

**CITY OF PARK RAPIDS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
July 26, 2016, 6:00 PM
Park Rapids Public Library-Lower Level
Park Rapids, Minnesota**

1. CALL TO ORDER: The July 26th, 2016, Regular Meeting of the Park Rapids City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Pat Mikesh, and everyone present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Pat Mikesh, Councilmembers Ryan Leckner, Rod Nordberg, Erika Randall, and Paul Utke. Absent: None. Staff Present: Administrator John McKinney, Treasurer Angela Brumbaugh, Public Facilities Superintendent Chris Fieldsend, Public Safety Director Harlan Johnson, Planner Ryan Mathisrud, Public Works Superintendent Scott Burlingame, Liquor Store Manager Scott Olson, Police Officer Carrie Parks, and Clerk Margie Vik. Others Present: Dick Rutherford, Mark Harmon, Elizabeth Wefel, Wayne Reynolds, and Kevin Cederstrom from the Enterprise.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by Nordberg, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda with the following addition: **Add to the Consent Agenda Item #7.31. Resolution for Authorization to Execute Minnesota Department of Transportation Grant Agreement for Airport Improvement Excluding Land Acquisition.**

4. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

4.1. Certificate of Achievement for Sabin J. Rasmus-Five Years of Employment with the City of Park Rapids: Harlan Johnson accepted the Certificate of Achievement for Five Years of Employment with the City of Park Rapids for Sabin Rasmus.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

5.1. City Council Workshop Minutes-June 28, 2016: A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Nordberg, and unanimously carried to approve the June 28th, 2016, City Council Workshop minutes as presented.

5.2. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes-June 28, 2016: A motion was made by Nordberg, seconded by Leckner, and unanimously carried to approve the June 28th, 2016, City Council Regular Meeting minutes as presented.

5.3. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes-July 12, 2016: A motion was made by Leckner, seconded by Randall, and unanimously carried to approve the July 12th, 2016, City Council Regular Meeting minutes as presented.

6. FINANCE:

6.1. Payables & Prepaids: A motion was made by Utke, seconded by Randall, and unanimously carried to approve the payables in the amount of \$27,521.11, and the prepaids in the amount of \$330,300.93, for a total of \$357,822.04.

7. CONSENT AGENDA: Randall removed Item #7.25 from the consent agenda. She questioned, regarding item #7.15., were we anticipating this cost to the city? Isn't this the same business that we just gave a significant break to on their permit application? Utke stated this is for extension of city services, that was for a building permit. McKinney stated that was for Tom Hass' building. This is for Jeff Voigt's building. **A motion was made by Utke, seconded by Leckner, and unanimously carried to approve the following consent agenda items:**

- 7.1. Resolution #2016-123 Approving Ordinance No. 562 Amending the Park Rapids City Code of Ordinances of the City of Park Rapids; Chapter 30 City Administration, Section 30.29 Salaries of Mayor and Council Members.**
- 7.2. Ordinance No. 562 Amending the Park Rapids City Code of Ordinances of the City of Park Rapids, Chapter 30 City Administration, Section 30.29 Salaries of Mayor and Council Members.**
- 7.3. Resolution #2016-124 Approving Ordinance No. 563 Amending the Park Rapids City Code of Ordinances of the City of Park Rapids, Chapter 36 Fee Schedule, Section 36.06 Employee/Contracted Services Compensation.**
- 7.4. Ordinance No. 563 Amending the Park Rapids City Code of Ordinances of the City of Park Rapids, Chapter 36 Fee Schedule, Section 36.06 Employee/Contracted Services Compensation.**
- 7.5. Resolution #2016-125 Accepting Donations for the City of Park Rapids.**
- 7.6. Resolution #2016-126 Approve Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for Hubbard First Response and Rescue.**

- 7.7. Resolution #2016-127 Approve Temporary On Sale Liquor License for the Northern Light Opera Company in the City of Park Rapids.**
- 7.8. Approve Outdoor Dance Permit for American Legion Post 212, for Friday, August 5th, 2016, starting at 8:00 p.m. and ending on Saturday, August 6th, 2016, at 12:30 p.m.**
- 7.9. Approve Multi-Vendor Transient Merchant License for Tony Meech d.b.a. Chase the Outdoor Expo to be held at the Hubbard County Fairgrounds on Friday and Saturday, July 29th and 30th, 2016.**
- 7.10. Resolution #2016-128 Approve Temporary On Sale Liquor License for Shell Prairie Agricultural Association in the City of Park Rapids.**
- 7.11. Approve Public Facilities Use Permit for Amy Kain and Wesley Kain to Use the Deane Park Gazebo at 19382 Eagle Pointe Trail on Saturday, August 6th, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for the Christina Guida Bridal Shower.**
- 7.12. Authorize Reduction in the Amount of \$2,539.96 for Building Permit Fees Associated with the Park Rapids Aviation Paint Booth Construction Project.**
- 7.13. Approve Purchase in the Amount of \$1,750.00 from McQueen Equipment for Airport Hangar Door Weather Seal.**
- 7.14. Approve Purchase in the Amount of \$2,652.46 from RDO Equipment for Parts to Replace the Radiator in the Motorgrader for the Street Department.**
- 7.15. Approve Low Bids in the Amount of \$2,800.00 from Girtz Excavating, and \$2,446.65 from Fergusson Waterworks, for a Total of \$5,246.65, to Extend City Sewer and Water Services to the Park Rapids Aviation Paint Booth.**
- 7.16. Approve Low Bid in the Amount of \$910.59 from Flying W Gardens to Purchase Seventeen (17) Trees for the 2017 Spring Tree Planting.**
- 7.17. Resolution #2016-129 Ordering the Securing of a Vacant Building Located at 501 Central Avenue North in the City of Park Rapids.**

