



City Council

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

Monday, March 27, 2023

7:00 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mara Bain	Mayor	Present	
Sam Husnik	Councilmember	Present	
Hanna Valento	Councilmember	Present	
Leif Erickson	Councilmember	Present	
Blake Roberts	Councilmember	Present	

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approve the Agenda (Action)

Comments:

Motion to: Approve the Agenda

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Leif Erickson, Councilmember
SECONDER: Sam Husnik, Councilmember
AYES: Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

5. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

Comments: Resident, Marcus Gibbs, commented about starting an ice cream truck in town. He cited several cities and their prices for an ice cream truck license. He commented that he would need to get several licenses to run his business and this would total \$4,400.00 per year.

6. Consent Agenda Considerations (Action Items)

Comments:

- a) Approve City Bills



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- b) Approve Minutes from March 13, 2023 Regular Council Meeting
- c) Memorandum of Understanding for Juneteenth – City of Forest Lake and AFSCME
- d) Memorandum of Understanding for Juneteenth – City of Forest Lake and IUOE
- e) Memorandum of Understanding for Juneteenth – City of Forest Lake and LELS 111
- f) Memorandum of Understanding for Juneteenth – City of Forest Lake and LELS 326
- g) Memorandum of Understanding for Juneteenth – City of Forest Lake and MAPE
- h) Forest View-Forest Lake PTA - LG220 Gambling Exempt Permit
- i) Ducks Unlimited – LG220 Gambling Exempt Permit
- j) Church of St. Peter - 1 to 4 Day Temporary On-Sale Liquor License
- k) Wildlife Science Center – 1 to 4-Day Temporary On-Sale Liquor License

Motion to: Approve Consent Agenda Items 6. a. and 6. c through 6. k. and Pull Item 6. b. for a Separate Vote

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Mara Bain, Mayor
SECONDER:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
AYES:	Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:	
ABSTAIN:	
ABSENT:	

Motion to: Approve Item 6. b.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Sam Husnik, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
AYES:	Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:	
ABSTAIN:	Bain
ABSENT:	

7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a. Resolution 03-27-23-01 – Donation of \$1,000 to the Fire Department from Rahr Corporation in Memory of Frank Elmquist

Comments: Fire Chief Newman presented information regarding a donation in the honor of Frank Elmquist from Rahr Corporation.

Motion to: Approve Resolution 03-27-23-01 for the Donation of \$1,000 to the Fire Department from Rahr Corporation in Memory of Frank Elmquist



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RESULT: **ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Mara Bain, Mayor
SECONDER: Hanna Valento, Councilmember
AYES: Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

b. Resolution 03-27-23-02 – Accepting Donations for Spring Spectacular Event

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman presented donations from several local businesses for the Spring Spectacular Event

Motion to: Approve Resolution 03-27-23-02 for Donations for the Spring Spectacular Event

RESULT: **ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Mara Bain, Mayor
SECONDER: Leif Erickson, Councilmember
AYES: Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

c. Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 722 - Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment on Electronic Billboards

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman briefly presented information regarding a text amendment pertaining to electronic/dynamic billboards that has been discussed in the Planning Commission Meetings as well as a previous Council Meeting. She cited the highlights of the text amendments.

Public Hearing opened at 7:12 p.m.

Applicant, Charles Bolkcom, commented on the request to encase the poles to increase the aesthetic standards to make billboard poles or foundation structures more appealing to the public.

Public Hearing closed at 7:15 p.m.



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Councilmember Roberts commented on the number of billboards and expressed concern about applicants coming forward. He also expressed the billboard on Broadway Avenue. City Attorney Johnson commented on eligible billboards, permitting, safety issues, and the option of Council discretion on applications that come forward if they if they don't meet the criteria of the zoning text. There was further discussion regarding particular regulations of the proposed ordinance regarding setbacks and lighting. Commissioner Roberts also asked about the guidelines of aesthetics. Community Development Director Wittman cited the guidelines for concealments of posts and shapes to the billboards.

Motion to: Approve Ordinance No. 722 to Repeal and Replace Title XV, Land Usage, Chapter 153, Section 209, Billboard Signs and Amending Chapter 153, Section 205, Signs

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Sam Husnik, Councilmember
AYES:	Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:	
ABSTAIN:	
ABSENT:	

Motion to: Approve Resolution 03-27-23-03 Adopting Written Statement of Reasons for Denial of an Applicant-Initiated Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Pertaining Billboards

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Leif Erickson, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
AYES:	Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:	
ABSTAIN:	
ABSENT:	

d. Ordinance No. 723 - Fee Schedule Amendment for Certain EDA Application Fees

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman commented on an amendment to the 2023 Fee Schedule Ordinance. She noted that information for Public Financial Assistance Application Fees and Escrow are currently not in the Fee Schedule and should be added to incorporate this new application fee. Councilmember Erickson asked if the fee is similar to other communities. There was further discussion regarding developer fees and responsibility on their part. Mayor Bain asked about the bill back process. Community Development Director Wittman noted that the preference is to have an escrow for applicants. Finance Director Knopik noted that escrow funds are accounted



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to those specific projects to endure expenditures are charged appropriately. Councilmember Husnik asked how the escrow fees are determined. City Administrator Casey noted that the majority of escrow fees are attorney or engineering fees and billed by the hour. Mayor Bain asked about specificity of public financial assistance that triggers the proposed fee and escrow. Community Development Director Wittman provided the example of Tax Increment Financing. She also reminded that the escrow is a deposit. She noted that this type of public financing is not the same program as the small business grants that are available. Mayor Bain noted she would like clarity on what triggers the application fee for businesses. City Administrator Casey indicated that this fee is purely a financial assistance fee and not related to zoning recommendations or other types of applications. There was further discussion on DEED and additional agencies in relation to the fee trigger.

