

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park City Council Work Session was held on May 18, 2026 at the Spring Lake Park City Hall, 1301 81st Ave NE, at 5:30 PM.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Mayor Goodboe-Bisschoff called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilmember Ken Wendling
Councilmember Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff
Councilmember Lisa Dircks
Councilmember April Moran

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mayor Robert Nelson

STAFF PRESENT:

Public Works Director George Linngren, Accounting Clerk/Special Projects Coordinator Haley Morrison
Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer Daniel Buchholtz

OTHERS PRESENT:

Halyn Roth, 7914 Able Street NE; Kristi Cobbs, 8085 Jefferson St NE

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2030 Residential Organics Collection Requirement Discussion

City Administrator Buchholtz provided an overview of the 2030 residential organics collection requirement included in the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan and incorporated into the Anoka County and Ramsey County solid waste management plans. He stated that cities with populations greater than 5,000 will be required to make residential curbside organics collection available by 2030.

Administrator Buchholtz reviewed the City's current open collection system, noting that the City licenses multiple refuse haulers for residential service and separately contracts with Walters Recycling & Refuse for organized residential recycling service. He stated that the City currently provides an organics drop-off site at City Hall, but organics collection is otherwise optional.

Administrator Buchholtz reviewed several potential compliance options, including requiring licensed haulers to offer organics collection, establishing a food scrap bag-in-trash-cart model, developing a traditional City-managed organics collection program, or continuing to monitor the issue and revisit it later. He stated that the food scrap bag model being used by Ramsey and Washington Counties allows residents to place food scraps in specially designed bags, which are

then placed in the regular trash cart and separated at a qualified processing facility. He noted that Walters Recycling & Refuse has invested in sorting technology at its Blaine transfer station and has indicated that capacity may be available for Spring Lake Park, Blaine, and Columbia Heights.

Councilmembers discussed the potential cost to residents, the practicality of requiring an additional cart, public education needs, resident participation, compliance concerns, and the benefit of minimizing additional truck traffic in the community. Councilmembers expressed concern about the impact of an unfunded mandate on residents, while also recognizing that waiting until closer to 2030 could reduce the City's flexibility and potentially increase costs.

Consensus of the Council was to invite representatives from Anoka County and Walters Recycling and Refuse to a future work session to provide additional information regarding the requirement, available collection models, potential costs, implementation timing, and public education.

B. Recycling Services Agreement Discussion

Administrator Buchholtz stated that the City's current recycling services agreement with Walters Recycling & Refuse expires at the end of 2026. He stated that the City has traditionally issued a request for proposals for a five-year recycling contract, but staff believes there may be value in negotiating a shorter-term extension with Walters due to the pending organics collection requirement and Walters' investment in the food scrap bag sorting system.

Administrator Buchholtz stated that a shorter-term extension could preserve the City's flexibility while staff continues to evaluate organics collection options. He also noted that changing recycling contractors can create operational challenges, including cart replacement and resident service issues.

Councilmembers discussed the potential length of an extension, the relationship between the recycling contract and future organics collection options, and the importance of avoiding unnecessary disruption for residents.

Council consensus was to permit staff to begin discussions with Walters Recycling & Refuse regarding a potential short-term extension of the City's recycling services agreement. Any proposed extension would be brought back to the City Council for formal consideration.

3. REPORT

A. City Council and Staff Reports

Councilmember Dircks reported that Pokémon Community Day had been scheduled for August 15. She stated that discussions were underway with the VFW regarding use of its hall and potential partnership opportunities, including serving as a drop-off site for a school supply drive.

Councilmember Wendling reported on a recent interaction with a young resident who was raising money to purchase a bicycle for his brother. He stated that he provided the resident with a bicycle.

Administrator Buchholtz provided an update regarding the City's compensation study. He stated that the City had received a resignation letter from Accountant Melissa Barker and that the compensation study consultant had preliminarily determined that the Accountant position was significantly under market and more appropriately placed at Grade 11. Mr. Buchholtz requested Council feedback regarding making a counteroffer to Ms. Barker by moving her from Grade 9, Step 7 to Grade 11, Step 5. He stated that the financial impact for the remainder of 2026 would be approximately \$2,500 and that funding had been included in the budget for compensation adjustments related to the study. Council discussed Ms. Barker's value to the organization, her experience with BS&A, and the cost of retaining an experienced employee compared with recruiting and training a replacement.

Council consensus was to authorize Mr. Buchholtz to make the counteroffer. Mr. Buchholtz stated that, if accepted, the item would be placed on the June 1, 2026 City Council agenda for formal action.

4. ADJOURN

Acting Mayor Goodboe-Bisschoff adjourned the meeting at 6:25 PM.

Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff, Acting Mayor

Attest:

Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer