



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## City Council Work Session

### July 25, 2023

<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>
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Mayor Supple called the work session to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

*Council Members Present:* Mary Supple, Mayor; Simon Trautmann; Sean Hayford Oleary; Ben Whalen; and Sharon Christensen

*Staff Present:* Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Dustin Leslie, City Clerk; Matt Hardegger, Transportation Engineer; Joe Powers, City Engineer; Kristin Asher, Public Works Director; Jay Henthorne, Police Chief; Jennifer Anderson, Health Administrator; Brittany Bartlett, Equity Coordinator; Chris Swanson, Management Analyst; and Mary Tietjen, City Attorney.

<b>ITEM #1</b>	<b>DISCUSS STATUS OF TWO REQUESTS SUBMITTED BY STAFF TO MINNESOTA MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET FOR POTENTIAL INCLUSION IN A 2024 BONDING BILL</b>
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City Manager Rodriguez introduced the new Equity Coordinator, Brittany Bartlett, to Council and she gave a brief overview of her background.

Director Asher presented the report to Council and recommended they pick either the Nicollet Avenue reconstruction project or the 73<sup>rd</sup> Street pedestrian bridge project for a bonding bill request.

Transportation Engineer Hardegger gave the presentation with an overview of both projects. He recommended Council Members choose the Nicollet Avenue project due to several factors including: regionality, timing, funding eligibility considerations, ownership, and staff time.

Council Members and staff discussed construction projects over the past ten years on Nicollet Avenue and how this request would differ from those.

Council Member Whalen stated that while the staff recommendation made sense, he wanted to know if it would make sense to push Penn Avenue as a future bonding construction project. Staff spoke about financial considerations for choosing Nicollet or Penn and stated Penn would likely not get a match from Hennepin County due to it being eligible for federal funding.

City Manager Rodriguez spoke about the importance of Hennepin County matching bonding funds and the need to fix many streets soon while having a small tax base.

Council Member Hayford Oleary stated that if the Nicollet Avenue project was chosen as the recommendation, it was still important to make the 73<sup>rd</sup> pedestrian bridge a priority as it was in bad shape and ADA non-compliant. Council Member Trautmann agreed and spoke about personal difficulties using the bridge.

Council Member Trautmann spoke about Penn Avenue being in bad shape and needing improvements. He asked staff if there were any ways for Council to leverage funding for its reconstruction. City Manager Rodriguez stated she would reach out to Commissioner Goettel regarding Penn Avenue.

Director Asher stated she would continue to solicit resources for the 73<sup>rd</sup> Ave Pedestrian bridge. Council Member Hayford Oleary asked staff to also make the north part of Portland Avenue a priority.

Mayor Supple stated the city should be strategic with bonding requests and was supportive of the staff's recommendation of Nicollet Avenue. The rest of the Council agreed with the recommendation.

<b>ITEM #2</b>	<b>DISCUSSION OF AN ORDINANCE REGULATING CANNABIS USE WITHIN PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PUBLIC PLACES</b>
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Police Chief Henthorne gave the presentation and asked Council for guidance in regulating cannabis in public spaces. He showed a draft ordinance and asked for feedback.

Council Member Whalen asked about private locations being included in the public place definition. Police Chief Henthorne gave the example of not allowing people to smoke cannabis in the parking lots of businesses. City Attorney Tietjen noted the Council could craft the definition however they wanted.

Council Member Hayford Oleary suggested mirroring prohibition of cannabis smoking where tobacco smoking is already prohibited. He further stated that he was in favor of restricting smoking cannabis in public spaces but not the consumption of edibles.

City Attorney Tietjen spoke about public nuisances and how those laws could apply with cannabis consumption. She stated the smoking of cannabis would have to be a nuisance to multiple people for it to qualify.

Council Member Whalen agreed with Council Member Hayford Oleary that prohibition of smoking cannabis in public places should mirror tobacco prohibition and that edibles should not be restricted. He also asked Henthorne if public inebriation laws could apply to cannabis. Police Chief Henthorne stated yes but there was not currently an effective way of testing for cannabis consumption in the field.

Mayor Supple agreed with treating cannabis smoking the same as tobacco and stated there was consensus on restricting smoking in public parks but not edibles.

Council Member Hayford Oleary asked questions about what constituted a public nuisance in relation to neighbor complaints. City Attorney Tietjen stated multiple neighbors would have to complain for it to be considered a public nuisance.

Mayor Supple asked about multi-family housing units and if smoking would be allowed there with the possibility of hallway smoking creating unwanted smells. Health Administrator Anderson

stated property owners and managers set the rules until 2025 when smoking in multi-family homes will be restricted.

The meeting was wrapped up with a general discussion about timelines regarding cannabis moving forward.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Supple adjourned the work session at 6:57 pm

Date Approved: August 8, 2023



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Dustin Leslie  
City Clerk



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Mary B. Supple  
Council Member



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Katie Rodriguez  
City Manager