OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park City Council Regular was held on October 20, 2025 at the City Hall, at 7:00 PM.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT
Councilmember Kenneth Wendling
Councilmember Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff
Councilmember Lisa Dircks
Mayor Robert Nelson

MEMBERS ABSENT
Councilmember April Moran

STAFF PRESENT
Sergeant Richard Kramer, Recreation Director Anne Scanlon, Attorney John Thames, City Administrator Daniel Buchholtz

VISITORS

Taylor Evans	520 Payne Ave	St. Paul MN
Mike Healey	7530 Blaisdell Ave	Richfield MN
Nick Montanari	1440 85th Ave NE	Spring Lake Park MN
Steban Kabalan	2810 Aspen Lake Dr NE	Blaine MN
Robbie Sealey	2845 Hedberg Dr	Minnetonka MN

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA - None

5. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nick Montanari, of JJN LLC (also known as Ghost Dispensary), located at 1440/85 Avenue NE, addressed the council to introduce himself and provide context for his ongoing communications. He acknowledged previous correspondence regarding the potential update to the City Ordinance to allow an additional dispensary. Mr. Montanari shared the research on crime rate impacts related to dispensaries and submitted supporting documentation and links to relevant studies for council review.

Mr. Montanari emphasized the importance of establishing a clear timeline or decision deadline, noting that his state pre-approval began in late May and is valid for 18 months. He said without clarity on the ordinance, he is unable to invest further in building improvements or security measures. Mr. Montanari expressed a willingness to collaborate with the City on monitoring public safety metrics, such as poison control calls or break-ins, should his dispensary be approved. He concluded by advocating for reducing stigma around cannabis products and reiterated his commitment to working with the city in a responsible and transparent manner.

Mayor Nelson and Councilmember Dircks both expressed support for a cautious approach to cannabis licensing, citing concerns about the city’s small size and the potential for market oversaturation. Mayor Nelson emphasized the importance of deliberate decision-making to avoid clustering, reduced business viability, and vacant storefronts, referencing similar outcomes in other states. He supported waiting for additional data from staff, legal counsel, and neighboring cities before expanding beyond the state-required minimum of one dispensary.

Councilmember Dircks echoed concerns about overconcentration and its impact on existing businesses. She stated that while supportive of cannabis legalization, she stressed the need to evaluate potential increases in wellness checks and traffic-related calls, which currently dominate police activity. Councilmember Dircks advocated for further research, including data from other states and tribal nations, and is awaiting input from the police chief to better understand regional implications.

Mr. Montanari addressed concerns about potential oversaturation of cannabis dispensaries, expressing confidence in his business model and experience in the cannabis industry since its early stages in Minnesota. He emphasized that his operation would contribute positively to the community through increased tax revenue and economic activity, not vacancy. He cited his background in business and partnerships with a major national cannabis brand, he argued that healthy competition benefits the market. Mr. Montanari also raised concerns about fairness in the application process, referencing a previous attempt to lease a location that is now being converted into a dispensary. He requested a fair opportunity to operate, noting that his current location near Highway 65 and 85th Avenue is already a high-traffic area and unlikely to significantly impact traffic or residential neighborhoods.

Mayor Nelson reiterated that the council is not permanently opposed to additional cannabis dispensaries but emphasized the need for more time and data before making further decisions. Mayor Nelson stressed the value of a proactive approach, stating that government processes often move slowly to ensure decisions are made correctly the first time. He expressed concern about expanding too quickly, especially given the city’s small size and the potential for dispensary clustering. He also highlighted the importance of understanding how surrounding cities are handling dispensary placement and emphasized the need to proceed cautiously to avoid future complications.

Administrator Buchholtz noted that the implementation of cannabis regulations places several unfunded mandates on the city, including compliance checks, which costs are not fully covered by the state-capped licensing fees. He also highlighted the elimination of local cannabis aid, which would have provided revenue sharing to help offset enforcement costs. These factors make implementation more challenging. He added that he is currently working on a study and expect to present findings at an upcoming work session within the next month.

