



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, September 11, 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:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Sam Husnik, Councilmember
AYES:	
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: Phil Becker, Resident, commented on 11th Avenue and Forest Road. He indicated he lives on the corner of this intersection and the reconstruction directly impacts him. He noted the ability to turn on Forest Road will be complicated by this change and indicated a stop sign or stop light at this intersection would be a simpler solution and more cost effective. He noted he does not see any benefit to a raised median and remove turning at this intersection and is a waste of tax payer money.



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Jim Lichty, Resident, commented on the weed harvester noting that he is next to the boat launch. He indicated that the City shouldn't be using the weed harvester and this is disrupting his lake area because it spills weeds to his shoreline. He noted that he emailed the Mayor without a response. He said the wind drives the pulled weeds. He would like to see the weed harvester gone.

Carl Graff, Resident, commented on 11th Avenue noting that the proposal is totally unacceptable to the residents. He noted the design is completely unacceptable with the proposed design at Highway 97 and Forest Road noting that the neighborhood in this area will be blocked off. He indicated that no data has been collected on cars, speed, etc. He said residents cannot keep spending money on these projects. He suggested that the City Engineer and Bolton and Menk look at this design. He also asked for additional open meetings and mailings to the residents. He asked for a different design that does not block the road and does not empty their pockets. He asked for Council to slow the project down and communicate better with the residents.

Perry McGowan, Resident, commented on the project on 11th Avenue. He noted that he lives next to the first speaker and was very disappointed when he received the mailing from the County. He noted there are approximately ninety-five (95) homes that access this segment of Forest Road that will be impacted by blocking off Forest Road at 11th and Highway 97. He indicated that in communicating with the area residents he noted common themes including that residents want to be able to make left turns, as well as see a reduction of the speed limit on 11th Avenue.

Sheila Smith, Resident, commented that their neighborhood is blocked between Clear Lake and the trail. She noted that there is no proposed sidewalk on the south side of the street. She explained the logistics of trying to navigate crossing Highway 61 and noted that pedestrian safety has been neglected.

Washington County Commissioner, Fran Miron, noted that he was contacted by City Staff and gave an apology to the residents of the neighborhood for the notifications that were sent by the County. He also commented that the City Engineer has been involved in the process of the design considerations. He noted that public input helps with the design on these roads and access points. He highlighted that the County is early in the design of the project and intends to have discussions with the Staff and Council. He assured the audience and public that the County is listening to do better in all aspects of the project ahead.

Mayor Bain noted that there is a Workshop scheduled for October 16, 2023 where the County will be present to discuss the project. City Engineer Goodman commented that there were open houses and noted the October workshop is a result of the open house comments from the residents.

6. Consent Agenda Considerations (Action Items)



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Comments:

- a) Approve City Bills
- b) Approve Minutes from August 28, 2023 Regular Council Meeting
- c) 2022-2023 Lift Station and Force Main Improvements – Contractor Request for Payment No. 9
- d) 2023 Street Pavement Maintenance Project – Contractor Request for Payment No. 2
- e) Downtown Stormwater BMP – Contractor Request for Payment No. 1
- f) Resolution 09-11-23-01 - Declaration of Public Works Surplus Equipment and Property

Motion to: Approve Consent Agenda Items 6. a. through 6. f.

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

7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

- a) **Resolution 09-11-23-02 – Donation of \$100.00 from Forest Lake Lions for the Forest Lake Fire Department**

Comments:

Motion to: Approve Resolution 09-11-23-02 for the Donation of \$100.00 from Forest Lake Lions for the Forest Lake Fire Department

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

- b) **Public Hearing - Ordinance No. 728 – Temporarily Prohibit Establishment of New Uses or Expansion of Existing Uses Related to Cannabis Businesses**

Comments: Amanda Johnson, City Attorney, presented an interim ordinance on uses related to cannabis businesses. She indicated the moratorium will continue through January 2025 and



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will rescind the previous moratorium that was in effect. She also noted that the moratorium will not affect current businesses, but they will still not be allowed to expand.

Public Hearing opened at 7:35 p.m.

Karen Morehead commented that she is in favor of temporarily prohibiting new cannabis business or expansion of current businesses.

Public Hearing closed at 7:37 p.m.

Motion to: Approve Ordinance No. 728 to Temporarily Prohibit Establishment of New Uses or Expansion of Existing Uses Related to Cannabis Businesses

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

c) Fenway Investments LLC - Headwaters Village PID 29-032-21-12-0017

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman commented on the last remaining undeveloped outlot in the Headwaters Village and noted there has been a multi-family structure to be built. She noted that the information was presented to the Planning Commission in August resulting in the items to come to Council for final approval. She noted that the development site is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as it guides for mixed use. She indicated that the zoning ordinance amendment proposed is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She noted the complex will consist of seventy-one (71) units. She commented on public infrastructure improvements noting that sidewalks and street lights will be added, but the rest of the infrastructure is there. She also commented that the developer is proposing parkland dedication fees for the project in lieu of green space.

Mayor Bain clarified that this is the last parcel of the development. Community Development Director Wittman noted that this is the last parcel for Headwaters Village core. Mayor Bain expressed concern of being over-built of multi-family residential properties.

1) Resolution 09-11-23-03 - Planned Unit Development (PUD) Amendment

Motion to: Approve Resolution 09-11-23-03 – Planned Unit Development (PUD) Amendment for Fenway Investments LLC - Headwaters Village PID 29-032-21-12-0017



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

2) Ordinance No. 729 - Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment

Motion to: Approve Ordinance No. 729 – Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment for the Property Located at Headwaters Village PID 29-032-21-12-0017

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

3) Resolution 09-11-23-04 - Final Plat

Motion to: Approve Resolution 09-11-23-04 – Final Plat for Fenway Investments LLC - Headwaters Village PID 29-032-21-12-0017

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

4) Resolution 09-11-23-05 - Final PUD Approval

Motion to: Approve Resolution 09-11-23-05 – Final PUD for Fenway Investments LLC - Headwaters Village PID 29-032-21-12-0017



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

8. Discussion

a) Budget Update

Comments: Fire Chief Newman noted that he is asking for an increase in wages for their firefighter Staff. He noted that several cities are transitioning to full-time firefighters because of the lack of volunteers to fill these roles. He provided a wage history to 2015 noting that there were thirty-one (31) members to the Staff and indicated that Forest Lake has kept up with that Staffing level. He noted that the average wage is not affordable for most of the individuals that volunteer. He indicated he is looking for a \$4.00 per hour increase for 2024. Mayor Bain indicated that this has been reviewed before and noted that the goal has been to get to the benchmark of the wage being the same as a patrol officer. Chief Newman noted that full-time staffing would cost an additional \$1M+ per year. Councilmember Roberts commented that he would be willing to go right to \$31.25 proposed for 2025. There was further discussion about retention.

City Finance Director, Kevin Knopik, he commented on the different options that were requested by Council from the last meeting to get the levy options below 20%. He presented Option 1 that places the levy at 19.97% showing the major difference as a reduction of the equipment certificate, he also noted an increase in revenues from antenna leases, and the final item would be a decrease in the capital improvements.

Next Finance Director Knopik presented Option 2 which shows a 17.87% levy with a greater impact to the same items as Option 1, but with an additional decrease in funding for parks and building maintenance. Mayor Bain asked for tangible examples of a reduction of the capital improvement levy. Finance Director Knopik gave examples of projects that would be delayed as a result of levy item reductions. Councilmember Erickson asked about fees from the new apartment complex. City Administrator Casey indicated that it won't impact these changes much. City Engineer Goodman noted that park dedication funds cannot be used for maintenance. Councilmember Roberts asked if there was a reason that Staffing considerations were not reduced as opposed to a reduction to park dedication fees. Councilmember Erickson also agreed that he would like to see the difference in Staffing requests. He also asked about bonding and debt service ratio. He asked where the City is headed from a debt service perspective. City Engineer Goodman discussed the road projects and his concerns for field work to prepare for these projects. He compared prices for costs from 2021 to



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now. He also gave further information on the life of a road. He discussed state aid funds that can be used on particular designated state aid routes. Mayor Bain reminded Council that the levy needs to be adopted by the end of September and it can be reduced, but not increased. She indicated that funding mechanisms of the past are no longer working. She also noted that she appreciates Staff working to bring the levy number down and has concerns of the amount of funding needed, and what projects are really necessary. Finance Director Knopik provided an annual breakdown of the 10-Year budget plan to 2033. Councilmember Roberts asked if there are any projections from the County moving forward. Finance Director Knopik commented that the median average is 2.6%.

9. Staff Updates

Comments: City Administrator Casey commented on the groundbreaking ceremony at the Washington County Environment Center.

10. Mayor and City Council Updates

Comments: Councilmember Roberts commented on communication to the residents. Councilmember Husnik commented on the EDA Meeting and the Headwaters 123 property. He also noted he attended the Airport Commission Meeting and noted that there are some projects that have been funded 95% by the State including maintenance on the runway, and a study for a possible new approach. Mayor Bain thanked Jamie Muscha, Parks Supervisor for her work on Arts in the park

11. Adjourn

Comments:

Motion to: Adjourn

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