



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session

June 13, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Supple called the work session to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

Council Members Present: Mary Supple, Mayor; Sean Hayford O'leary; Sharon Christensen; Simon Trautmann; and Ben Whalen

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Dustin Leslie, City Clerk; Amy Markle, Recreation Services Director; Karl Huemiller, Recreation Programming Manager; Rachel Lindholm, Sustainability Specialist.

ITEM #1	DISCUSSION OF DONALDSON PARK IMPROVEMENTS
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Director Markle provided a presentation about Donaldson Park and spoke about the following: park history, park usage, user groups, challenges, resident needs, reinvestment opportunities, proposed process, and budget considerations. She stated the playground between the fields would be moved from the middle of the fields to make room for a new building. Council Member Trautmann preferred keeping it between the fields and finding a different solution for the building. Director Markle spoke about the location of the playground limiting the building design but would revisit.

Council Member Whalen asked if the plans were being funded through CIP funds. Director Markle confirmed.

Mayor Supple asked if these plans were already included in the budget. Director Markle replied that they were already included in the budget approved by Council.

City Manager Rodriguez and Council Member Whalen discussed debt being used to fund projects and the plan for it going forward.

City Manager Rodriguez spoke about the need to reinvest assets and avoiding facilities falling into disrepair as there were a lot of facilities in the city that needed to be fixed.

Council Member Whalen spoke about allocating more funding to park maintenance and was willing to put more into the budget using the regular budget rather than just CIP funds.

Council Member Trautmann stated the importance of playgrounds in the city for kids and spoke about finding more ways to get people in the parks, such as food trucks.

Council Member Hayford Oleary asked how full the east parking lot would usually get. Director Markle replied that the parking lot was usually full during games. Council Member Hayford Oleary stated staff could look at reducing parking spaces in the future when considering renovations.

Council Member Whalen stated he supported the process and agreed with Council Member Trautmann that the playground should stay in the middle of the fields if possible. He further stated that staff could look at reconfiguring the paths.

ITEM #2	DISCUSSION OF LOCAL SALES TAX AUTHORIZATION AND REFERENDUM PLANNING
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Director Markle provided an update to Council stating the question would have to go on the ballot in 2024. She also spoke about the planned education campaign for residents.

Council and staff discussed needs for projects that would be funded by the proposed local sales tax.

ITEM #3	SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT UPDATES
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Sustainability Specialist Lindholm gave a presentation to Council focusing on ARPA Municipal Building Energy Improvements and the Community Garden Pilot Project.

Council Member Whalen asked if there were reports to go with the ARPA improvements and if there were high level lists of improvements that could be easily shared. Sustainability Specialist Lindholm replied that there were reports for each building and that a spreadsheet of improvements was being maintained.

Mayor Supple stated that lighting should be focused on the buildings and away from neighborhoods. Sustainability Specialist Lindholm stated they would make sure of that and that the lighting generally faces down.

Council Member Whalen asked if empty plots in the community gardens were due to lack of interest or residents backing out. Sustainability Specialist Lindholm spoke about the community gardens being a pilot project and expected more participation in the future.

Council Member Whalen asked if there were plans to expand the community gardens or continue the pilot project as-is. Sustainability Specialist Lindholm replied the current garden has room for expansion.

Council Member Trautmann stated he heard concerns from residents about community gardens causing an increase in crime. He asked staff if there were any crime issues due to the garden. Sustainability Specialist Lindholm stated there have been no issues related to crime.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Supple adjourned the work session at 6:30 pm

Date Approved: June 27, 2023



Dustin Leslie
City Clerk



Mary B. Supple
Mayor



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager