

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCEL MEETING
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
STATUTE SECTION 13D.021
3/26/2025**

The 3/26/2025 City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Ron Hanegraaf at the City Hall at 6:02 pm. Present were City Councilmembers Janet Hegland, Rob Busch, Jennifer Lattin, Scott Wendell. Also present were City Administrator Jack Davis, City Engineer Brian Bachmeier, City Attorney Bill Griffith, Public Works Director Jim Windingstad, and Assistant Planner Eleanor Hahn.

Also in attendance were Linda Madsen- Lakes Center for Youth & Families, Tom Lakner, Betty Hanegraaf, John Young, Myron & Cindy Angel, Kim Snell, and Brenda Miller.

In attendance via interactive technology was Travis McDonald, Davey Tree Expert Company

The meeting was held in an interactive technology meeting format.

A. CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

1. Call to Order – Regular Meeting, 6:00PM
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Adoption of Agenda

Motion by Mayor Hanegraaf to approve the 3/26/2025 City Council amended agenda removing B2 1/22/2025 meeting minutes, B3 2/12/2025 meeting minutes, and D7 generator bids to a later date as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Bill Payments (Pages 1 - 3)

Motion by Councilmember Hegland to approve the March 26, 2025 Consent Agenda as presented and the supplemental bill list which was distributed to council prior to the March 26, 2025 meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Wendell.

Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

C. PRESENTATION(S) and ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

1. Public Forum

Brenda Miller - Quinalt Street NE, Columbus, a member of the Anoka County Election Integrity Team (ACEIT), stated that her citizen group focuses on elections and continues to research election **Electronic Poll Pad** information. Miller went on to say that the Anoka County Commissioners recently decided to renew their contract with Knowink and NGO for electronic poll pads for elections. Despite 100's of calls from citizens asking them not to renew, the costs after raising taxes over 16% and concerns of the lack security, it was passed 4 to 2 by the County. ACEIT shared with the county information about the Legislation that Texas Representative Pete Sessions is putting forward entitled "Make Elections Secure Again (MESA)". This would include shortening early voting and hand counting paper ballots. ACEIT is asking the county to delay their vote. The County has put forth their information regarding the amount these poll pads would cost and stating that the County has the authority to tell the municipalities whether or not to use them. ACEIT has researched statutes which have concluded that the municipalities have the right to opt out. Miller also noted that she provided Council with information by Robert Kirchner who has extensive knowledge reading through statutes and worked for the **City** of Anoka ~~County~~ for over 30 years. Miller went on to say that 2 cities have already decided to opt out. Miller stated that Columbus has approximately 3,000 eligible voters and according to MESA and the Minnesota Secretary of State, Columbus will need to divide up into 2 precincts to keep it at 1,500 per precinct to make things more manageable. Miller states her concern is the problem uploading information from the tabulators on election day and that using cellular service for use of the poll pads will be problematic. ACEIT believes the County is vastly underestimating the cost of poll pads and that they will cost much more for municipalities than stated. State Senator Calvin Bahr and Commissioner Jeff Reinert recently attended the Linwood Township meeting on March 11, 2025 and they agree with ACEIT. Senator Bahr stated that the poll pads can only be used for 3 election cycles then need to be replaced. He estimates that each will cost about \$2,500. Anoka County Elections Manager Tom Hunt stated the municipalities will be liable for any damage to the poll pads and are considering taking the old cases and cutting them down to fit the new poll pads, which Miller questions how the warranty would work. Miller stated that ACEIT has decided to visit all 21 municipalities to keep them informed of all their findings and asked the Council if they would be allowed to attend meetings or a workshop. Councilmember Hegland stated that she asked City Administrator Davis to set up a meeting for Tom Hunt in which Hunt declined. Councilmember Hegland also stated that during the local government official meeting Hunt said that the poll pads would be operating on the Verizon cellular network which causes concern as Columbus is a dead zone with Verizon. Councilmember Hegland stated the importance of seeing and understanding all sides and that if Hunt doesn't have time to visit the council, then she will go talk to him.

Kim Snell at 50321 197th Ave NE of Columbus has questions about Davey Tree Expert Company. Mayor Hanegraaf suggested that Kim's questions be included during the Davey Tree Expert Company agenda. Councilmember Busch stated that anything on the agenda isn't open to public forum. Councilmember Hegland stated that they removed that rule and that it's easier to talk

about it during the agenda. City Attorney Griffith stated it makes sense when all the items on the agenda are all in the same set of minutes and conversation.

2. Lakes Center for Youth and Families - Annual Report (Pages 4 – 23)

The Mission of Lakes Center for Youth and Families was established in 1976 to ensure the success of youth, adults, and families through counseling, intervention, and enrichment programs meeting the ever-changing needs of individuals, families, and the community. The Lakes Center for Youth and Families serves municipalities in Anoka, Chicago and Washington County. Linda Madsen, community outreach coordinator for the Lake Center for Youth and Families, presented an overview and an annual report to the City Council summarizing the 2024 activities.

Madsen highlighted the *Safety Camp*, a summer program for youth entering grades 3-5, covering first aid, bike safety, and other safety-related topics. The program is planned and administered by Lakes Center in collaboration with the Forest Lake Police and Fire Departments, along with community leaders.

The Intervention Program helps youth develop healthy and positive decision-making skills. In 2024, the program served 189 clients through 258 sessions. It operates through contracts with Chisago and Washington counties and their referrals along with the Forest Lake Police Department. Madsen highlighted a grant-funded program at Linwood Elementary School which was recently renewed for two more years with double the original grant amount. The goal is to reach students before they require intervention. A full-time staff member at Linwood works with individual students, small groups, and entire classrooms. Last year, 400 students participated, and Forest Lake Elementary Schools have expressed interest in implementing a similar program. A new initiative under the Intervention program is the *Education Engagement Program*, serving students in the Chisago Lakes, North Branch, and Rush City School Districts with two full-time staff members. Designed for students with high absenteeism or frequent tardiness, the program takes a supportive approach and staff work with them and their families to address underlying issues. This program is funded by the St. Croix River Education District and Chisago County Human Services Department.

Counseling is their third program, serving clients from as young as three years old to adults in their 80s. Appointments can be held virtually in their office, or on-site for students attending the Forest Lake School District or Lakes International Language Academy. In 2024, they served 217 clients across various age groups, conducting a total of 3,468 sessions. Madsen emphasized that the Center does not turn anyone away due to an inability to pay. In 2024, 33 clients utilized their sliding fee scale, receiving 303 sessions at a total cost of \$33,000. Madsen informed the Council that funding comes from program fees, grants, charitable gaming, and special events, adding that an upcoming fundraising event is scheduled for May 1st at Tanner Brook Golf Course in Forest Lake. Madsen extended the Center's gratitude to everyone for their support.

3. Lakner's Woodlands Ponds Development Agreement (Pages 24 – 40)

Eleanor Hahn, Assistant Planner presented a proposed amendment to the Development Agreement for Lakner's Woodlands Ponds. This plat was approved by the City Council in 2018 as a residential lot split.

City Council

March 26, 2025

During the approval process, the City required funds to be escrowed for potential future improvements to Zodiac Street. The escrow deposit of \$15,000 was to be refunded to those who paid it if no improvements were made by October 9, 2028. In 2019, an amendment to the Development Agreement introduced a deferred escrow provision, allowing the lot owners to pay the \$15,000 when the lots were sold rather than at the time of the split. Additionally, this amendment prohibited future owners from participating in any petitions for improvements to Zodiac Street. At the November 12, 2024 City Council workshop, the Council addressed a potential language change in the agreement after receiving a request from the Lakner's. The existing wording stated that the escrow funds would be returned to the current property owner rather than the original payer. Since the initial workshop meeting, the request has expanded to a full review of the Development Agreement. City Staff have determined that it is no longer feasible for Zodiac Street to be improved by 2028. Given this, staff recommend waiving the escrow requirement and removing the provision barring future property owners from participating in improvement petitions. Currently, this requirement is preventing the owners from selling the lots, as they would have to pay the escrow only to have it refunded to them in 2028.

Councilmember Hegland stated that the Lakner's were the first residents to contact her after she was elected to the Council, and she has since advocated for a fair resolution on their behalf. Councilmember Lattin stated that, ultimately, it comes down to the fact that Zodiac Street is unlikely to be improved within the next few years, making this a fair and straightforward decision. Councilmember Wendell agreed that the likelihood of Zodiac Street being paved before 2028 is low and posing no financial risk to the City.

Motion by Councilmember Hegland to approve an amendment to the Lakner's Woodland Pond Development Agreement dated November 15, 2019 to remove Recital 3 - escrow for improvements and Recital 4 - future petitions. Seconded by Councilmember Lattin.

**Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye.
Motion carries**

4. Davey Tree Expert Company Conditional Use Permit (Pages 41 - 57)

A representative from Davey Tree Expert Co, Travis McDonald attended via interactive technology. Mayor Hanegraaf asked the applicant if the company would be bringing diseased trees back to Columbus. McDonald reassured the Council that Davey Tree strictly follows Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) regulations, such as not transporting diseased or quarantined trees and hauling chipped materials to an incineration plant in St. Paul. Mayor Hanegraaf also asked about the size of the company's chippers. McDonald stated that they use residential chippers, which can take up to 20-inch logs. He stated that most chipping is done at job sites rather than at the business location. He continued by saying that the stored byproduct, whether that is wood chips or full logs that are too large to chip, would be hauled out regularly. Hanegraaf asked if the company primarily removes trees, or if they also treat diseased trees. McDonald responded by saying that Davey specializes in plant healthcare. He stated that they are all certified arborists who have studied disease and insect management. McDonald

stated that their goal is to preserve landscapes for as long as possible. Hanegraaf asked how the chemicals for these treatments will be stored. McDonald stated that the MDA had certain restrictions for the storage of their materials, namely ensuring proper ventilation and security. He also said that they will have to install an eyewash station and follow certain OSHA regulations as well. Hanegraaf asked how many Davey facilities are in the Twin Cities area. McDonald stated that there is one in Eden Prairie, one in Plymouth, and another in South Saint Paul. He stated that Davey recently acquired Mickman Brothers in Blaine, which specializes in commercial landscaping.

Mayor Hanegraaf asked if residents could stop in at the location, and McDonald stated that there is always someone at the front desk. Although, he stated that the majority of their business is handled online or on the phone.

Councilmember Lattin asked for confirmation that this site would primarily be used as a storage facility, where employees would come in the morning to gather their equipment and return at night. McDonald confirmed that not much will happen in the shop area or yard. Lattin also asked McDonald to describe the size of the trucks they will be using. McDonald stated that there would be a variety of smaller landscape trucks, some including basic sized trailers for mini articulating loaders and aerial bucket trucks, but no semi-trucks or big box trucks. Lattin then asked for a description of what the wood chipping noise would be like. McDonald said that it would happen rarely, and only for a few minutes at a time. He compared the noise level as a large commercial mover and a leaf blower at the same time.

Councilmember Wendell asked Assistant City Planner Eleanor Hahn to show the Plymouth location on Google Maps to provide a visual for the Council. He stated that the chippers on site are small trailer chippers, stating that logs too large for the smaller chippers will be hauled out rather than chipped on site. McDonald confirmed that, saying that larger logs would be hauled to their mulch facility elsewhere to be chipped. Wendell then asked if they are required to do any Tier 2 reporting with hazardous materials, and McDonald stated that they do not, as the controlled fungicide and insecticides that they use are not considered hazardous. McDonald also confirmed that they are not fueling the equipment on site and will utilize local gas stations rather than storing diesel fuel. Lastly, Wendell asked McDonald to describe the fencing and screening changes that they are considering. McDonald stated that they are planning to add some evergreen trees to screen the debris pile from the roadway, as well as repair and add slats to the existing chain link fence.

Councilmember Hegland suggested adding a condition requiring adherence to relevant USDA guidelines. She then asked what the business's occasional weekend activity meant. McDonald stated that the company would respond to emergency fallen trees during the weekend. He also stated that during especially bad weather, employees may have to work a weekend to make up for lost hours. McDonald stated that the start time would still be 7:00 a.m. on these occasions. Hegland asked if business slows during the winter months, and McDonald stated that they are actually extremely busy in the winter. He explained that certain trees can only be worked on during the dormant season, such as fruit trees or disease prone trees. Councilmember Hegland suggested adding a condition that trucks cannot be unloaded on Lake Drive, as that had previously been an issue with different businesses at this location.

City Attorney Bill Griffith clarified the two additional conditions suggested by Councilmember Hegland, to which the Council agreed with through consensus.

Motion by Mayor Hanegraaf to approve the Davey Tree Expert Co Conditional Use Permit at 13733 Lake Dr NE with conditions listed in the City Staff Report and additions as recommended by City Council. Seconded by Councilmember Wendell.

Roll call vote: Lattin – Aye; Wendell – Aye; Hegland – Aye; Busch – Aye; Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

5. MTW Truck Wash Site Plan (Pages 58 – 63)

Assistant City Planner Eleanor Hahn stated that a Conditional Use Permit for MTW truck wash at 15217 Hornsby St. Northeast was approved by the City Council on September 25th, 2024. The applicant spent the winter months finalizing construction plans and a building permit application for the facility was received in mid-March of this year. She stated that there were several small changes from what was approved in the CUP and what was submitted in the building permit. A Site Plan review is required to make those small amendments. She then listed the following proposed changes; squaring off of the southern side of the building, the addition of an access lane and garage door to the mechanical section of the building and the removal of windows and decorative materials from the back of the building. Finally, she stated that this matter went before the Planning Commission last week on March 19th, and the Planning Commission is requesting that the City Council consider approving this site plan change.

Councilmember Lattin stated that she discussed this with applicant James Skeie at the ColumBiz breakfast event and stated that she believes these changes are fairly straightforward. Councilmember Wendell agreed and stated that he thinks this development will be a good addition to the community. Councilmember Hegland stated that it appears that part of the walkway had been removed as well. Hahn stated that that change was missed in the review, and that she will have to follow up with the applicant to ask whether that was an oversight or if it had been removed as a way to limit impervious surfaces. Hegland stated that she has no issue with the change, but that she is curious as to why it was made. Lattin asked if the removal of the walkway would impact the CUP, and Hahn stated that since there was no requirement for a contiguous walkway, this change would not affect their CUP. Hegland stated that her only concern would be accessibility, and Wendall pointed out there is a ramp marked on the updated plans. City Administrator Jack Davis stated that as a commercial business, they would have to comply with all ADA access requirements before they get a permit.

Motion by Councilmember Wendell to approve the MTW Truck Wash Site Plan Review for the proposed minor changes to the building and site plan as presented in the staff report with clarification of the sidewalk. Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

Roll call vote: Lattin – Aye; Wendell – Aye; Hegland – Aye; Busch – Aye; Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

D. CONSULTANT, LIAISON and STAFF REPORTS

1. City Engineer No additional report. Will address Hornsby Project Wetland credits during City Administrators report.

2. City Attorney No report

3. Mayor & City Council Report

Councilmember Lattin shared that on March 24th she attended the Coon Creek Watershed meeting. She Lattin stated she found it interesting that they had a long discussion relating to lack of green space and how that really effects groundwater and runoff, but Columbus doesn't really have that issue because we have our acreage minimums and some strict guidelines that we abide by.

Lattin stated at the last fall fest meeting the group is exploring the possibility of a potential road closure on Kettle River Blvd from 165th to Notre Dame Street to allow for basically safer crossing of the street. Lattin is currently working with the Anoka County on this matter.

Lattin wanted to acknowledge the efforts of Companion Animal Control as she worked with them with on a loose dog situation that visited several neighborhoods. She commended them on a great job communicating to multiple residents and they were able to capture the puppy that escaped within 24 hours.

Councilmember Wendell reported that the Forest Lake Cable Commission (FLCC) did not meet as there was no quorum. However, he stated that Jill Green from FLCC confirmed that the April 17th meeting is still scheduled. He also mentioned that when a city meeting date is changed, city staff should inform LATV of the changes to have a LATV staff member present for the recording of the meeting.

Wendell stated that the recent ColumBiz event held at Blaine Brothers TruckAline was a success and informed the Council that they will be hosting the annual Minnesota Trucking Association Truck Driving Championship the second week in June. He added that he is aware of this statewide competition for truck drivers and the winners in several different categories move on to the national event. Additionally, Wendell reminded the Council that Running Aces will again host the upcoming Special Olympics largest truck convey.

Councilmember Hegland informed the Council that she and City Administrator Davis had a meeting with Midco to discuss the Ominbus bill that was passed last year where there is a requirement that any employee of a company like Midco is now required to complete 40 hours of training before they can install the fiber optic. The deadline for that training for the seven-county metro area is July 1st. This is a big concern for Columbus because Midco had to get the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) to approve the training which requires 10 or 20 hours of actually site work to be completed during the construction season. She also added that this bill did not pass until last fall and that Midco is struggling with this new requirement timelines.

Melissa Wolf, a former government relations manager for Midco, is now a Lobbyist for MN Cable Communications Association, has introduced a bill requesting that the legislators delay the deadline for this requirement and push it back a year so that it gives them time to get their staff trained and also to reduce the number of hours from 40 to 20 or 10.

City Council

March 26, 2025

Hegland went on to say the reason Midco contacted Columbus regarding this bill is that there are two big projects that are on the construction schedule and if this change does not take place, there is federal money involved with a deadline and the money will go back if the projects are not done within the given deadline.

Midco is requesting Columbus to take part in their press conference and Councilmember Hegland stated she will be contacting Commissioner Reinert so that he's aware of this. There are 4 communities in Anoka County that will receive grant money through Anoka County to get broadband expanded, and expenditure of all that money has a deadline required for completion by the end of 2026.

Councilmember Busch and Mayor Hanegraaf attended the Fire Board meeting on March 20th. At this meeting Mayor Hanegraaf was appointed Chair and President of the Committee, Blake Roberts was elected Vice-chair, and Nate Moats retained the secretary position. Hanegraaf informed the Council that at this time the Fire Board did not receive the funding for an Assistant Fire Chief; however, they will continue to discuss the need for this future position. Councilmember Busch reported the Fire Departments budget is \$975,000, which Columbus's share is \$195,000, with the remainder \$780,000 Forest Lake's responsibility. Busch inquired about the status of medical calls that used to be more frequent but have become less due to policy changes made for medical calls for which there is a response.

The Forest Lake Fire department has three dual role employees: two from the building department, Nick Finali and Nate Moats and Mike Swenson from the Public Works department. These are essentially the first responders, which their day jobs with the City helps with response time. Busch reported that currently the department is recruiting, and the department currently has 7 Columbus residents but previously there were 11.

Councilmember Busch commended staff, Council and Mayor Hanegraaf for a successful ColumBiz event and thanked Blaine Brothers TruckAline for hosting. Commissioner Reinert was present and commented on the new proposed county jail. It was reported that a 500-cell unit is being considered, however, a study showed a sufficient need for approximately 300 units. Therefore there is some current pushback between the Commissioners on this decision as to the size of the facility. Joe McPherson and Jerry Auge from Anoka County Highway department, gave information on the upcoming road projects, specifically Kettle River Blvd. and Potomac Street, and mentioned Highway 97 project on behalf of MnDOT.

Mayor Hanegraaf reported that he attended a roundtable discussion with Steve Massey, Forest Lake School District Superintendent and the cities in the district, including Scandia, Lino Lakes, Linwood, and Centerville. The discussion was looking at the school district's future and possibly changing the boundary lines for the elementary school. Part of the discussion was moving grades 1-5 for elementary and 6th graders would move to the middle school. Currently there are two elementary schools next to each other, they will be closing one of them for students but retaining the building for future needs if the student population increases. Mayor Hanegraaf requested a thank you to be written to Blaine Brothers TruckAline for hosting the EDA ColumBiz event in March.

4. Personnel Committee Report

Councilmember Hegland directed the Councilmembers to the memo provided by Assistant City Administrator Aaron Berg regarding 2 options for mission statements from the 12 possibilities that were discussed at the March 4th City Council workshop meeting. The personnel committee selected these 2 similar statements to consider. One is what we strive to do, talking about rural values and the other one talks about rural character. Councilmember Hegland read each one: A) The City of Columbus strives to provide quality services with a respectful and proactive approach and in accordance with our community's rural values. B) The City of Columbus provides quality services in a respectful, proactive manner that helps preserve our strong community and rural character. Each Councilmember gave their preference to the given mission statements. Councilmembers Lattin, Wendell, and Hegland chose statement A, Councilmember Busch and Mayor Hanegraaf chose statement B.

Motion by Councilmember Hegland to adopt Mission Statement: The City of Columbus strives to provide quality services with a respectful and proactive approach and in accordance with our community's rural values. Seconded by Councilmember Lattin.

Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

5. Planning Commission Report

Councilmember Lattin reported that the Planning Commission met on March 19th to review a minor change to MTW Tuck Wash that was approved tonight. There was one other discussion around the current Planning Commission Policy 24-01, that states when a new CUP requiring a public hearing is requested, the Planning Commission will hold an open forum for community members to make statements or address concerns, but no discussion or approval of the Planning Commission will happen at that meeting. Then at a future meeting, the Planning Commission will review the application for the CUP, and in the case Davey Tree, no residents spoke at the public open forum. They also required no building permits or watershed approval as they are renting an existing building and the Planning Commission mistakenly approved them on the same night that they had their open forum. This was addressed and reviewed by all Planning Commission members at the City Planning Commission meeting on March 19th. There was some frustration among the Planning Commission in that they have no flexibility however not all Planning Commission members feel that way. Councilmember Lattin commented that she received a memo dated March 24th from Councilmember Hegland stating the reasoning behind the two-meeting process. Planning Commission member Robin Wood felt two meetings were helpful to allow time to visit a site and to prepare questions but also agreed with ~~another~~ **other** planning commissioner members that it sometimes seemed excessive and confusing for the applicant. Councilmember Lattin is proposing to the Councilmembers if this is a topic of future discussion to review the existing policy 24-01. City Administrator recommends to discuss this at the next City Council workshop meeting.

6. Park Board Report

Mayor Hanegraaf reported that the Park Board had a meeting with FLAFA (Forest Lake Athletic Fastpitch Assoc) regarding the park dugout covers. FLAFA organization offered some donation numbers to for the Park Board to consider and board member countered with a dollar-for-dollar donation. President of FLAFA stated at the meeting she will bring back our offer to their next board meeting and report back to the Park Board. Mayor Hanegraaf added that the first draft of the Park Master Plan was presented to the Board, and they will continue to work on this project with budgeting and financing included. Additional information was given regarding the tennis courts project reporting that bids will go out in the next month.

7. Public Works Report

Public Works Director Jim Windingstad revisited the conversation of RVS no longer providing park maintenance and lawn mowing services. The direction was to go out for bids from qualified contractors. Six contractors were contacted and Windingstad received 3 bids for mowing and 3 for park maintenance. The closest bid was approximately \$30,000 higher than the previously contracted services through RVS. Through discussion with City Administrator Davis and Windingstad it was determined to take these services in house through the Public Works department. Windingstad had a conversation with Ryan from RVS to help determine time allotted for each service. Ryan projected 600 hours for the season April – October, this would equate to 200 hours annually for three of the public works employees to complete that tasks previously provided by RVS. Councilmember Busch inquired about what additional equipment will be needed to perform these services. Windingstad commented they will need to buy a leaf blower and a weed whip. City Administrator stated that with the current budget we have allocated of \$37,500 for 2025, we anticipate the startup cost for those items that Windingstad mentioned that we'll have to purchase will be approximately \$27,000, therefore there will be approximately another \$10,000 available should we able to hire seasonal employees to help to get us through some of this this year and still not exceed what we have budgeted for 2025.

Motion by Councilmember Lattin to approve that the City Public Works Department assume grounds maintenance duties for City Parks and those public areas identified in D.7 B of the March 26, 2025 City Council Packet in lieu of contracting this service to outside vendors. Seconded by Councilmember Busch.

Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

Public works Director Windingstad provided a handout with prices and options of mowers to consider for purchase. He priced out three mowers: Toro, Ferris, and John Deere. All very good commercial mowers. John Deere is a 37 horsepower gas, 11 1/2 gallon fuel tank, 60-inch mower deck but no suspension. The other two mowers have a form of suspension where Toro has what they call a “my ride”, which is a suspension cradle, so your seat and pedestal that you sit on has suspension 3 shocks, one in the front, two in the back. They ride very nicely. Ferris is a 4-wheel suspension, similar to what is on your car with a shock on each corner. Windingstad recommendation to the Council was the Ferris mower considering the terrain it will be used on. Councilmember Hegland inquired if these bids come

from State contract bidding. Windingstad stated John Deere and Toro are through State Contract and the Ferris purchase is through a buying cooperative.

Motion by Mayor Hanegraaf to approve the purchase of an ISX 3300 Ferris 60" deck Zero Turn Mower to be used for mowing of City properties. Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

**Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell– Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye
Motion carries.**

Windingstad reported to the Council that last Wednesday, March 19, 2025 there was a slight catastrophe in our water department as the City had their first main water break. Our SCADA system was able to notify us of the leak. Within 10 minutes our employees found the source of the water main break on West Freeway Drive between well houses 1 and well house 2 and 3. The City had to shut off water to 2 residences and 2 businesses. Service was restored within 24 hours and those customers that were out of service were offered bottled water during the duration of the outage.

Olson's Sewer was called and assisted the City with the repair of leak.

8. City Administrator Report

City Administrator Davis informed the council that the Hornsby-Eureka project has been on the last few agendas to discuss the wetland credits. Unfortunately, the trail portion of those improvements is not covered by the local government roads wetland replacement programs. So the cost of those wetland credits would be have to be borne to the city. The cost for those credits as provided by the city engineer was \$18,006.52. Staff checked with the Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) to see we had any wetland credits from previous projects. We were informed that we had no wetlands credits, Councilmember Hegland stated that she remembers that there was some sort of Agreement made with the watershed district several years ago. As a follow up to Councilmember Hegland's recommendation, Staff checked with the RCWD Administrator and their Board of Managers and were told that there were some credits that we could petition to see if they would be eligible for this project. We were told that their criteria were primarily for wetlands credit used for flooding issues, water quality issues and basically ditch repair issues and that trails generally were not considered. RCWD stated that while this request did not meet their requirements for use of wetland credits, they could pay us the \$18,006.52 to purchase those credits from their Clear Lake Fund as this would improve pedestrian access to Clear Lake. Councilmember Hegland requested that staff notify RCWD that with this payment of \$18,006.52 by the RCWD to the City of Columbus settles the concerns raised by the City related to the MOU dated October 15, 2009 and the City of Columbus is satisfied with the outcome of the negotiations and considers this matter resolved.

Motion by Councilmember Hegland move to approve the City's share of the wetland credits costs for the trail portion of Hornsby Eureka project for payment to the City of Forest Lake in the amount of \$18,006.52. Seconded by Mayor Hanegraaf.

**Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye.
Motion carries.**

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- ▶ Park Board Meeting, March 25, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
- ▶ City Council Workshop Meeting, April 1, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
- ▶ Planning Commission Meeting, April 2, 2025, 6:00 PM
- ▶ City Council Meeting, April 9, 2025, 6:00 PM

F. ADJORNMENT

Motion by to adjourn by Councilmember Busch. Seconded by Councilmember Wendell.

Roll Call Vote: Janet Hegland – Aye, Rob Busch – Aye, Jennifer Lattin – Aye, Scott Wendell – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye.

Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM

Drafted by Recording Secretary Danelle Peacock with edits by Lorie Spangle, Jack Davis and Eleanor Hahn

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCEL MEETING
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
STATUTE SECTION 13D.021
4-9-2025**

The 4-9-2025 City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Ron Hanegraaf at the City Hall at 6:00 P.M. Present were City Councilmembers Janet Hegland, Rob Busch, Jennifer Lattin, Scott Wendell. Also present were City Administrator Jack Davis, Assistant City Administrator Aaron Berg, City Engineer Brian Bachmeier, City Attorney Bill Griffith, Public Works Director Jim Windingstad, Kim Snell and Betty Hanegraaf.

The meeting was held in an interactive technology meeting format.

A. CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

1. Call to Order – Regular Meeting, 6:00 P.M.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Adoption of Agenda

Motion by Councilmember Wendell to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Lattin.

Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Bill Payments (Pages 1 & 2)
2. Approval of January 22, 2025 City Council Minutes (Enclosure)
3. Approval of February 12, 2025 City Council Minutes (Enclosure)

Motion by Mayor Hanegraaf to approve the Consent Agenda, and the supplemental Bill List which was distributed to Council prior to the April 9, 2025 meeting, with the removal of items 2 and 3. Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

C. PRESENTATION(S) and ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

1. Public Forum

Nothing at this time.

2. Lake and Crossway Drive Street Light Approval (Pages 3 - 9)

City Administrator Jack Davis stated the City Council reviewed a request for the installation of a streetlight at the intersection of Lake Drive and Crossways Lake Drive during the Workshop Meeting on February 4, 2025. Following that discussion, staff was instructed to include this item on February 12, 2025, City Council Agenda. At the February 12th meeting, the Council directed staff to submit an application to Connexus for the design and installation cost quote of a streetlight at that intersection. On March 31, 2025, the City received installation quotes and agreements from Connexus for this project. The cost for the outdoor lighting new construction is \$1,401, and the and maintenance agreement for this location was provided as Exhibit 1 in the City Council Packet. The estimated total cost for the project was \$1,500. The project location was shown in Exhibit 2 in the City Council Packet.

Davis stated that installing a streetlight at this intersection would significantly improve visibility and reduce the number of accidents that have occurred at this site. If the proposal is approved by the City Council, adjoining property owners will be contacted to explain the improvement and any potential impacts of the lighting at this location will be addressed. Staff requested that the Council consider the approval of the outdoor lighting new construction cost of \$1,401 and the Outdoor Lighting Energy and Maintenance Agreement for this project.

Mayor Hanegraaf stated that the Council had discussed this previously. No additional questions were asked.

Motion by Councilmember Hegland to approve the outdoor lighting construction cost of \$1,401 for the outdoor lighting and maintenance agreement with Connexus for the Lake and Crossways drive streetlight project. Seconded by Councilmember Busch.

Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

3. Fund Transfer and Invoice Payment - Public Works Fund 150 to Fund 403 (Pages 10 & 11)

City Administrator Jack Davis stated that the accounting department is requesting to transfer funds from Park Services Lawn Care to the Park Equipment Capital Fund. This transfer is due to the contract with RVS not being renewed for the 2025 fiscal year. This change occurred after the 2025 budget was set and new bids for Park Lawn Contracting Services exceeded the budget and were not approved. The Public Works Department will be maintaining city parks and require the equipment necessary to do so. The first request proposes a transfer of \$16,628.94 from Fund 150 (150-4520-3175) to Fund 403 (403-4521-5800). The second request is to process the invoice for Molson's Power and Equipment in the amount of \$16,628.94, along with the normal accounts of payable on the Thursday, April 10th check run. A copy of the invoice from Olson Power Equipment was provided in City Council Packet.

Motion by Mayor to approve the transfer of \$16,628.94 from Fund 150 (Parks) to Fund 403 (Parks Capital). Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

Motion by Mayor Hanegraaf to approve the payment of the Olson Power and Equipment invoice in the amount of \$16,628.94 for the purchase of a Ferris 1SX3300, to be processed with the normal accounts payable on Thursday, April 10th, 2025. Seconded by Councilmember Busch.

Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.

D. CONSULTANT, LIAISON and STAFF REPORTS

1. City Engineer

City Engineer Brian Bachmeier addressed the Mayor and City Council with an update regarding the ~~Lake Boulevard/Kettle River~~ **Lake Drive/Kettle River Boulevard** Roundabout project. He reported that he received an invitation earlier in the day to attend a meeting at Anoka County to discuss the project, which is federally aided. Although the meeting has not yet been scheduled, city staff has been informed, and arrangements will be made to determine appropriate representation once a date is confirmed.

Councilmember Hegland asked for an update on two additional Anoka County projects. First, the status of federal funding for the Lexington and Potomac projects and whether there would be an opportunity for further discussion with Anoka County regarding concerns about trail costs, particularly for the Lexington project. City Administrator Jack Davis stated that a meeting was held earlier in the day with Karen Blaska and Jeff Peary from the Anoka County Parks Department. City staff in attendance included Jim Windingstad, Aaron Berg, and Eleanor Hahn. During the meeting, Anoka County representatives asked whether the City would be participating in the trail project on a cost-share basis for the Lexington Avenue improvement. Davis stated that the City declined participation, citing budget limitations and noting that funding is currently allocated toward other mandatory infrastructure obligations. The County proposed a realignment of the trail from the west side to the east side of Lexington Avenue. This adjustment would place the trail fully within the City of Columbus limits, from 185th Avenue to Broadway, which is the first segment to be constructed. Anoka County also asked whether the City would consider assisting with occasional maintenance, such as mowing. The City indicated it would be open to discussion but no commitments were made. It was requested that any Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) for shared maintenance between Columbus, ~~Hjam~~ **Ham** Lake and East Bethel be initiated and administered by the County. The City has also declined trail cost participation for the Potomac Street improvement. No additional information is currently available regarding the schedule of either the Lexington or Potomac projects. Staff will contact Anoka County to request a status update and will report back to Council at a future meeting.

2. City Attorney

City Attorney Griffith stated tomorrow, the House Bonding Committee will hold a hearing on our Hornsby funding request, with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor testifying in support of the bill. He stated that an informational hearing will be held in the Senate's Transportation Committee, meaning both chambers will have heard the case. Separately, the proposed fiscal disparities amendment will be postponed to a future session, though its introduction and county-level discussions signal that leadership recognizes its ongoing importance. Overall, he stated that it's encouraging that the funding

request is being heard in both the House and Senate, and that top city leaders will be present to advocate on the City's behalf.

Councilmember Busch asked if Hornsby funding request was related to the \$1.3 million bonding bill that had just been proposed the previous week. City Attorney Griffith confirmed that the request is currently included in that bonding proposal. Councilmember Busch then noted that he had spoken in favor of the bonding bill at a recent press conference and planned to share more during his council report.

3. Mayor & City Council Report

Councilmember Lattin shared that a resident had reached out with concerns about a lack of communication regarding a planned closure of Highway 23 (Lake Drive) near the intersection with of Main Street. Lino Lakes had posted signage about the closure, which is expected to significantly impact traffic from Columbus to I-35W. Lattin noted that Lino Lakes has since confirmed the closure will be delayed by a few weeks and that additional information is forthcoming. She plans to share updates via email as they become available. Assistant City Administrator Aaron Berg added that he is waiting for Lino Lakes to release an official press statement before sharing the information but is prepared to post it on the City's social media platforms once it is available.

Councilmember Hegland provided an update from the April 3, 2025, Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization (WMO) meeting. All member cities approved the proposed 2026 budget, which passed unanimously. However, a proposed amendment to the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) failed after being rejected by Ham Lake, as unanimous approval is required for approval. As a result, the portion of the budget earmarked for updating the watershed plan will now be allocated based on the standard cost-sharing formula for non-operating expenses, rather than being split evenly. Councilmember Hegland went on to say that there was a public hearing regarding an amendment to the Watershed plan, which included a tributary study for Linwood Lake. This study will be incorporated into the watershed plan as a guiding document, allowing for the application of grants for water quality improvements. The amendment was approved by the board following review by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (BWSR). Additionally, a previously finalized boundary adjustment between the Coon Creek Watershed District and Sunrise WMO had four parcels incorrectly listed in the Anoka County tax system. A concurrence document was signed at the meeting to correct the oversight, and Coon Creek will work with Anoka County to resolve the issue. Councilmember Hegland also confirmed that Sunrise River WMO will be at Fall Fest and checked on the availability of the University of Minnesota's Turf Extension exhibit, which was popular at Fall Fest two years ago.

Councilmember Hegland also met with Anoka County Elections Manager Tom Hunt to discuss concerns raised by the Anoka County Election Integrity Team (ACEIT), specifically related to poll pad usage. Though there was an issue by the County with having Hunt attend a council meeting, he agreed to meet one-on-one to discuss the matter. During that meeting, they discussed the county's perspective on the issues, particularly the state mandates that influence county practices. Councilmember Hegland shared

that they reached a potential compromise that could help address the concerns of ACEIT while still working within the county's protocols. She stated that she plans to discuss these ideas with Brenda Miller to gauge her reaction. If she's on board, the proposal could be implemented in Columbus, potentially alleviating concerns about data security without disrupting the election process.

Councilmember Busch added to his earlier comments, noting that after participating in the press release, he was able to arrange a one-on-one meeting with Representative Nolan West to discuss the bonding bill. Busch emphasized that while West was already aware of their interest in the bill, the personal meeting likely helped reinforce their position and push it forward. Busch also briefly asked West about sports betting and was surprised to hear it hasn't been a prominent issue this legislative session. He reiterated his support for the bonding bill, especially given the potential for local funding. Busch also mentioned that he missed his scheduled meeting with Senator Kreun due to the other meetings running over their time limits but felt that Senator Kreun was well briefed on these bills since they had seen him recently.

Mayor Hanegraaf commented that he and Councilmember Hegland would be heading to the Capitol the next day to advocate for the \$762,000 in bonding funds for Hornsby St and expressing hope that their efforts would be successful. He mentioned that the city had already requested reimbursement for the wetland credits for the project. City Administrator Jack Davis stated that while the credits haven't been paid yet, they've been approved. Mayor Hanegraaf then suggested holding off on cutting the check until after their meeting at the Capital. Councilmember Hegland confirmed that they will testify at 10:15, April 10, 2025 for the bonding bill.

4. Personnel Committee Report

Councilmember Hegland provided an update on the ongoing work to revise the city's compensation plan. She reminded the council that they had previously heard a presentation from Mark Goldberg with DDA, the firm hired by the City to perform the study during the last workshop. She noted that his recommendations have now been incorporated into the updated model. The council is scheduled to review the model on Tuesday of the following week. Councilmember Hegland encouraged councilmembers to revisit the PowerPoint presentation and share any questions, concerns, or feedback before then so that those can be passed along to Mark and potentially integrated into the model. She also asked Aaron to confirm whether the full presentation of the revised plan is scheduled to come back to the council in June. Aaron confirmed that it was June.

5. Planning Commission Report

Councilmember Hegland reported that the Planning Commission had a relatively light meeting the previous week. The main item on the agenda was the site plan for Loves, which is proposing to add two more islands of pumps, bringing the total to four, on the side closest to the freeway. While some of the discussion extended beyond the scope of a typical site review, it was noted that all Planning Commissioners took the time to visit the site in advance, which was appreciated. The Commission plans to continue the discussion at their next meeting, where a recommendation is expected. Councilmember

Hegland also stated that the group participated in a zoning in-service session, organized by Assistant City Planner Eleanor Hahn, who provided helpful informational memos. The session was especially beneficial for newer members, helping them better understand zoning concepts and the types of applications they might encounter.

6. Parks Board Report

Nothing at this time.

7. Public Works Report

Public Works Director Jim Windingstad stated that he just wants to say thank you for approving the money transfer for the new mower.

8. City Administrator Report

City Administrator Jack Davis informed the council that there has been a recent increase in inquiries about the city-owned property located north of Caribou Coffee, which was originally proposed as the site for the Harchenko/Apollo apartment project. Over the past six to seven months, there have been four inquiries, with one current prospect appearing to be particularly serious. City Administrator Jack Davis asked to move forward with potential negotiations, requesting that the City Council authorize him to engage an appraisal firm to determine the property's value and requested a motion to approve authorization to proceed with an appraisal for the property identified as PIN 24322211-001, using Nagel Appraisal. City Administrator Jack Davis added that the cost of the appraisal will be approximately \$1,200. This expense will initially be covered by the city's general fund but will be charged to the property as a cost of resale and reimbursed to the general fund once the property is sold.

Motion by Mayor Hanegraaf to approve the monies for the property appraisal for pin 24-32-22-11-0011. Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

Councilmember Busch asked City Administrator Jack Davis when the property was last appraised, suggesting it was likely before the Ebert proposal. City Administrator Jack Davis clarified that this particular parcel has not been appraised recently and the city had an appraisal done for a different across the highway to the north. The last appraisal for this parcel was completed prior to the purchase agreement signed by Harchenko in 2021. That Purchase Agreement set the sale price at \$800,000 and noted that property values have likely changed significantly since then.

**Roll Call Vote: Busch – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye.
Motion carries**

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- ▶ **EDA Workshop/EDA Regular Meeting, April 15, 2025, 5:30 PM**
- ▶ **Planning Commission Meeting, April 16, 2025, 6:00 PM**
- ▶ **Local Board of Appeals and Equalization, April 17, 2025, 6:00 PM**
- ▶ **City Council Meeting, April 23, 2025, 6:00 PM**

Mayor Hanegraaf also noted this Sunday, April 13, 2025 is the Lions Pancake Breakfast from 8 to 1.

Councilmember Hegland asked about the Local Board of Appeals and Equalization, noting that the city typically receives a report from the county in advance of the meeting. She inquired whether that report would be provided this year. City Administrator Jack Davis responded that he would contact the County Assessor to check on the status of the report.

F. ADJORNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Busch to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Hegland.

Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Busch – Aye, Mayor Hanegraaf – Aye.

Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 6:31 P.M.

Drafted by Recording Secretary Danelle Peacock

City of Columbus
Board of Appeal and Equalization
Hybrid Interactive Technology Format
MN Statute, Section 13D.021
April 17, 2025

The April 17, 2025 meeting of the Board of Appeal and Equalization for the City of Columbus was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Ron Hanegraaf at City Hall. Present were City Council Members Jennifer Lattin, Scott Wendell, Janet Hegland and Robert Busch and City Administrator Jack Davis.

Also in attendance: Anoka County Assessor Alex Guggenberger and Anoka County Residential Appraiser Shawn Halligan.

Not in attendance: None.

A. LOCAL BOARD OF APPEALS AND EQUALIZATION (LBA&E) MEETING

1. Call to Order LBA&E Meeting – 6:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Hegland to approve the agenda. Seconded by Lattin. Roll call vote: Lattin – aye; Wendell – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye. Motion carries.

B. PRESENTATIONS AND HEARING

1. City Assessor's Report

Alex Guggenberger, the Anoka County Assessor, presented a summary of the Columbus Assessment Staff, Columbus property breakdown, and the assessment & taxation timeline. Guggenberger commented that there are 2,289 parcels in the City of Columbus, noting very little has changed since last year. Guggenberger informed the Council if residents do not attend this Local Board of Appeals and Equalization and would like to appeal their values, the only other option they have is to bring their appeal to tax court, however, statutory authority is limited to clerical errors, if a house was mismeasured, we still have the ability to resolve that up until the end of December.

He explained to the Council that there is a 21-month study that is used to determine market conditions adjustment, with the goal of this study to convey what the market has done over these last 21 months. Is it going up? Is it going down? Is it staying flat by property type? Additionally, the 21-month study generates the trend and gets applied to the sales in a 12-month study. In the calendar year 2024 there were 27 residential sales in Columbus.

Hegland inquired where vacant land would be dedicated to within the guidelines of agriculture or residential. Guggenberger explained that the property type of vacant land would be based on zoning therefore, if the land was zoned agricultural or rural vacant land, it would be deemed agricultural and if the vacant land was in a development or a platted lot, it would be designated residential.

Hegland asked for clarification of what changed when the county took over the assessing of properties in Columbus from when the city had their own contract assessor.

Guggenberger explained that there's a division of duties between county and local (city) assessor, stating the county assessor ultimately has responsibility for the assessment in general, so even if it's a contracted local assessor doing the day-to-day collecting the data, at the end of the day, it's the county that's still responsible for that value. They are essentially supervising the work that the local assessor produces. When we took over, we had a very distinct plan of how we were going to handle the contract as we knew there were some data issues. During the first contract cycle of three years, the County went out and did assessments on all the properties and they were treated the same way all parcels are treated, because they were using the same model.

Councilmember Hegland stated that previously the City had an assessor for many years that retired and at that time the City hired a contract assessor that found issues with the data being inconsistent and not up to date. The City entered into a contract with the County after the last contract assessor moved from the area, which created the need to assess all properties citywide to have a solid base going forward.

2. Board of Appeals and Equalization Hearing

Guggenberger informed the council that there are three parcels that have gone to Tax court and have changes made as follows:

- 24-32-22-13-0007- original 2025 assessed value was \$528,300 and agreed upon value has been changed to \$346,800 (equals roughly \$3.25/foot).
- 24-32-22-13-0008 -original 2025 assessed value was \$761,100 and the agreed upon value has been changed to \$499,700 (equals roughly \$3.25/foot).
- 24-32-22-13-0009 -original assessed value was \$900,700 and the agreed upon value has been changed to \$128,700 (equals roughly \$2.00/foot of buildable ground). Originally this complete parcel was assessed at the same rate, not considering there is a pond in the middle of the parcel, and it would take a considerable amount of dirt work to allow some development on this property.

Motion by Hanegraaf to approve the new assessed values on the above properties: 24-32-22-13-0007, 24-32-22-13-0008, and 24-32-22-13-0009. Seconded by Lattin. Roll call vote: Lattin – aye; Wendell – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye. Motion carries

Davis stated that he has not received any written appeals at this time, and no-one has signed up to petition an appeal or is on online to appeal their valuation.

C. Adjournment of LBAE

Motion by Hanegraaf to adjourn. Seconded by Wendell. Roll call vote: Lattin – aye; Wendell – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Hanegraaf – aye. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Lorie A Spangler

DRAFT

1 CITY OF COLUMBUS
2 CITY COUNCIL MEETING
3 INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
4 STATUTES SECTION 13D.021
5 April 23, 2025 – 6:00 PM

6 The April 23, 2025, City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Ron Hanegraaf at 6:00
7 PM at Columbus City Hall. Present in person were Councilmembers Janet Hegland, Jennifer
8 Lattin, Scott Wendell, and Mayor Ron Hanegraaf. Councilmember Rob Busch attended remotely
9 via Zoom.

10 Also present: City Administrator Jack Davis, Assistant City Administrator Aaron Berg, City
11 Engineer Brian Bachmeier, City Attorney Bill Griffith, Lt. Jessica Slavik and Deputy Matthew
12 Vertina (Anoka County Sheriff's Office), and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

13 In attendance via interactive technology: Councilmember Rob Busch, Zach England (Love's
14 Travel Stops), Joseph O'Leary, and Assistant City Planner Eleanor Hahn.

15 This meeting was held in a hybrid format per State Statute 13D.021.

16 **A. CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

17 **1. Call to Order – Regular Meeting, 6:00 PM**

18 **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

19 The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hanegraaf and recited by all present.

20 **3. Adoption of Agenda**

21 Mayor Hanegraaf introduced the AI transcription and minutes trial. Councilmembers were
22 encouraged to state their names before speaking for accuracy.

23 **Motion by Councilmember Janet Hegland to adopt the agenda as presented.**

24 **Seconded by Councilmember Jennifer Lattin. Roll Call Vote: Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye,**
25 **Wendell – Aye, Busch – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries unanimously.**

26 **B. CONSENT AGENDA**

27 Items included:

- 28 • Approval of Bill Payments (Pages 1 & 2)
29 • Approval of January 22, 2025 City Council Minutes
30 • Approval of February 12, 2025 City Council Minutes

- 31
- Minor typographical corrections noted and included

32 **Motion by Councilmember Janet Hegland to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.**
33 **Seconded by Councilmember Scott Wendell. Roll Call Vote: Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye,**
34 **Wendell – Aye, Busch – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries unanimously.**

35 **C. PRESENTATION(S) AND ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

36 **1. Public Forum**

37 No public comments were made in person or via Zoom. The forum was closed.

38 **2. Anoka County Sheriff's Office Quarterly Report – Lt. Jessica Slavik & Deputy Matthew**
39 **Vertina**

40 Lt. Slavik and Deputy Vertina presented the Anoka County Sheriff's Office quarterly update. Key
41 highlights included:

- 42
- Announcement of a scam prevention workshop scheduled for May 15, 2025.
 - Increasing concerns over Bitcoin ATM scams. Council expressed interest in potentially regulating kiosk installations.
 - Crime overview:
 - Two residential burglaries involving forceful entry (one with a car jack, one with a brick).
 - Thefts reported at Running Aces Casino.
 - An unusual case in which an assault victim later stole the suspect's vehicle; both individuals are facing charges.
 - An accidental firearm discharge that led to self-inflicted injury.
 - **Traffic Stop Statistics:**
 - 244 traffic stops conducted.
 - 36 arrests were made as a result.
 - Deputy Vertina highlighted ongoing mental health response calls, particularly at group homes. He shared that familiarity with frequent callers has helped de-escalate incidents.
 - A recent change in permit-to-carry regulations now allows issuance to adults ages 18 to 20.
 - Council expressed appreciation to both Lt. Slavik and Deputy Vertina for their continued service and community engagement.
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61 **3. Love's Site Plan Review**

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- Assistant City Planner Eleanor Hahn presented the staff report regarding the proposed addition of four fuel dispensers at Love's Travel Stop.
 - Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed site plan.
- 63
64

- 65 • Landscaping delays were addressed; a revised plan is forthcoming.
- 66 • Council reviewed 22 traffic accident reports, with most being minor.
- 67 • Zach England, representing Love's, attended remotely and answered questions from the
- 68 Council.
- 69 • Council supported the site plan expansion.

70 **Motion by Councilmember Janet Hegland to approve the Love's Site Plan as outlined in the**
71 **staff report dated April 23, 2025. Seconded by Councilmember Jennifer Lattin.**
72 **Roll Call Vote: Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Busch – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye.**
73 **Motion carries unanimously.**

74 **4. City Park Tennis Court Reconstruction Bids**

- 75 • City Administrator Jack Davis provided the staff report.
- 76 • The project would be a full reconstruction, not just resurfacing.
- 77 • Two design options under review: a mix of tennis and pickleball courts or only tennis
- 78 use.
- 79 • Bidding may be delayed securing favorable late-season contractor rates.
- 80 • Final designs and cost estimates will be reviewed by the Park Board.

81 **Motion by Mayor Ron Hanegraaf to authorize Bolton & Menk to advertise and solicit bids for**
82 **the reconstruction of the City Park Tennis Courts and return the results of the bids to Council**
83 **for discussion and direction for the project at a future meeting. Seconded by Councilmember**
84 **Janet Hegland. Roll Call Vote: Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Busch – Aye,**
85 **Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries unanimously.**

86 **5. City Hall Generator Bids**

- 87 • City Administrator Jack Davis presented the staff report.
- 88 • Proposed installation of a backup generator to ensure continuity of operations at City
- 89 Hall and possibly the Senior Center.
- 90 • Total estimated cost: \$28,239, with funding allocated from the 2025 Capital
- 91 Improvement Plan.
- 92 • Generator would be installed behind City Hall near HVAC units.
- 93 • Council discussed the need for emergency preparedness and possible future expansion.
- 94 • Staff will explore county grant options for offsetting costs.

95 **Councilmember Janet Hegland made a motion to delay a decision on the City Hall Building**
96 **Generators and directed staff to explore county grant options for offsetting costs. Seconded**
97 **by Councilmember Lattin. Roll Call vote: Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Busch –**
98 **Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries unanimously.**

99 **6. Lakner's 2nd Amendment to Development Agreement**

- 100 • City Administrator Jack Davis presented the staff report.
- 101 • Council reviewed updated language concerning escrow payments.

102 **Motion by Mayor Ron Hanegraaf to approve the Lakner’s Woodland Ponds Second**
103 **Amendment Development Agreement. Seconded by Councilmember Wendell. Roll Call Vote:**
104 **Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Busch – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye.**
105 **Motion carries unanimously.**

106 **D. CONSULTANT, LIAISON & STAFF REPORTS**

- 107 • **City Engineer:** No report.
- 108 • **City Attorney:** Bill Griffith provided a legislative update, noting current activity at the
109 legislature relevant to bonding bills and fiscal disparities funding. Discussion included
110 status updates on North Hornsby project and possible fiscal disparity funding. Senator
111 Kreun reportedly advised not to count such funding out yet. Council agreed to monitor
112 further legislative developments.
- 113 • **Mayor Hanegraaf:** Praised the Anoka County Sheriff’s Office for its professionalism.
- 114 • **Councilmember Busch:** Shared appreciation for the improvements and turnout at the
115 **Running Aces Grand Reopening.**
- 116 • **Councilmember Lattin:** Reported on the Coon Creek Watershed Meeting, highlighting
117 water quality and drainage issues, and provided a planning update on FallFest activities.
- 118 • **Councilmember Wendell:** Provided an update from the Forest Lake Cable Commission,
119 including regional coordination and updates on public access services.
- 120 • **Councilmember Hegland:**
 - 121 ○ Reported that the Planning Commission reviewed and supported the Love’s
122 expansion plan and participated in a Land Use and Zoning Inservice.
 - 123 ○ Reported the Personnel Committee continues work on the Compensation Study
124 and job classification reviews.
- 125 • **Public Works:** Director Jim Windingstad: Provided historical traffic count data from a
126 previous study near the Love’s Travel Stop area for informational reference.
- 127 • **City Administrator:** Facilitated meeting operations, AI minute trial, and council logistics.

128 **E. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS**

- 129 • **Anoka County Local Government Officials Meeting** – Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 6:00
130 PM at Bunker Hills Activities Center
- 131 • **City Council Workshop** – Tuesday, May 6, 2025, 5:30 PM
- 132 • **Planning Commission Meeting** – Wednesday, May 7, 2025, 6:00 PM
- 133 • **Next City Council Meeting** – Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 6:00 PM

134 **F. CLOSED SESSION**

135 The meeting was closed pursuant to the attorney-client privilege under Minnesota Statutes
136 Section 13D.05, Subdivision 3(b), to discuss potential sanctions related to solicitation practices.

137 **G. ADJOURNMENT**

138 **Motion by Councilmember Scott Wendell to adjourn the meeting.**

139 **Seconded by Councilmember Janet Hegland.**

140 **Roll Call Vote: Hegland – Aye, Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Busch – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye.**

141 **Motion carries.**

142 **Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.**

143 **Respectfully Submitted,**

144 **AMB**

145 

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147 **Disclaimer:**

148 **Portions of these City Council Minutes were generated using artificial intelligence (AI)**
149 **technology to assist with drafting. All content has been thoroughly reviewed and verified by**
150 **a human for accuracy and completeness. In accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapter**
151 **13, Section 13.03 – Data Practices, a full, unedited written transcript, video, and audio**
152 **recordings are considered public data and can be made available to the public upon**
153 **request.**

1 CITY OF COLUMBUS
2 CITY COUNCIL MEETING
3 INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
4 STATUTE SECTION 13D.021
5 6/25/2025

6 The 6/25/2025 City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Hanegraaf at City Hall at 6:04
7 p.m.

8 Present were City Councilmembers Janet Hegland, Scott Wendell, and Jenny Lattin. Also
9 present were City Administrator Jack Davis, City Attorney Megan Rogers, City Engineer Brian
10 Bachmeier, and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

11 Not in Attendance: Councilmember Rob Busch

12 Also in Attendance: Kim Snell, Dave & Noreen Rybak, Curt Strandlund, and Ellen Hinrichs.

13 Grant Ducatch (Excel Engineering/Camping World), Michael Bedell and Michael Vandever
14 (Camping World) were in attendance via Zoom.

15 **A. CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

- 16 1. Call to Order – Regular Meeting, 6:04PM
- 17 2. Pledge of Allegiance
- 18 3. Adoption of Agenda

19
20 **Motion by Hegland to approve the June 25, 2025 City Council Agenda with the following**
21 **change: Move the Planning Commission Report from Item D.5 to follow directly after Item**
22 **C.1. Seconded by Wendell. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye,**
23 **Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.**

24 **B. CONSENT AGENDA**

- 25 1. Approval of Bill Payments
- 26 2. ~~Approval of March 26, 2025 City Council Minutes~~
- 27 3. ~~Approval of April 9, 2025 City Council Minutes~~
- 28 4. ~~Approval of April 17, 2025 LBA&E Minutes~~
- 29 5. ~~Approval of April 25, 2025 City Council Minutes~~
- 30 6. Approval of May 14, 2025 City Council Minutes
- 31 7. Approval of the Supplemental Bill List

32 **Motion by Hegland to approve the Consent Agenda Items B.1, B.6 & B.7, table B.2, B.3, B.4, &**
33 **B.5. Seconded by Wendell. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye,**
34 **Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.**

35 **C. PRESENTATIONS AND ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

36 **1. Public Forum**

37 No public comment was presented.

38 **(D.5 Planning Commission Report)**

39 Councilmember Hegland reported on recent Planning Commission recommendations,
40 including the unanimous support for the Rybak Site Plan and the Camping World Interim
41 Use Permit (IUP). Hegland stated the Assistant Planner Eleanor Hahn noted additional
42 documentation provided to Council and updated building elevations for Rybak.

43 **2. Site Plan Review – Rybak Co., 13915 Lake Drive**

44 Council discussed the Site Plan Review and their site visits. Council reported that
45 Assistant Planner Eleanor Hahn had confirmed there were no complaints on the
46 property in over 23 years. Staff confirmed that the proposed site improvements
47 conform with zoning regulations and are unlikely to burden city services.

48 **Motion by Hanegraaf to approve the Rybak Site Plan Review for an addition to 13915**
49 **Lake Drive as presented. Seconded by Lattin. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell –**
50 **Aye, Hegland – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.**

51 **3. Camping World IUP and Development Agreement Amendment**

52 City Attorney Megan Rogers provided a report and recommendation on the Camping
53 World IUP and Development Agreement revision. Council discussed the term of the IUP
54 and lease, fire access issues, and past overuse of the property. Concerns were raised
55 over the lack of a maximum unit count in the current development agreement. Grant
56 Ducatch (Excel Engineering) clarified site layout improvements and suggested a site plan
57 update to include fire lanes and emergency access. The Council discussed establishing a
58 10-year IUP with renewal.

59 **Motion by Hegland to approve the Camping World IUP Development Agreement termination**
60 **to occur after 10 years as well as adding additional language to the use of the secondary**
61 **parcel including and update to the site plan to include fire lanes and emergency. Seconded by**
62 **Lattin. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye, Hegland – Aye. Motion**
63 **carries.**

64 **(D.5 Planning Commission Report Continued)**

65 Councilmember Hegland continued the Planning Commission recommendations for the
66 Backyard Wedding Concept.

67 **4. Backyard Weddings Concept Review – 7553 180th Avenue**

68 Council discussed and considered the various requirements, fees, and conditions
69 associated with an Event License and an IUP for the requested backyard weddings
70 concept. The Planning Commission found this use to be more consistent with a/an IUP
71 than an event license. Council also discussed concerns were expressed over parking,

72 traffic, and long-term enforcement. Council agreed the matter should be sent back to
73 the Planning Commission as proceed to an IUP with a public hearing.

74 **Motion by Hegland to approve the Backyard Weddings Concept Review for an Interim Use**
75 **Permit with conditions listed in the staff report and other amendments as necessary.**
76 **Seconded by Lattin. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Hanegraaf –**
77 **Aye. Motion carries.**

78 **5. City Park Tennis Court Bids**

79 City Administrator Jack Davis provided a report regarding the City Park Tennis Court
80 Bids. Davis stated the bids were properly solicited and received for repaving and
81 resurfacing of the existing facility including two tennis courts with pickleball overlay
82 options on each. The lowest quote received was from Goodmanson Construction in the
83 amount of \$124,600.00 for ~~a~~ ~~the~~ based project with an additional \$1,900.00 for an
84 alternate bid 1 and no additional charge for alternate bid 2. Davis stated that the cost of
85 this project is greater than the existing funds available by \$47,184.00. Davis outlined
86 alternative sources of funds available to fill the gap in funding including park dedication
87 fees may help fund improvements.

88 Council discussed increased public interest through phone calls and emails about
89 converting aging tennis courts to include pickleball overlays, potential expansion and
90 adding amenities such as basketball, field upgrades and dugouts.

91 **Motion by Hegland to table the award of the bid from Goodmanson Construction and direct**
92 **the Park Board to discuss the wants and the needs of the residents and look at the bigger**
93 **picture to create a more comprehensive plan. Seconded by Lattin. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye,**
94 **Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.**

95 **6. DocuWare Document Management Proposal**

96 City Administrator Davis presented a proposal for cloud-based record storage. Initial
97 cost is lower than alternatives previously considered. Council discussed file volume, file
98 naming, and long-term digitization. Concerns about scanning priorities, project phasing
99 and cost of piecemealing were raised.

100 **City Administrator directed to reconnect with Metro Sales, Inc. to answer questions**
101 **and calculate a complete phased project bid.**

102 **7. Set Agenda for July 1, 2025 Work Meeting**

103 Council agreed to include future discussion items on Lakes Area TV Podcast Presentation
104 and Update, DDA Wage and Compensation Study Report, City Council and Planning
105 Commission Packet discussion and 2026 Preliminary Budget discussion and Financial
106 Report.

107

108 **Motion by Hanegraaf to approve the July 1, 2025 Workshop Meeting agenda. Seconded by**
109 **Wendell. Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion**
110 **carries.**

111 **D. CONSULTANT, LIAISON AND STAFF REPORTS**

- 112 **1. City Engineer Report** – City Engineer Brian Bachmeier had no formal report however did
113 provide a verbal confirmation that the city had submitted a DNR Water Appropriations
114 Increase Request on June 6, 2025. The DNR has confirmed receiving the submission
115 however has not followed up with questions or sent a formal approval.
- 116 **2. City Attorney Report** – City Attorney Megan Rogers provided clarification on what
117 funding programs were approved by the legislature in regard to the Hornsby Street
118 Project.
- 119 **3. Mayor and Council Reports** – Councilmember Lattin reported that Coon Creek held a
120 meeting on 6/23/25 and presented on Community and Council Engagement. Fall Fest
121 Meeting 6/26/25 and confirmed The Rocking Hollywood’s and residents are requesting
122 new city logoed apparel. Councilmember Wendell had no report. Councilmember
123 Hegland suggested a solution on the topic on Meeting Minutes. She suggested a process
124 that would give staff three business days to turn around a set of draft minutes. Council
125 would be emailed the draft minutes and have two business days to resubmit revisions.
126 Revised minutes, with revision marks, would then be distributed in the following Friday
127 packet to be approved at the council meeting. If proposed revisions are disputed the
128 council would sort them out formally and approve collectively so the approved minutes
129 can be finalized within two weeks. Council agreed to the plan. Mayor Hanegraaf
130 reported that the light was installed today at Howard Lake Dr. and Kettle River Blvd.

131
132 **Motion by Hegland to amend the agenda to move the Public Works Report and City**
133 **Administrator Report before the Personnel Committee Report. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Roll**
134 **Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.**
135

136 **4. Personnel Committee Report**

137
138 **(4.) Public Works Report**

139 Public Works Director Jim Windingstad had no report.
140

141 **(5). City Administrator Report**

142 Davis stated that ACSO Laura Landes had provided instructions on how to register a
143 Neighborhood Party for Night to Unit on Aug 5th, 2025. The city website and social
144 media accounts have shared the information.
145

146 **(6) Personnel Committee Report**

147 Council reviewed a proposed merit-based pay system for the City Administrator. Council
148 collectively agreed to consider granting the City Administrator a merit increase.

149 Discussion focused on decimal-based scoring and simplifying merit increase
150 percentages.
151
152 Ellen Hinriches, HR Consultant, answered questions on how the Personnel Committee
153 concluded on how the scoring recommendation was decided upon.
154
155 City Attorney Megan Rogers provided an overview of the general reasonings and
156 justification for creating a system to evaluate the City Administrator in this format.
157
158 Hegland suggested assigning percentage increases based on performance tiers starting
159 at 3.01. Further discussion continued amongst members and council agreed to start at
160 3.0. An agreement to reexamine the process in the future.
161
162 Hegland proposed a table which was distributed to each council member on how to
163 determine how each score rating calculates financially. Council members agreed to use
164 a simplified version of a percentage point per category with an understanding that it will
165 be reviewed and evaluated in the future.
166
167 **5. ~~Planning Commission Report~~** Moved to C.2
168 **6. ~~Public Works Report~~** Moved to D.4
169 **7. ~~City Administrator Report~~** Moved to D.5
170

171 **E. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS**

- 172 • City Council Work Meeting, July 1, 2025 – 5:30 PM
- 173 • Planning Commission Meeting, July 2, 2025 – CANCELLED
- 174 • City Hall Closed, July 4, 2025 – Independence Day
- 175 • City Council Meeting, July 9, 2025 – 6:00 PM
- 176 • Anoka County Highway Department Open House – July 14, 2025, 4 PM to 8 PM

178 **F. CLOSED SESSION**

179 Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13D.05 Subd. 3(a), the meeting was closed to evaluate the
180 performance of the City Administrator. Mr. Davis requested the meeting remain closed. Council
181 discussed evaluation input from multiple sources and reached consensus on performance
182 scoring.

183 **G. ADJOURNMENT**

184 **Motion by Hegland to adjourn. Seconded by Wendell.**

185 **Roll Call Vote: Lattin – Aye, Hegland – Aye, Wendell – Aye, Hanegraaf – Aye. Motion carries.**

186 Meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

187

188 *Drafted by Aaron M. Berg, Assistant City Administrator*

189 **Disclaimer:**

190 **Portions of these meeting minutes were generated using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to**
191 **assist with drafting. All content has been thoroughly reviewed and verified by a human for accuracy**
192 **and completeness. In accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13, Section 13.03 – Data**
193 **Practices, video and audio recordings are considered public data and can be made available to the**
194 **public upon request.**

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