

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE ANOKA CITY COUNCIL  
ANOKA CITY HALL  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
JANUARY 4, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Rice called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present at roll call: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Anderson, Freeburg, Schmidt, and Weaver.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Lee; City Attorney Scott Baumgartner; and Recording Secretary Cathy Sorensen.

Absent at roll call: None.

**3. COUNCIL MINUTES**

3.1 Minutes of December 21, 2015, Regular Meeting.

Motion by Councilmember Weaver, seconded by Councilmember Schmidt, to waive the reading and approve the December 21, 2015, Regular Meeting minutes.

Vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

**4. OPEN FORUM**

4.1 Tammy Husma, Anoka, shared concerns with the First Transit bus line hitting curbs while making right hand from Main Street. She shared that both the 805 and 852 routes have hit the curbs and shared how a food vendor parked by Wells Fargo Bank during Anoka Halloween was a concern and should not be allowed to park there. Ms. Husma suggested possibly reducing the curb at the northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Main Street.

Councilmember Freeburg said the bump-outs were controversial at the time of design but allow for safer pedestrian crossing time. He said while he sympathizes with the bus drivers, there is not a lot that can be done at this time.

City Manager Greg Lee said staff worked with Metro Transit and conducted test runs with 48-foot tractor trailers who were able to navigate the turns and suggested the bus driver may have been unaware of bump-outs.

Ms. Husma said there have been new drivers since the changeover in September to the First Transit bus line.

Councilmember Schmidt said Anoka Halloween controls everything within the curbs during the Anoka Halloween event and suggested Ms. Husma contact them.

Mayor Rice said it takes specific awareness of the bump-outs and sometimes more maneuvering in order to negotiate the bump-outs.

Mr. Lee reiterated the purpose for the bump-outs was for increased safety by helping cross times for pedestrians as well as making them more visible to traffic by someone taking a left onto Main Street.

Ms. Husma said she still recommended the City consider reducing all bump-outs but most specifically the northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Main Street.

## **5. PUBLIC HEARING(S)**

None.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Schmidt, seconded by Councilmember Freeburg, to approve Consent Agenda 6.1 through 6.2.

6.1 Approved Verified Bills.

6.2 Revising and Setting Council Calendars.

Vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

## **7. REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

### **7.1 Parks and Recreation Board - Update.**

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chairperson Steve Nelson provided a report highlighting 2015 park projects. He noted the City maintains 34 parks and several off-street park locations and reviewed projects completed in 2015 including Peninsula Point Park rehabilitation, Main Street tunnel art, Polk Street overlook, Oakwood Cemetery, Forest Hill Cemetery, Kings Island Channel, Mississippi River Trail (MRT), Kings Island – Waterfowl Blind #2 by Federal Premium, concerts in Riverfront Park, Anoka Nature Preserve projects, Rum River shoreline stabilization, and John Ward Park.

Chair Nelson shared proposed 2016 park projects, including John Ward Field #3, Castle Field Phase 3, Bonnell Fields reconstruction, rehab of wooden shelters at

Kings Island, Grant, and Ward Parks, Akin boat slip expansion, Kings Island reforestation, rail station park planning, State Hospital shelter relocation, Mississippi Community Park, Anoka Nature Preserve, Enloe sledding hill, and updates to the aquatic center.

Councilmember Anderson inquired about objection to a dog park. Chair Nelson said in a city of only seven square miles it is difficult to find an appropriate location to meet everyone's needs. He said they thought Mississippi Park would be a good fit but the neighborhood was not in favor of a dog park nearby and that Sunny Acres is a good compromise.

Councilmember Freeburg thanked Chair Nelson and the Board for their work and inquired about the area by the State Hospital, as this is a beautiful area that should be shown. Mr. Lee said that project will include the southern part of the State Hospital property and Anoka County is interested in participating in this project.

Councilmember Weaver referred to a recent photo showing park staff grooming the trails for cross-country skiing with skiers following right behind. He said use of the trails and amenities is exciting to see and complimented the remarkable Park Board and staff who maintains the parks.

Chair Nelson said he recently attended a Castle Field meeting and noted that skating is occurring at Sorenson Park already and complimented City staff for their great work and long hours.

Councilmember Weaver suggested providing parking at the trailhead west of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue for cross-country skiing access. Chair Nelson said the Board has had discussions about that idea but they need to evaluate how to get the groomer through those areas so they are trying to come up with alternatives.

Councilmember Freeburg said Anoka is blessed with wonderful natural resources for the residents. Chair Nelson shared that his wife used to brag about Anoka and felt she would have even more reason to do so today.

## **8. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATION**

None.

## **9. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

### **9.1 RES/Annual Designations. RESOLUTION**

Mr. Lee shared a staff report with background information to the Council stating annually the City Council adopts a resolution designating the official depositories and signees. Mr. Lee outlined the changes to the previous appointment list

including replacing former City Manager Tim Cruikshank's appointments with Mr. Lee, removing appointments to the LMA (Landlord & Managers Association) as they no longer exist, and noting that U.S. Banks is the only official depository.

Motion by Councilmember Freeburg, seconded by Councilmember Anderson, to adopt a resolution designation of official depositories and signees as outlined.

Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Anderson, Freeburg, Schmidt, and Weaver voted in favor. Motion carried.

9.2 RES/Annual Appointments to Various Committees.

**RESOLUTION**

Mr. Lee shared a staff report with background information to the Council stating Anoka City Council Bylaws and Charter require that at the first meeting in January, the Anoka City Council shall: (1) Choose a Mayor pro-tem, (2) designate the official newspaper, (3) designate official posting location, (4) designate date/time of regular meetings and worksessions, (5) appoint such officers, employees, and committees, and citizens to various boards and organizations as may be necessary. Mr. Lee noted that designation of the Official Newspaper will need to be decided upon by the City Council and included in the resolution as the City has received two requests to be named the Official Newspaper, ECM Publishers/Anoka County Union and the Anoka County Record. City Attorney Scott Baumgartner has received the circulation requirements for both publications and believes at this time they are both qualifying newspapers.

Mr. Lee said staff is suggesting Councilmember Weaver be appointed as 2016 Mayor Pro Tem. He also noted that Councilmember Schmidt was appointed to serve as liaison to the Metro Cities but that the timeline has since changed so he is recommending just removing his name from that appointment. Mr. Lee shared that historically the *Anoka Union Herald* has served as the City's official newspaper but that this year the City received an offer from the *Anoka County Record* to publish legal notices as no charge. He said representatives from both publications were present and wished to speak to the Council.

Tom Murray, General Manager for ABC Newspapers/ECM Publishing, said they publish 40 newspapers throughout the state. He said the Council needs to decide if this offer would be good for the citizens as he feels the action will reflect on the City and transparency for constituents. He said they cannot match the offer of no charge as they have newspapers that are worth something. Mr. Murray said they produce quality newspapers at a fair price for professional services and offer credibility, transparency and trusted local service. He noted this offer was sent to all cities in Anoka County and that several cities are recommending not using the *Anoka County Record*. He said they publish over 44,000 issues each week, 1,400 of which are in Anoka, and would be honored to continue to serve the City.

Councilmember Freeburg asked how many people ECM Publishing employ. Mr. Murray said they employ 37 people at the newspaper with headquarters in Coon Rapids, adding many of who live in the area.

John Kysylyczyn, owner and publisher of *Anoka County Record*, advised the Council that the City of Ham Lake recently appointed them as their legal newspaper and that he expects the City of Oak Grove to confirm their appointment as well. He noted they have been publishing for Anoka County the past year and are the only publication to publish all Anoka County cities tax notices. Mr. Kysylyczyn said he has served on a Council and never had someone ask about their legal newspaper because most cities have excellent websites, newsletters, email lists, and compact communities where information is shared by discussion. He said the cities of Coon Rapids and Fridley have done citizen surveys, which showed most residents get their information from their city newsletter first, website second, word of mouth third, and newspapers fourth or fifth. Mr. Kysylyczyn said while cities have to publish notices this way as it is required by law they do have a choice to not spend \$5,000-8,000 annually on a communication tool that ranks fourth or fifth but instead use the money to invest in another communication tool. He said the reason they have lower circulation and website hits is because they do not cover sports, arts, or movies but only cover public notices and a limited amount of government-oriented news. He said the *Anoka County Record* is read by people interested in public news and that its circulation is a hollow argument. Mr. Kysylyczyn said the wiser investment of money is in City newsletters because that is how media works in a major metropolitan area.

Councilmember Freeburg asked how many employees the *Anoka County Record* employs. Mr. Kysylyczyn said they have no employees, only owners and contributors.

Councilmember Freeburg asked if anyone shops in Anoka County. Mr. Kysylyczyn said he shops quite a bit at the Coon Rapids Costco.

Mayor Rice asked how the data gets entered. Mr. Kysylyczyn said they work with Adobe design and cutting and pasting. He said he has a background in government and has worked for the legislature and has found errors in public notices before.

Councilmember Freeburg asked why the *Anoka County Record* is offering to publish for free. Mr. Kysylyczyn said they are able to offer free publications because they make money through private law firms publishing divorce notices, probate notices, etc. He said they run a lean operation and printing more papers does not mean more papers are read and if we can increase the amount of private money coming in it brings the cost of government down.

Councilmember Freeburg said he while he has no problem with Mr. Kysylyczyn looking to acquire all cities he likes Anoka's local newspaper and wants to see them to stay in business. He said their employees spend money in Anoka and that he appreciates their efforts and wants to stay local.

Motion by Councilmember Freeburg, seconded by Councilmember Anderson, to adopt a resolution outlining annual designations and appointments for 2016 as proposed, including appointing *AnokaUnion* as the official newspaper.

Mr. Kysylyczyn said the amount of money the City pays for publications is relatively small and that a multi-million corporation like ECM Publishers does not need Anoka to survive. He said the big money is not serving small cities like Anoka but in publishing mortgage foreclosures, etc. Mr. Kysylyczyn said Anoka County paid \$50,000-\$65,000 last year in publications while Anoka only paid \$5,000 so this amount would not affect ECM Publishers' bottom line. He said while it would be great to make a profit he enjoys this work.

Councilmember Weaver said he will be abstaining from voting as he has used ECM Publishers as a vendor for 30 years.

Councilmember Schmidt said he supports having all information in one location and noted everyone reads the *AnokaUnion* at the senior center. He noted the alternative publication looks more like a blog.

Councilmember Freeburg said he is disappointed the County would go along with this publication and feels they are doing a disservice to the residents. Mr. Kysylyczyn said Minnesota law requires counties to bid and select the low bid for this service while cities and school districts are different.

Councilmember Freeburg said that is why he believes the *Anoka County Record* is trying to harvest clients to sell to other newspapers. Mr. Kysylyczyn thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak as other cities have pretended not to receive their offer.

Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Anderson, Freeburg, and Schmidt voted in favor. Councilmember Weaver abstained. Motion carried.

9.3 ORD/Dumpster Lease Agreement; 10K Brewing, 2005 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)  
**ORDINANCE**

Mr. Lee shared a staff report with background information to the Council stating the City has been entering into lease agreements with private businesses needing to use City property for various things such as parking, dumpster storage, etc. and that Council held first reading of an agreement at their last Council meeting for 10K Brewing, LLC, 2005 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. He noted at that meeting the Council

directed staff to amend the agreement to reflect the cost of \$45.00 per year, plus applicable taxes as well as one other administrative change.

Motion by Councilmember Anderson, seconded by Councilmember Freeburg, to hold second reading and adopt an ordinance authorizing the conveyance of a real property lease for 10K Brewing, 2005 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**11. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**12. UPDATES AND REPORTS**

12.1 Tentative Agenda(s).

The Council reviewed the tentative agendas of the upcoming Council meetings.

12.2 Staff and Council Input.

Councilmember Freeburg asked for an update on the work going on at Kings Island. Mr. Lee said the area has just been re-dredged where the road crossed and the bridges are at the contractor's expense.

Councilmember Weaver noted upcoming events, including Winter Fest at Green Haven Golf Course on January 29-31 and the Mayors' Trail Ride on February 6, 2016.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Freeburg, made a motion to adjourn the Regular Council meeting. Councilmember Anderson, seconded the motion.

Vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

Time of adjournment: 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by: Cathy Sorensen, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*

Approval Attestation:

Amy T. Oehlers, City Clerk