Motion to: Approve Ordinance No. 723 Amending Title III, Chapter 35, of the City Code and the City's Fee Schedule by incorporating Public Financial Assistance Application Fees and Escrows.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Sam Husnik, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
AYES:	Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:	
ABSTAIN:	
ABSENT:	

e. Resolution 03-27-23-04 - MnDOT Agency Delegated Contracting Process-DCP Agreement

Comments: City Engineer Goodman presented information regarding a contracting process agreement that is in compliance with new federal language. He noted this agreement is with MnDOT and they will act as an agent to receive federal grant funds for the City.

Motion to: Approve Resolution 03-27-23-04 Accepting the MnDOT Agency Delegated Contracting Process-DCP Agreement



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RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
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AYES: Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
NAYS:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

8. Discussion

a) Wetland Banking

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman provided brief information regarding wetland banking and noted that it is allowed everywhere unless it is specifically banned in the zoning code. She commented on additional information regarding wetland banking as it pertains to the city and Watershed as an example. She also discussed long-term impacts and noted that high and dry land is favorable to turn into a wetland. She indicated this diminishes farmland and developable land. Fairview Farms Wetland Banks were mentioned and there are credits still available. Community Development Director Wittman provided several other discussion points regarding wetland banking. She indicated that based on the amount of water in Forest Lake with 35% wetlands, Staff is recommending we have no wetland banking.

There was further discussion about the conservancy district and Community Development Director Wittman noted that a wetland bank is still a taxable area, however, has a lower value because it isn't a developable land. City Engineer Goodman also provided comments regarding developers. There was further discussion regarding the Staff recommendation to either completely ban or have conservancy areas for wetland banking. Community Development Director Wittman spoke about the amount of wetland in the community and the conservancy districts. She noted that a public hearing is required in the Planning Commission as well as the Council. She also indicated that this discussion has been going since last year. Mayor Bain suggested an outreach to the public to support educational information regarding the topic of wetland banking. Councilmember Valento commented that she is in favor of either banning or supporting conservancy areas. Councilmember Erickson and Councilmember Roberts asked additional questions and City Engineer Goodman commented on the Comprehensive Plan in relation to available land and what the City had determined for development in the Plan. He commented on the Chestnut Creek development and wetlands. Community Development Director Wittman summarized the comments from Council noting the favor of conservancy or bans.

b) Joint Workshop City Council-EDA for April 19, 2023



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Comments: City Administrator Casey commented on the upcoming joint workshop between the EDA and City Council regarding public financing including TIF and other types of assistance that may be available. He noted the potential date as April 19, 2023, beginning at 6:30 p.m. He also indicated there will be a closed session immediately following the joint workshop. There was discussion regarding protocol for closed sessions. It was determined that the meeting will be scheduled for April 19, 2023, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

9. Staff Updates

Comments: Deputy City Clerk reminded Council that the Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting will be held on April 10, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. Assistant City Administrator Udem commented on the Municipality of the Year Award and will report back if the City won. He also commented on the BSA online permitting portal. Community Development Director Wittman commented on the new assistant in the department, her meetings last week, the Spring Spectacular Event being held at the City Center on April 1, 2023, and a potential food truck ordinance that may be coming forward later in the year. Commissioner Roberts asked about the food trucks and enforcement. City Administrator Casey commented that it is important to wait until after the July 4th Events for 2023. He also commented that he has been monitoring bills at the Capitol. He also mentioned Juneteenth regarding a potential change in the date to make it retroactive to 2023 rather than effective for 2024. City Administrator Casey also commented on the sacred settlement projects and the bill that has been introduced in Legislature. Finally he commented on bonding bills and noted that he doesn't have updates at this time regarding the submitted City projects.

Commissioner Roberts asked about Pizza Pub and expansion of docks. Community Development Wittman commented on the DNR and permitting as well as EAW (Environmental Assessment Worksheets) that would be generated. She noted this would be part of the approval processes. Commissioner Roberts also asked about the study for the lake front and how that relates to the donation from Forest Lake Lake Association. Assistant City Administrator Udem mentioned he has spoken to Bruce Chamberlain and more information is on its way.

10. Mayor and City Council Updates

Comments: Councilmember Roberts commented that he attended the Planning Commission Meeting last week. Councilmember Husnik commented that he attended the Vietnam Veteran Meeting with over 350 individuals in attendance. He commended Diane Finnemann for her efforts to get the meeting together. Councilmember Erickson commented on his meetings last week.

11. Adjourn

Motion to: Adjourn

Comments:



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