CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

August 17, 2026 at 5:00 PM
7701 County Road 110 West Minnetrista, MN 55364

Pursuant to Minnesota Statues, section 13D.02, one or more council members may participate remotely.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Whalen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Council Present: Mayor Whalen, Councilmembers Reffkin, Vickery, Lacy, Govern. Staff; City Administrator Kruggel, Assistant City Administrator Bauman, Community Development Director Abel, Public Services Director Peters, Finance Director Grimm, Chief Squiers, City Clerk Meyerhoff (Remote), City Engineer Alyson Fauske.

2) DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) New Police Department Records Management System

Chief Squires updated the Council on the need to replace its aging Records Management System (RMS), which has outdated technology and is approaching the end of its useful life. The department currently participates in a multi-agency consortium that uses the same RMS, providing cost savings and allowing participating agencies to share information. Because replacing the system is a complex undertaking, the consortium determined that outside expertise is needed to identify a new system that meets the agencies' needs, assist with implementation, and manage the migration of data from the existing system. The Council previously authorized the Police Department to enter into a contract with GTL Advisors for assistance with the RMS replacement process. Other participating cities have joined the effort, which is expected to reduce costs through collaboration. Jeff Goldstein, President of GTL Advisors, attended the work session to provide Council with an update on the project, which is still in its early stages and is expected to be a significant investment.

b) Mound Fire Budget Discussion/St. Bonifacius Partnership

City Administrator Kruggel updated the City Council on changes to the Mound Fire budget and the process used to establish the city's annual contribution. The city had budgeted approximately $434,000 for its Mound Fire portion based on an expected 8% annual increase. In early August, Mound indicated that it planned to significantly increase its administrative fee and provided preliminary figures suggesting an increase of approximately 18.6%, without providing sufficient detail or justification. Subsequent budget figures changed several times, first coming in at approximately $427,000, or 6.29% above the prior year, and then increasing to approximately $440,000, which is about $16,000 more than the city had budgeted. Staff noted that the changes and lack of detailed information have raised questions among the participating communities, including Spring Park and Minnetrista/Shorewood area partners, regarding the new charges and how the budget is being structured. Council was advised that, under the existing contract, the city must notify Mound by January 3, 2027, if it wishes to renegotiate provisions, which could allow changes to be discussed for potential implementation in 2028.

Mayor Whalen and Councilmember Reffkin expressed significant concerns regarding Mound's proposed administrative charges to the Fire Department budget. Historically, the city has paid approximately $20,000 in administrative costs, but Mound initially proposed increasing the fee to $155,000. They questioned the substantial increase, particularly because Mound did not provide a detailed breakdown of the costs or documentation showing the amount of staff time devoted to Fire Department-related work. The proposed administrative allocation included charges for finance, human resources, information technology, the city manager, city clerk, communications, and other services. They also expressed concern that Mound reduced the Fire Department's capital outlay from approximately $208,000 to $86,000 while making other budget adjustments, potentially shifting costs rather than reducing them. Additional questions were raised about reductions to the duty crew/duty officer program despite plans to add duty crews. They directed staff to request detailed information on the administrative charges, including the methodology used to calculate them, changes in the Fire Department budget from 2026 to 2027, and the justification for capital and staffing changes. They also indicated support for formally notifying Mound that the city intends to review and potentially renegotiate the existing contract, with a letter to be prepared for consideration in September or October and before the January 3, 2027, deadline. Staff will continue efforts to meet with Mound and St. Bonifacius regarding the fire service partnership and other outstanding issues, with the Council noting that continued unilateral changes to costs and budgets could undermine the partnership.

c) ADA Assessment Update

City Administrator Kruggel presented options for conducting an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility assessment of city facilities. A proposal from a consultant working with WSB was significantly more expensive than a proposal from Kraus-Anderson, which included both ADA and facility needs assessments. Council discussed whether the city could use a 2018 staff checklist, but noted that it may not reflect current ADA requirements or Minnesota accessibility laws. The assessment was discussed as a risk-management effort that would provide a prioritized list of improvements and estimated costs that could be incorporated into the city's capital improvement planning. Council also discussed the importance of ensuring that City Hall and the city's polling location are accessible to residents with disabilities and noted that grants may be available for accessibility improvements. Council directed staff to obtain a revised proposal from Kraus-Anderson limited to an ADA assessment of City Hall and the Police Department, rather than including the public works and police garages or a broader facility needs study. Staff will also continue to explore potential grant opportunities and consult with other communities regarding accessibility assessments. A broader facility needs assessment may be considered in the future, particularly as the Police Department debt is expected to be paid off around 2028.

d) Recreation Vehicle Ordinance

During the work session, the City Council continued its discussion of proposed changes to the recreational vehicle ordinance, focusing primarily on the definition of "de minimis" use and the required distance from neighboring residences. Council discussed changing the setback from 300 feet of a property line to a distance measured from the primary structure on a neighboring property, recognizing that some larger but narrow parcels cannot reasonably meet the existing setback requirement. Members also discussed the need to balance residents' ability to use ATVs and UTVs for activities such as accessing docks or maintaining their property with concerns about repeated recreational use and noise. After considerable discussion, Council reached a compromise to require recreational vehicles to be operated at least 220 feet from a neighboring primary structure, while allowing de minimis use on parcels of one acre or less, defined as limited operation within a 60-minute period. The existing two-hour continuous-use restriction would remain in place. Staff noted that enforcement is generally complaint-driven and that precise distance requirements can be difficult to enforce. Council directed staff to incorporate the agreed-upon changes into an ordinance for consideration at a future meeting, with the goal of providing greater flexibility for smaller properties while addressing potential noise and nuisance concerns.

3) ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Reffkin, seconded by Govern to adjourn the work session at 6:16 p.m.

Motion passed 5-0.

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Lisa Whalen, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Ann Meyerhoff, City Clerk