

**WORKSESSION OF THE ANOKA CITY COUNCIL  
ANOKA CITY HALL  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION ROOM  
MAY 28, 2019**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Rice called the worksession meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present at roll call: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Freeburg, Skogquist, and Wesp.

Absent: None.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Lee; Public Works Director Mark Anderson; Engineering Technician Ben Nelson; Community Development Director Doug Borglund; Electric Utility Director Greg Geiger; and City Attorney Scott Baumgartner.

**3. COUNCIL BUSINESS and/or DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**3.1 Discussion; Round-Up Program.**

City Manager Greg Lee shared a staff report with background information stating the Round-up Program was started in January 2012 with the purpose to actively raise funds specifically to reduce expenses and provide financial assistance to worth-while activities, organization and community projects that improve the lives of families, children and seniors in the community. He said a large recipient of Round-up funds is the Youth First Community of Promise organization and staff would like discussion with Council the level of support we provide to Youth First going forward and whether Council would consider adding Anoka Community Mission as a benefactor of the Round-Up Funds distribution program. He stated that \$16,000-\$17,000 went to Youth First and explained how funding has been pulled back on programs along with discontinuation of programs in their house with no further fundraising and asked if we are getting the services, we want to justify the continued contribution from Anoka.

Councilmember Freeburg asked if they purchased the house at the time. Councilmember Wesp said the house was purchased by Anoka County through 80% funding and 20% funding by Youth First through CDBG funds. He noted the City currently provides in-kind accounting services through a JPA and then explained how the City of Coon Rapids joined. He said Youth First still uses Anoka High School and busing but that money for house was provided by the Anti-Crime Commission and the Police Federation but only has one staff person. Councilmember Wesp said as a current board member he has seen Youth First's direction change and was not sure the City should continue to provide in-kind accounting services as he sees deterioration that is not fair to taxpayers. He stated

overall; they do great work for youth but not that many in Anoka as their services have changed at the house from a drop-in location to more homework help.

Councilmember Skogquist inquired about contributions from other cities. Mr. Lee stated in 2018 Andover contributed \$22,000, Anoka \$20,000, Coon Rapids \$20,000, Ramsey \$15,000, Anoka County \$7,500, Anoka Hennepin School District \$7,000 and Anoka County Sherriff \$1,000, with Anoka's \$5,000 in-kind donation included.

Mayor Rice said Youth First was a long-standing program as it may be disingenuous to withdraw, adding that Andover does not benefit much either based on their contribution.

Councilmember Wesp agreed that we morally have an obligation to stay but said it has been troubling to see how Youth First has changed by not providing provide summer programs for the last three years.

Councilmember Barnett said the funding comes from our residents and if she cannot say that 70% goes back to Anoka as they are no longer giving back to the City, she has concerns about continuing to help as they do not help Anoka directly.

Councilmember Wesp said Youth First was established in 1995 by Anoka and felt we have some obligation as they do assist Anoka high school students.

Councilmember Freeburg said we used to get more than our share before Andover High School was opened and noted the Anoka Lions and Rotary are actively involved as well

Mayor Rice reviewed the original concept that included homework help, health/dental, and a meal and how the program has moved from curriculum to more social based.

Councilmember Barnett suggested transferring support to Anoka County Missions as they are more Anoka-based. Councilmember Wesp suggested Anoka County Missions could focus on the Highland Park neighborhood too as there is a need there.

Mr. Lee said it would be difficult to discontinue any funding midway in 2019 but suggested the change occur in 2020.

Council consensus was the in-kind accounting services be provided by another city and that Anoka still partner at some level but that we identify another group to support youth and families. They stated they would like to review the contribution for 2020 that included review of Youth First's strategic vision to see if it was still in line with the City's goals.

Discussion was held on the decline of contributions of the Round-Up program overall and the opt-in options and how staff is working to share the benefits of the program to new customers by stating how little it affects their monthly bills. Mayor Rice suggested sending a donation request around the holiday season of \$6 which is approximately the total of a customer's annual donation through the Round-Up program.

3.2 Discussion: Coordinated Refuse Hauling.

Mr. Lee shared a staff report with background information stating at the April 1, 2019 City Council meeting the City Council questioned the City's practice of spending millions of dollars each year to reconstruct our streets while still allowing multiple garbage haulers and other heavy vehicles to operate on them. The consensus of the City Council was that they wanted to review this issue and directed staff to include this topic on a future worksession agenda. He said the topic of single hauler garbage service and/or organized hauling was last discussed in 2014/2015.

Discussion was held on reasons why this was an important topic that included freedom of choice and hauler lobbying efforts as hauling was similar to utilities such as water and electric. Mr. Lee stated Blaine has had a single hauler system for 50 years and that Anoka was single hauler for 100 years until the 1980s when they hired Peterson Companies and then opened it up in 1991, adding six years later the street renewal program was needed. Mr. Lee spoke about the effects of increased truck traffic and how these vehicles were exempt from spring axel weight limits which is when roads are the most vulnerable.

Councilmember Freeburg added that these trucks have to stop and start quickly which affects the roads as well. Mr. Lee agreed if a single hauler system was implemented the hauler would stop at each house and greatly decrease the fast stop/starts that affect the roads.

Councilmember Wesp noted homeowner associations require one hauler and that we could review their street data to see how their roads are affected.

Councilmember Skogquist said this will be a difficult conversation but he understood the need. Discussion was held on bus traffic too and the need to allow buses only on streets where a child was being picked up and not as access to get to the next street.

Mr. Lee commented on the cost to upgrade roads to 9- or 10-ton was too expensive to address the hauler affects.

Discussion was held about area pricing and how it was not a large savings otherwise and if not organized the City could reduce the number of licenses overall then discussed size and capacity of garbage versus recycling trucks.

Mr. Lee explained if the Council wished to proceed the City would need to notify the residents and haulers which triggers a 60-day review period that included a seven-year timeframe to convert to an organized hauling system.

Councilmember Barnett asked about pricing and customer service. Mr. Lee said those elements would be negotiated seven years out.

City Attorney Scott Baumgartner added a default provision could be built into the contract. Mayor Rice noted a couple haulers only have a few customers in Anoka.

Councilmember Skogquist asked more about the process to change to single hauler and how onerous it was. Mr. Lee explained if the City does not reach agreement with current haulers then the market share is usually split.

Councilmember Skogquist stressed the importance of customer service throughout this process. Mr. Lee said at any point the City could stop the process and return to the present plan.

Mayor Rice stated if we can reduce street renewal costs from 25-35 years it would mean a lot to the City's budget. Mr. Lee estimated the City spends \$300,000-\$400,000 per year for additional street repair due to trucks and that staff would prepare a benefits analysis first for further review.

Council consensus was to move forward with consideration of a single hauler system.

Councilmember Skogquist said our role as a Council is to make tough decisions and that this activity is adversely affecting City streets.

A resident inquired about the number of haulers that would be allowed should this move forward.

### 3.3 Discussion; Rental Licensing Density and Rental Requirements.

Community Development Director Doug Borglund shared a staff report with background information and provided an update on rental licensing density cap and approach to non-licensed rentals property located within blocks where the rental density exceeds the set cap. He reviewed reasons for rental licensing such as inspections, staffing, frequency of inspections, unlicensed rentals, rental property checklist, no longer rental forms, rental licensing fees, rental conversion fees, rental application and additional language, landlord/manager living proximity to rental property, online resources for landlords and tenants, and verification of compliance for all rental properties.

Councilmember Barnett said not having a rental license encourages others to rent non-compliant and sets a precedent moving forward so there should be no leniency and those remaining properties could be assessed a fee for non-payment of rental license.

Mr. Baumgartner noted the difficulty comes when a family is present and referred to the period of legal non-conforming use and the implications.

Councilmember Skogquist asked what rights did the City have to come in on a lease. Mr. Borglund noted many do not even have a lease agreement on file.

Councilmember Barnett spoke about consequences for not having a license including penalties and the importance of this process should we need to make a change.

Mr. Baumgartner suggested rather than negotiations with landlords the City could approach them about whether they wish to live in the home or sell and ask for a proposal.

Councilmember Barnett inquired about the current rental license process. Mr. Borglund said before they had planners doing inspections who were not trained but that now they have qualified individuals with building inspector credentials conducting the inspections. Discussion was held on what a rental license was and was not and the importance of adopting the 2019 property maintenance code at some point as it would allow staff to address issues like smoke alarms.

Councilmember Barnett spoke about creating a form for property owners to complete when they are no longer a rental so the properties are removed from the database and can start over, then suggested prorated options or a bonus as an incentive to convert back to single family. Mr. Baumgartner encouraged language that clarified the property would be fully removed from the rental market.

Mr. Borglund agreed as rental licenses become a commodity.

Councilmember Barnett spoke about the need to increase conversion fees and efficiencies. Mr. Borglund agreed as it takes a lot of staff time to review and process rental applications.

Mr. Lee suggested a fee of \$500 be included in the upcoming fee schedule. Mr. Baumgartner cautioned the cost and work associated with this fee needs to be justified.

Councilmember Barnett inquired about the Koskinen Law and background checks and how far could a landlord live away from their rental property. She said we require no more than 50 miles and suggested a five-county radius instead and spoke about the need for online resources for managers including a class on how to write a lease. Mr. Baumgartner recommended not providing a lease model but instead share information on tenant/landlord rights then spoke about tendency and knowledge of concerns.

Council consensus was to support bringing forward a program of inspections. Mr. Lee said they should be able to accomplish this through part-time administrative staff for 2020 but will likely need to increase the level of service going forward.

Councilmember Wesp cautioned about adding staff because it taxes the residents and reallocates the resources. Councilmember Barnett said this program would help with police response.

Discussion was held about the need to address rental housing and blight and removing tired neighborhoods.

Councilmember Skogquist left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

3.4 Discussion; Meeting with Neighboring Community, City Council Strategic Meeting.

Mr. Lee shared a staff report with background information stating the in the past, the Anoka City Council has met with city councils of neighboring communities to discuss common issues and interests. Staff would like to know if the City Council would like arrange such meetings in the near future and if so, which community would you like to meet with and what topics should be included on an agenda. He also inquired about possible strategic meetings for Council to discuss various topics and elements related to City operations and if Council is interested in this type of meeting. He stated if so, the meetings could be conducted very similar to our Goals Sessions at the beginning of each year. Mr. Lee spoke about traffic impacts and position on certain areas off of Highway 169 until the traffic study is shared then spoke about the riverboat concept and ways to get that concept moving forward again. He noted Anoka could meet with Coon Rapids about joint events such as marathons and the shooting range at Bunker Hills and that there is one being thought about in Anoka.

Councilmember Wesp said he did not see the need to meet with other cities because while there are some intersecting ideas and projects, we all have our own plans. Discussion was held regarding possible annexation options with Slims in Andover.

Councilmember Barnett said we already work with other cities through staff but suggested a neighborhood meeting with the residents in a park may be beneficial in getting more citizen input right in the neighborhoods.

Councilmember Wesp said he does that now through door knocking. Discussion was held on ways to engage the community more.

Council consensus was to add an additional goal session mid-year as priorities could change and the session would provide a good check-in for progress.

**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

4.1 Staff Update.

None.

**5. COUNCILMEMBERS COMMENTS**

None.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Rice adjourned the Regular Worksession meeting at 7:20 p.m.

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Submitted by: Cathy Sorensen, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*

Approval Attestation:

Amy T. Oehlers, City Clerk