



MINUTES CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

**November 25, 2024 - 6:00 PM
Lakeville City Hall, Marion Conference Room**

1. Call to order, moment of silence and flag pledge

Mayor Hellier called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Members Present: Mayor Hellier, Council Members Bermel, Lee, Volk, Wolter

Staff Present: Justin Miller, City Administrator; Julie Stahl, Finance Director; Allyn Kuennen, Assistant City Administrator; Taylor Snider, Assistant to the City Administrator; Tierney Helmers, Communications Manager

2. Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

3. Discussion Items

a. Communications Update

Tierney Helmers, Communications Manager, began her presentation by reviewing the quarterly newsletter sent to all residents. A QR code was put in the last newsletter requesting feedback from residents on their opinions of the newsletter. The City only received two pieces of feedback from residents. Other strategies for feedback will be looked into and the QR code will remain on future newsletters. Helmers explained to the Council that as the city has continued to print newsletters, there has been an increase in the amount of newsletters being printed. This is due to the new housing developments in Lakeville that now receive our newsletter at their door, as all doors in Lakeville receive one. Print Solutions in Lakeville has now taken over the printing process and saved the City money while maintaining excellent quality. Helmers also reported the changes to the local paper, Sun Thisweek, and how that will affect their advertising strategy. More information will follow as she continues to work with the paper on their advertisement options.

Council was pleased with how the newsletter has been effectively relaying important information to residents. They also see this as a great resource to refer residents to about notices for important information. As for the newspaper, Council agreed to reduce the amount of full-page publications to once a month (as opposed to twice monthly)

b. Draft 2025 Legislative Priorities

Allyn Kuennen, Assistant City Administrator, gave a brief update on the 2025 Legislative

Priorities draft and asked Council if there is anything they want to see added or removed. Older priorities that have been addressed have been removed. The council touched on early voting timelines, the Dan Patch Commuter Rail Line, broadband internet, zip code uniformity, and liquor laws. After conversing, the Council agreed that liquor laws would be discussed more at the January council retreat. The Council informed staff that they were satisfied with the list and ready to proceed with the items mentioned.

c. 2024 Year End Preview & Final 2025 Budget/Tax Levy Discussion

Finance Director Julie Stahl, presented to Council. In her year-end preview, she highlighted that the projected year-end fund balance is looking better than the one adopted by about \$875,000. She also highlighted the SAFER grant and how this will positively impact revenue in 2025. By maintaining the funding for the budgeted firefighter positions, Lakeville will be able to lessen the impact of increased levies once the grant runs out.

Council raised questions about being above the fund balance policy that is aimed to be achieved every year. Stahl explained that it is acceptable to be above our fund balance policy because those dollars do have a plan on how they are to be spent. She says that this would not be seen as a red flag by Moody's. 3rd Quarter 2024 Financial Report

d. 3rd Quarter 2024 Financial Report

Finance Director Julie Stahl, updated the council on the third quarter financial report. In her overview, she pointed out that building permits are fewer than they were expecting, and are hoping for a better 2025. Looking at future projects that are coming up, this should be a reasonable expectation. She also informed the council that the ERP costs will evolve in 2025 to just maintenance costs. She also reported that the General Fund is looking strong going into quarter four. The liquor department's sales are down this year, but we can expect to see a rebound during the busy holiday season coming up.

Council asked if staff have seen the efficiencies of the new system yet. Stahl responds that staff have not seen the efficiencies yet and that they thought we would find a lot more time savings, but we aren't seeing them yet. She noted that there is a learning curve as well.

4. Items for Future Discussion

There were no items for future discussion.

5. Committee/ City Administrator Updates

Councilmember Bermel reported that the Dakota 911 Board of Directors meeting went well. They are pleased with the delivery of the new ERP. There will be audio data recording updates, and the Board approved the contract for that. Cybersecurity is a timely priority on our list because Dakota 911 will be signing on services for cybersecurity. The Dakota 911 staffing has improved from where it was. They have been using retirees to fill scheduling gaps, which has helped a lot.

Councilmember Lee talked about the ALF changes that will contractually be made and will be voted on for approval at the next Council meeting.

The fire relief association continues to discuss scheduled contribution plan changes. This will be a January retreat topic.

Councilmember Wolter provided updates on the discussions regarding the I-35 Solutions Alliance's future.

Mayor Hellier reported that the Economic Development Commission is wrapping up their strategic plan and some business retention-type projects will be coming up next. The Regional Council of Mayors discussed housing issues once again at their latest meeting.

Councilmember Lee thanked all councilmembers for sending in their City Administrator reviews.

6. Adjourn

Motion was made by Bermel, seconded by Lee, to adjourn. Voice vote was taken on the motion. Ayes - All in favor.

Mayor Hellier Adjourned the meeting at 7:48 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Taylor Snider, Assistant to the City Administrator

Luke M. Heller, Mayor