Robbie Sealey, speaking on behalf of Ghost, expressed strong support for the council's thoughtful and collaborative approach to cannabis implementation. He emphasized that Ghost is a national brand entering the Minnesota market and highlighted the potential long-term economic benefits such a brand could bring to the city. He stated that it includes increased tax revenue, real estate investment, and support for local infrastructure improvements. Mr. Sealey encouraged ongoing dialogue with city officials and offered to collaborate further through legal and administrative channels to explore how Ghost could align with Spring Lake Park's goals.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes – October 6, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
B. Approval of September Claims List – General Disbursement #25-17 - $531,139.66
C. Revenue and Expenditure Report – September 30, 2025
D. Statement of Fund Balance – September 30, 2025
E. City Administrator Performance Evaluation Statement
F. Accept Letter of Resignation from Code Enforcement Officer Nick Anderson
G. Approval of ROW – Xcel Energy – 8492 Central Avenue NE
H. Contractor's Licenses

Administrator Buchholtz gave an overview of the City Council's review of his performance evaluation. He stated that the city council expressed satisfaction with his performance in managing the city's daily operations

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

7. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Police Report

Sergeant Kramer reported that the Police Department responded to 804 calls for service in September 2025 compared to 685 calls for service for the month of September 2024. He stated that School Resource Officer Imig reported handling 7 calls for service, along with conducting 11 student contacts, 35 escorts and 5 follow-up investigations. Sergeant Kramer said Investigator Bennek handled 32 cases for the month of September, 30 of which were felony in nature and 2 misdemeanors, while continuing to monitor 4 forfeiture cases. He said Investigator Bennek conducted several search warrants as part of a multi-agency auto theft investigation.

Sergeant Kramer stated that he is working on switching the City over from AT&T to Verizon. He said that the by switching the City will receive $30,000 in savings and credits.

B. Parks and Recreation Report

Parks and Recreation Director Scanlon provided an update on recent department activities. She reported that the Pickleball Courts are completed and the playground equipment from Terrace Park has been installed at Able Park. Director Scanlon stated that planning has begun on the 2026 Tower Days Festivities.

8. ORDINANCES AN/OR RESOLUTIONS

A. Ordinance 505, Amending Chapter 12.44 of the City Code Relating to Construction Site Runoff Control

Administrator Buchholtz provided a summary of the proposed ordinance update related to the city's MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) permit compliance. He explained that the city's existing code was found to be out of date during a recent audit conducted by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

Administrator Buchholtz stated the city is proactively adopting the MPCA's model ordinance. He said the proposed ordinance includes the following key updates:

- Revised definitions to align with current MPCA and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) standards.
- Clear identification of permit requirements and mandatory proof of MPCA construction stormwater permit coverage prior to issuance of city permits.
- Expanded site review standards, including Best Management Practice (BMP) requirements, phasing timelines, and inspection documentation.
- Enhanced post-construction stormwater management provisions to ensure long-term water quality treatment and maintenance in accordance with MS4 standards.
- Strengthened enforcement procedures, including authority to issue stop work orders, assess corrective costs, and act against posted financial securities when necessary.
- Reorganization of the ordinance chapter for improved clarity, consistency, and alignment with the MS4 permit structure.

Administrator Buchholtz stated staff recommends adoption of the ordinance as a major step toward fulfilling the MPCA audit action items and maintaining compliance with the city's MS4 permit.

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to approve Ordinance 505, Amending Chapter 12.44 of the City Code Relating to Construction Site Runoff Control.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

B. Resolution 2025-37, Approving Summary Publication of Ordinance 505, Amending Chapter 12.44 of the City Code Relating to Construction Site Runoff Control

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to approve Resolution 2025-37, Approving Summary Publication of Ordinance 505, Amending Chapter 12.44 of the City Code Relating to Construction Site Runoff Control.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. REPORTS

A. Attorney's Report - None

B. Engineer's Report

Report accepted as presented.

C. Administrator Report

Administrator Buchholtz announced that a Work Session is scheduled for November 3, 2025, and he noted that a review of the Personnel Policy will take place during the Regular Council Meeting on November 3, 2025.

11. OTHER

A. Closed Session – Discussion of Lease of Real Property at 8480-8492 Central Avenue NE, pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, subd. 3(c)

Motion made by Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff to adjourn the meeting for a closed session.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM

Meeting reconvened at 8:10 PM

Attorney Thames stated that the City Council had adjourned to a closed session held pursuant to Minnesota Statue 13D.05, subd. 3(c)3 to discuss the Lease of Real Property at 8480-8492- Central Avenue NE. He stated that staff has been given direction.

Councilmember Wendling announced that the Spring Lake Park Lions Pancake Breakfast would take place on Sunday, October 26 at Spring Lake Park High School.

13. ADJOURN

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to adjourn.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM.

Robert Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer