

***REGULAR ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 6, 2021
MINUTES***

The Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Sheri Bukkila, July 6, 2021, 7:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

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

Councilmember absent: None

Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson
City Attorney, Scott Baumgartner
Others

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESIDENT FORUM

Thorin Ott, 14021 Nightingale Street, came forward and stated he received a bad well test and his backyard is the old dump. He has been in contact with the City, MPCA, and the Health Department. He wanted to make sure the City knew he has a problem, and it could affect other wells in the area.

Mayor Bukkila stated the City, County and State are aware of the well test and things are in motion to help address his issue.

City Administrator Dickinson stated the MPCA will be responding to test other wells. He assured residents that the City water system is fine, and it is private wells that are being tested. The City is working with the MPCA to make sure the issue is being addressed.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Barthel, Seconded by Nelson, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 15, 2021 Regular Meeting; June 22, 2021 Workshop Meeting

Motion by Barthel, Seconded by Nelson, to approve the June 15, 2021 Regular Meeting and June

22, 2021 Workshop Meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

- Item 2 Approve Payment of Claims
- Item 3 Approve Appointment – GIS Coordinator
- Item 4 Approve Park Exclusive Use Permit

Motion by Butler, Seconded by Nelson, to approve the Consent Agenda as read. Motion carried unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESSMEN EMMER

Congressman Emmer came forward and spoke about the state of conditions in Washington DC. He stated the Infrastructure Bill has hope of moving forward. Congressman Emmer spoke about Federal Bills that have come across his desk and explained his viewpoint. He stressed the importance of face-to-face communication and stated it has been lacking due to COVID restrictions.

Mayor Bukkila directed attention to the Infrastructure Bill and noted that it excludes streets. She stated the City's water system is stable and the City needs help to fund roads. Congressman Emmer stated they gave discretion to the States on how the relief funds are used. He agrees that the roads should be included in the funding parameters.

Mayor Bukkila asked Congressman Emmer to address Highway 10. Congressman Emmer stated the Highway 10 expansion is long overdue and millions have been allocated to the project. He commented that resources are limited, and funds need to be allocated to what impacts people the most.

DISCUSSION WITH STATE OF MINNESOTA ELECTED OFFICIALS

State Senator Abler came forward and stated he is happy that the landfill pit was cleaned up. He stated it has been a bizarre session where money kept falling from the sky. Senator Abler explained there was a significant amount of one-time money that the State did not know how to spend. His concern is how to fund projects once the one time money tapers off. He stated Andover is a model of how government should work.

State Representative Scott came forward and said the State is working on the well water issue. Representative Scott spoke on transportation and explained there is no increase in transportation taxes. She informed the Council that \$31 million has been allocated to finish Highway 10 and driver's testing facilities will open. Representative Scott stated there will be a second daily Amtrak train between Chicago and St. Paul. She expressed concern that transportation safety was not addressed in the Transportation Bill and that the high cost of housing was not addressed.

Councilmember Nelson thanked Representative Scott for opening additional drivers testing sites. Representative Scott stated there is a backlog in the Court system, but they are working on adding staff to address the problem.

State Senator Benson came forward and addressed mental health and substance use disorder needs. She stated there has been an increase in the number of adolescent mental health beds. Senator Benson explained Telehealth will still play a role in healthcare. She said the school system is under pressure and in need of stabilization.

Senator Benson stated the work force is changing due to COVID and the State is adjusting to. She noted there is \$1.2 billion left to spend in Federal Covid dollars and the State received \$17 billion overall. Senator Benson stated the influx of Federal dollars has accelerated the economy but increased inflation.

Mayor Bukkila thanked the elected officials for being accessible to her and to residents.

State Representative Bahr came forward said this is the session that did not happen. He said the lack of fact-to-face meetings resulted in being unproductive. Representative Bahr said the one-time money is going to come to an end and may lead to tax increases to pay for the on-going services if not done right. He expressed concern over the State providing electric vehicle charging stations and believes the private sector will build it. He stated he is on the following committees: Transportation, Commerce, and Rules.

Mayor Bukkila encouraged Representative Bahr to reach out to City staff and ask for their input on the impact of State policies and thanked him for coming.

DISCUSSION WITH ANOKA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

County Commissioner Schulte came forward stated there are no County road projects in Andover this year. The County is working on the Highway 10 improvements and County road connections.

County Commissioner Braastad came forward and said she represents the portion of Andover north of Andover Boulevard and east of Round Lake Boulevard. She chairs the Public Safety Committee and is Co-chair of the Highway 65 Corridor Coalition. Commissioner Braastad stated the County will be redistricting in 2022.

Councilmember Holthus asked how a resident can request a test for their well. Commissioner Braastad said they can pick up the test kit at City Hall and follow the instructions.

County Commissioner Gamache came forward and stated he sits on the IT Committee and Chairs the Parks Committee. He spoke about improvements to Bunker Beach and the Bunker Hills Activity Center. Commissioner Gamache stated many staff are working from home and are not needed in County buildings. He noted that funds from the Federal Government were used to

expand broadband and to update and protect data.

Councilmember Holthus said she hears from people who go to Anoka County Licensing Centers and complain that it takes a lot of time, they are packed, and there is no place to sit. She asked if it was possible to open up a few more locations. Commissioner Gamache responded that residents can make an appointment, use online tools, and mail in tab renewals.

Councilmember Holthus stated the Anoka County Parks are wonderful but asked if the County planned on staffing the gates again. Commissioner Gamache said they are starting to use a self-service electronic payment system. They use the system at the largest parks.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the golf course is remaining open. Commissioner Gamache responded they are keeping the golf course open and it is in great shape.

Councilmember Butler stated the County staff are great at the License Centers. He has heard comments about the library hours and said it is challenging for families to get there during day hours. He has also heard about County roads that do not have wide shoulders or trails to accommodate pedestrians and bikers.

Commissioner Schulte came forward and stated the County will never do a road project without a trail. He explained it has been in their policy for the past 5 years.

QCTV ANNUAL UPDATE

Executive Director Karen George came forward and stated QCTV is celebrating 40 years. She explained the cities of Andover, Anoka, Champlin, and Ramsey joined together to create Quad Cities Community Television. Ms. George reviewed QCTV structure and funding. Ms. George presented the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan and placing more focus on social media and engagement.

Ms. George identified the services QCTV provides to the City: live meetings, video on demand, weekly segments, election forums, Fun Fest Parade coverage, elected official profiles, and in-depth topic programming. Ms. George highlighted the capital projects and investments.

Seamus Burke, Social Media/Communications Coordinator with QCTV, came forward and presented data on website and social media services. Mr. Burke shared QCTV's 2021-22 Communications Plan.

Ms. George noted the importance QCTV had during the pandemic from covering sports, graduations, and the Mayors' Prayer Breakfast. Ms. George displayed the awards QCTV has achieved over the years.

Mayor Bukkila thanked Ms. George for her presentation.

Councilmember Butler thanked QCTV for providing government transparency and community engagement.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

City Staff updated the Council on the administration and city department activities, legislative updates, updates on development/CIP projects, and meeting reminders/community events.

(Administrative Staff Activities) – Mr. Dickinson stated the City is having a booth at Fun Fest this weekend. Staff are working on budget, CIP, and Union negotiations. Development discussions are taking longer than anticipated. The City mill and overlay projects are almost done. Tom Anderson trail is on-going. Parks staff are battling vandalism in parks and need the public’s help in reporting and watching parks. The City is at 74 new housing starts. Mr. Patch will retire in July and may continue work as a consultant.

MAYOR/COUNCIL INPUT

(Fun Fest) – Mayor Bukkila is looking forward to seeing everyone at Fun Fest.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Holthus, Seconded by Barthel, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary

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