach the required Comprehensive Plan objectives and asked why the City bends to the Met Council. Mr. Dickinson stated he advocates for the City to have the authority to develop as Council sees fit. The Met Council requires cities to have a minimum of 3 units per acre and Andover is exactly at 3 units per acre, Met Council would likely look at it differently if our Comprehensive Plan was slightly higher than 3.0. Mayor Bukkila stated she does not like the fact that if one landowner cannot develop at the 2.4 units per acre, then another landowner has to make up for that difference. Mr. Janish stated the bigger the development, the more flexibility there is. Mr. Janish stated the City is going to use the density the developers already have in their plan, place the extra in a “bank”, and use the excess density to offset the loss in smaller developments.

Councilmember Butler commented that this amendment prevents the need to ask for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment with every development that is below the minimum density. Mr. Dickinson stated that is the intent. Mr. Janish stated staff will track this process and report back to the Met Council on how it is working. Mr. Dickinson stated tackling the density requirement will be easier when the Rural Reserve gets sewer and water.

The Council reached consensus to move forward with the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Mayor Bukkila recessed the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Mayor Bukkila reconvened the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

***DISCUSS COMMUNITY CENTER COMMISSION BY-LAWS***

Mr. Dickinson explained he received feedback prior to the January 5<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting about redefining the purpose of the Andover Community Center Advisory Commission. He indicated now would be a good time to make changes as new members are to be appointed to the Commission. Council direction was to review the by-laws and identify by-law changes. Mr. Dickinson explained the membership, terms, and purpose of the Commission and stated the City struggles with getting members from the business community.

Mayor Bukkila stated the Commission is a group of Community Center users and not necessarily taxpayers. She said the Commission should have the purpose to serve the taxpayers and have a transparent perspective. She stated she does not have a solution, does not know if it is functional the way it is, and if it is purposeful. Mayor Bukkila stated the amount of information she has received has been inadequate. She said she does not get a full review of the fees at the Council level.

Councilmember Butler stated there is a lot of time spent on fee review on the Commission. He said the purpose of the Commission has changed and suggested the Council review the Community Center budget and fees. He stated the Community Center Commission could function as an advisory board to provide recommendations for programs.

Councilmember Barthel asked if the Community Center Advisory Commission is needed and can the Community Center operate as other City Departments, under the supervision of the City Administrator and reviewed by the Council.

Mayor Bukkila stated she can see the users wanting to meet with the Community Center Manager. She said there is a purpose to bring in more revenue. Mayor Bukkila would like the taxpayers to have representation in fees and program ideas.

Councilmember Nelson stated there are people who have good ideas for revenue so the Community Center can be successful.

Mayor Bukkila stated it can be operated as a task force with members from the Council and public.

Councilmember Barthel suggested having the task force include other Commissions such as parks and open spaces. Mayor Bukkila stated the parks have their own Commission and the public can address their ideas there.

Councilmember Holthus asked if Council was suggesting the Community Center Advisory Commission should operate in the same manner as the Park & Recreation and Planning & Zoning Commissions with an open forum and public meeting. Mayor Bukkila replied it is more about what is the Community Center Advisory Commission's purpose, what the Council wants from them, and what Council wants on their shoulders.

Councilmember Holthus asked how other cities operate and if they have Community Center Advisory Commissions. Mr. Dickinson stated it is rare and other cities invite the groups or residents to a meeting if they need input.

Mayor Bukkila stated that is more of what she envisions. She agreed there could be stakeholders meeting. Mayor Bukkila suggested inviting organizations to meetings if they or the City felt the need.

Councilmember Butler suggested having the Park and Recreation Commission hold Community Center meetings once or twice per year to solicit input and provide recommendations and have user group meetings with the Community Center staff.

Mayor Bukkila said there can be a list of Community Center users that are invited to these meetings.

Councilmember Holthus asked how the City defines who is the leader of each group and will groups be missing out if there is not a formal organization or leader to speak from them.

Mayor Bukkila said there will always be some hit and miss in finding stakeholders and the City needs to make their best effort to reach them.

Councilmember Holthus asked what makes the Community Center Advisory Commission not sufficient.

Mayor Bukkila stated the focus needs to be on being as profitable as possible. She stated the outside perspective is that users are running the Community Center and they are not looking out for the taxpayer interest.

Councilmember Butler stated that could be a perception, but it is not reality. He said the user fees are set through research of other cities and set by the Advisory Commission. He suggested changing the perception by having the City Council approve the fees. Mr. Dickinson stated the Community Center is at the higher range of rates when compared with other facilities.

Councilmember Bukkila said the perception is hockey is making all the decisions. She stated if a policy is a good business decision and in the best interest of the community, it makes sense.

Councilmember Butler asked if the Community Center is a business or a community center. He gave the example of giving up some rental time in the field house to hold voting. He stated adding turf broadens the user groups and number residents using the Community Center. He supports the Community Center operating as efficiently as possible and asked if it is more important to broaden the user groups or to make more money.

Councilmember Nelson stated he sees it as both, bringing in revenue and serving the community.

Councilmember Barthel stated the Community Center is both revenue and community driven. He asked if the City needs a Community Center Advisory Commission or if the decision-making role can go to the City Council level. Councilmember Barthel stated the discussion tonight leads him to believe the City does not need an advisory commission. He suggested having two sessions a year to gather public input by community center staff.

Councilmember Butler asked if the Council wanted an advisory commission, the Council, or staff to make decisions such as allowing voting at the Community Center.

Councilmember Barthel responded that if Council wants staff to make the decisions, the Council needs to set the strategy and be clear on what they believe in.

Mr. Dickinson stated the area where the City does not make money but spends money is after school programs. He said after school programming saves on public safety costs. Mr. Dickinson asked if the Council wants to make decisions at their level, the Park Commission, Community Center Advisory Commission, or some other way. Mr. Dickinson stated one of his goals is to have fewer meetings and he is looking to simplify the process. He stated the Community Center Manager is reporting to too many different entities: the users, the Advisory Commission, the City Administrator, and the City Council. The Community Center Manager is put in a tough position and other department heads are not put in that position. Mr. Dickinson suggested going to quarterly meetings if Council decided to maintain the Advisory Commission. He stated the City needs a mechanism to reach out to user groups and those that are unheard.

Mayor Bukkila stated she is leaning towards no longer having an advisory commission for the Community Center and to elevate decisions to the Council. She said recreational aspects and community input can go to the Park & Recreation Commission.

Councilmember Holthus agrees with Mayor Bukkila that the Park & Recreation Commission can take on the Community Center recreational aspect. She stated the Park and Recreation Commission can reach out to stakeholders. The Community Center Manager and the Parks Supervisor can partner at meetings. Councilmember Holthus said there are members on the Community Center Advisory Commission that would be ideal to serve on the Park and Recreation Commission. She asked if the number of members on the Park Commission can be increased because their role will change drastically by adding on the Community Center or change it over time.

Councilmember Barthel stated it may be better to get rid of the Community Center Advisory Commission because they will be constantly changing the membership due to users of the Community Center changing.

Mr. Sutherland stated he has struggled bringing items to the Advisory Commission and they were needed more when the Community Center first opened and during the expansion

discussion. He could see meeting a couple times a year but does not see the need to be involved monthly or twice a month. He does like the idea of pulling in user groups once or twice a year. Mr. Sutherland suggested staff present Community Center updates at a Council workshop at least once per year.

Mayor Bukkila polled Council on keeping the Community Center Advisory Commission.

Councilmember Holthus stated Mr. Sutherland is correct that there is not much on the Advisory Commission meetings and many members missed meetings. She suggested merging the Community Center Advisory Commission with the Park and Recreation Commission. She wants to ensure the stakeholders are being heard and an opportunity to have a public forum. She said there is value in having a citizen group, but they do not need to meet monthly. Councilmember Holthus stated she would like to start having joint meetings with the City Commissions again. She summarized her position stating the Community Center Advisory Commission does not need to continue as they are now.

Councilmember Butler stated his answer depends on how the Advisory Commission is replaced. The two important things are the opportunity for public forum and a user group meeting. He suggested the public forum be conducted by the Park and Recreation Commission and the user group meeting conducted by staff.

Councilmember Nelson said it is good for the community to have input. He said the Advisory Commission can provide input by meeting less often.

Councilmember Barthel stated no.

Mayor Bukkila stated the Council has come to a consensus to eliminate the Community Center Advisory Commission. Council agrees that stakeholders should meet with the Community Center Manager twice yearly or as needed. She stated recreational opportunities can be communicated to the Park & Recreation Commission and financial or policy concerns should be brought to the City Council.

Mr. Sutherland replied he is nervous about the Park Commission piece as they have been operating outside the Park Commission for 15 years. He asked how he should decide what goes to the Park Commission and what authority do they have. He said he would like the process to be clear.

Mr. Dickinson stated a mechanism for residents needs to be implemented. He stated he envisions user group meetings twice per year. Mr. Dickinson envisions the Park and Recreation Commission receiving updates and discussing collaboration instead of making decisions about what is done in the building.

Mayor Bukkila sees the Park and Recreation as the mechanism for public input. Mr. Dickinson said there will be input at the park and rec level but the most input is received at user group meetings.

Councilmember Butler said part of the agenda can be a public forum when staff presents Community Center updates at the Park and Recreation Commission. He stated it would be a collaboration between the Community Center and the Park and Recreation Commission. Mayor Bukkila stated she likes that idea.

Mr. Sutherland stated he is okay with meeting with the Park & Recreation Commission once or twice per year. He said communication with user groups happen daily or weekly and does not know how a formal meeting would move forward because of the current frequent communication, but those meetings could identify other users.

Mayor Bukkila suggested moving this forward as a pilot program to see if the meetings are productive. Mr. Dickinson stated he would attend the user group meetings with Mr. Sutherland.

Mr. Dickinson will bring regular Community Center updates to the City Council much the same as he does for other city operations.

Mayor Bukkila said she would like clarity in the financial reports and asked Mr. Dickinson to present the budget in a way the Council would understand. Mr. Dickinson stated staff will work to present the budget to accommodate Council's interest. Mayor Bukkila said she wants to see the revenues, expenditures, and what the taxpayers are paying for. She said Council can then decide if they are comfortable with the numbers or if they need to take action to reduce the loss.

The Council reached consensus eliminate the Community Center Advisory Commission, provide regular updates to the City Council, hold user group meetings twice a year at the staff level, and provide updates and a public forum at the Park and Recreation Commission twice per year.

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

***Motion*** by Barthel, Seconded by Butler, to adjourn. Motion was taken by roll call.

Councilmember Barthel - aye  
Councilmember Butler – aye  
Councilmember Holthus - aye  
Councilmember Nelson - aye  
Mayor Bukkila -aye  
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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*Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary  
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*