



# City Council

## Workshop

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

Monday, October 16, 2023

6:30 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	Absent	

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

### 4. 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.*

### 5. Discussion Items

#### a. Public Facilities Use

Comments: Jamie Muscha, Parks Supervisor, presented information on the city owned recreational facilities as well as the user groups and the particular uses for each facility. She commented on the current model for facility operations noting that staff is primarily responsible for planned scheduled and unscheduled maintenance, including mowing, weed control, and irrigation. She also commented that the city is not responsible for the day-to-day preparation of the fields such as dragging and chalking before games and events.

She noted the existing challenges as there are volunteers who are responsible for athletic field preparations and commented on potential city liability. She indicated the city is appreciative of the help, however, as the city expands and field improvements are made, there is increased liability to the city when staff is not responsible for these duties. She indicated it is in the city's best interest to explore new opportunities for facility operation models to reduce any potential liability to the city.

Mayor Bain asked about the how the volunteer use came to be or where they come from. Parks Supervisor Muscha explained that often it is parents of the youth teams. Councilmember Husnik asked about the time involved for taking over these services. Public Works Director Adams commented on the man hours involved and noted the school staff that is also providing



# City Council

## Workshop

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

---

Monday, October 16, 2023

6:30 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

---

game preparation services. Councilmember Erickson asked why this issue has come to the forefront. Community Development Director Wittman commented on the future predicted capital improvements to the facilities and the need to have a more feasible model. City Administrator Casey commented that there are multiple people, including coaches, and parents, improperly maintaining day-to-day field preparation. Mayor Bain commented that she is surprised parents and coaches are prepping the fields. City Administrator Casey commented that it's not uncommon to have parents doing this type of activity to get their required volunteer hours, however, at a complex the size of Fenway, a different model should be used. He indicated that the high school would be a good partner to take over this field maintenance as they are already doing this for their games.

Councilmember Valento commented she has received complaints on the condition of the fields and would be willing to explore the conversation with the school to maintain this part of operations. There was discussion of the aglime and impacts to the fields by having to continue adding due to improper dragging.

There was conversation regarding fees and ideas of different revenue streams. Mayor Bain commented that it would be beneficial to do something different rather than compete with what FLAAA is doing, for example, banners. Parks Supervisor Muscha suggested fees or cost per person for field preparation even if services are contracted out to an outside party. She noted that the benefit to the city would be consistency of maintenance and operations to all of the city facilities. City Administrator Casey and Parks Supervisor Muscha commented on the opportunities of keeping teams in the Forest Lake area rather than seeing them leave to use fields in other communities. City Administrator Casey also commented on field lighting creating more hours for field use and time on the fields.

Councilmember Erickson commented that he would like to start these conversations with the school district. He also asked if there is a lack of communication with the district on these items. City Administrator Casey indicated there is not a lack of communication between the city and the school, however, there is a lack of communication of outside organizations. City Administrator Casey noted that there should not be exclusive use as these are public fields and should be available to the public for use as well. Mayor Bain indicated that partnership with the school district is a good option to explore.

### **b. Public Nuisances, Abatement, and Administrative Citation**

Comments: City Attorney Johnson presented information on the city's code enforcement ordinance. She noted the topics of conversation beginning with individuals able to enforce the code, including the building official, city administrator, city clerk, code enforcement officer, community development director, community service officer, fire chief, fire inspector, fire



# City Council

## Workshop

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

---

Monday, October 16, 2023

6:30 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

---

marshal, and public works director. She also discussed administrative citations. She provided an example of the process for issuing an administrative citation including issuance of a compliance letter. She also commented on exceptions of issuance of a compliance letter noting categories that include repeat offenders, license violations, fire prevention violations, animal violations, traffic or parking violations, noise violations, failure to follow a stop work order, and emergency situations. There was discussion about various scenarios where a violation occurs and a citation could be issued.

City Attorney Johnson provided information on the current administrative appeal process. She noted that she doesn't recommend the Council being the independent hearing body. She explained the conduct of the administrative hearing process noting the administrative penalty of \$2,000.00 as the maximum amount allowed by law per incident. Mayor Bain noted that she is comfortable setting fees at a lower amount as a level just above an "education" to the offender.

City Attorney Johnson noted that the proposed ordinance uses the state definition of the word public nuisance and commented on the difference between private and public nuisances. She commented that some public nuisance may include issues relating to animals, public health, fences, sign regulations, graffiti, stormwater management, refuse, hazardous waste, vehicles, outdoor wood boiler systems, grass or weeds, direct sky reflected glare, failure to stop work, lack of snow and ice removal within a certain amount of time, rain, ice, snow, or waste water flowing from properties and buildings and not discharged property, signs, awnings, vegetation or other objects located on private property that are not constructed and maintained property to maintain a clear view of all traffic, digging, adding, adding fill or doing any act that alters proper drainage, depositing snow in the right of way, and excessive or unreasonable amounts of otherwise lawful parking that causes narrowing of traffic lanes.

City Attorney Johnson also commented on public nuisances affecting public health including creation of odors or smells which are offensive or obnoxious. There was further discussion regarding agricultural properties. She provided photos showing examples public nuisances. She also noted unsheltered storage exceptions of agricultural areas, rezoned areas, and construction activities when there is an active building permit on file. There was also conversation on abandoned, junk, or unauthorized motor vehicles, and the exception of screening these items as it applied to agriculture and rezoned areas.

City Attorney Johnson commented on building maintenance and appearance standards. She noted that building maintenance can be difficult in rulemaking as individuals have particular preferences in building aesthetics. City Administrator Casey mentioned items of deterioration and disrepair being a public nuisance. Mayor Bain commented that there are many other areas of public nuisance to focus on. City Administrator Casey indicated that boarded up or burned up homes that may have had a fire is a public nuisance, not necessarily a home with peeling paint.



# City Council

## Workshop

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

---

Monday, October 16, 2023

6:30 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

---

There was further discussion on homes with boarded up windows and doors, and individuals living in homes in disrepair. There was also discussion on particular items presented in the draft ordinance and modifying the language to be about safety.

City Attorney Johnson commented on emergency abatement and provided an example of snow removal on sidewalks noting that if snow is not removed, then city staff will come in and provide snow removal at the expense of the owner. Mayor Bain commented on communications at the beginning of the season stating the intent of Staff regarding snow removal. There was also discussion of sending a notice to the resident or owner per snow event. It was noted that these abatements are complaint based. City Attorney Johnson commented on the process of issuing abatement fees. She noted the next steps in the process indicating the final ordinance and fee schedule will be presented at the December 2023 Council Meeting.

### c. Refuse Hauler Contract Renewal

Comments: City Administrator Casey provided information on the Republic Services refuse hauler contract indicating that the current contract allows for an extension to the contract for an additional five (5) years. He also noted that one of the biggest complaints the city receives, is about the cost. He indicated that the County disposal fee is the biggest increase which Republic Services has no control over. Councilmember Husnik commented that he would like to continue with Republic Services. Councilmember Erickson asked about putting out an RFP. City Administrator Casey commented that it will take several weeks to get an RFP out and noted that there may be three companies that will respond including Waste Management, Walters, and Republic Services. Mayor Bain commented that changing vendors would be significant and would be inclined to negotiate with Republic as soon as possible to see what their costs would be. Mayor Bain commented that the public doesn't view refuse pick-up as a city-wide change but that they don't have their one vendor of choice. Councilmember Valento indicated she is in favor of negotiating with Republic Services.

### d. Holiday Bridge Lighting Update

Comments: City Administrator Casey commented that there is a total of \$6,500.00 and it is unlikely that the total donations for the Bridge Lighting project will reach \$10,000.00 for option two (2) Public Works Director Adams noted that option one (1) of approximately \$5,000 was approved at the last meeting. He also commented on an additional option of lighting the bridge on the west side outlined and the east side of the bridge being outlined and the beams lighted as well. It was decided that the staff will work with the vendor and go with option three (3) to have a combination of the two previously presented options.

## 6. Adjourn

Motion to: Adjourn



# City Council

## Workshop

### ~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

---

Monday, October 16, 2023

6:30 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

---

Comments: There was a comment on receiving group Council emails and violating open meeting law. City Administrator Casey commented that he can send out a general email stating the individual's email was received. Mayor Bain noted that any Councilmember can reply without selecting "reply all" and not creating a consensus.

City Administrator Casey asked if Council liked being in the Community Room for workshop sessions. City Attorney Johnson commented that Forest Lake is a type of outlier in that the City has a recorded workshop in Council Chambers and that most other city meeting minutes are typically only one (1) page long. Mayor Bain commented that she likes the format but wants to keep the Open Forum portion for the public.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Sam Husnik, Councilmember
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
<b>AYES:</b>	Bain, Husnik, Valento, Erickson
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Roberts