- 7.18. Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$91,811.92 for Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for the Water Tower and Treatment Facility Loan Payment.**
- 7.19. Approve Pay Request #7 and #8 in the Total Amount of \$160,084.98 to C&L Excavating for Construction Services for the Riverside Area Phase One Project.**
- 7.20. Authorize the Execution of the Purchasing Agent Agreement by and between Hammers Construction and the City of Park Rapids for the Deane Park Bathroom Project.**
- 7.21. Allow the Park Rapids Police Department to Participate in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Grant and Allow the Expenditures to Complete the Funding Match and Purchase Mobile Computer Equipment.**
- 7.22. Resolution #2016-130 Authorizing Proper City Officials to Execute an Agreement for Assessment Services by and between Loren Tolkkinnen d.b.a. SLL Inc. and the City of Park Rapids.**
- 7.23. Approve *First Reading* of Ordinance Amending the Park Rapids City Code of Ordinances of the City of Park Rapids, Chapter 36 Fee Schedule, Section 36.06 Employee/Contracted Services Compensation, to Increase Salary of Fire Department Secretary.**
- 7.24. Resolution #2016-131 Approve Step Increase and Wage Adjustment for Full Time Accounting Clerk/Receptionist Janel Stewart.**
- 7.25. *Removed from the consent agenda.***
- 7.26. Resolution #2016-132 Approve Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for North Country Friends.**
- 7.27. Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$25,808.06 to TKDA for Professional Services Regarding the Airport Master Plan.**
- 7.28. Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$9,076.26 to Minnesota Department of Commerce Regarding the Energy Efficiency Loan Program.**
- 7.29. Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$740.00 to Apex Engineering Group for Professional Service Regarding the Riverside Area Phase One Project.**

- 7.30. **Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$3,513.32 to N.D. Sewage Pump for Replacement of Controllers on Lift Station #1, #10, #13, and #16.**
- 7.31. **Resolution #2016-133 Authorization to Execute Minnesota Department of Transportation Grant Agreement for Airport Improvement Excluding Land Acquisition.**

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

7.25. Approve Job Description for Non-Union Police Sergeant and to Authorize Staff to Promote Two Officers from the Existing Police Department Staff to the Two New Non-Union Positions: Randall stated I oppose this at this time. I do not oppose the appointment of sergeants, even two of them, but given the recommendations from the study that we just heard, I need to be assured that we are not going to appoint two sergeants, and then also go back and appoint this executive officer position. My educated opinion is, I do have some knowledge of the structure of the police department, and I think we are too small to have an executive assistant officer and two sergeants. I want to be assured we are not going to have three people in supervisory roles. I'm also opposed to appointing the sergeant at this time. I would like to see the sergeant's position be approved today, but I would like to see these are left open until our permanent police chief is hired. Harlan Johnson is with us for a short time and I ultimately think it would be best left to the incoming chief of police to make that decision about supervisory positions, which is a non-union position, which creates a whole other set of circumstances. In addition we are still down one full time police officer because we are unable to fill it at this time. Once that issue is resolved we certainly could, and I would think we would not only post the position internally, but if we couldn't find qualified candidates internally, we could search outside of the organization for a sergeant once we are able to fill that. We are not even fully staffed and we're going to appoint two sergeants from our less than full staff, and in addition, I don't think we even have any part time officers right now. Johnson stated we have two. Randall stated we've been low on part time officers and the guys have been running ragged because we've been short staffed and because of the changes that have been coming. I don't think this is the time. Johnson is only here until October 1st. I don't know why we can't wait to allow that next person to make the decision. We've been running shifts for as long as I've been here without sergeants. As you can see it hasn't gone the greatest, but I think there are still things that can be implemented in the interim if we decide not to go forward with this hire. I support the sergeants, but we need clarification as to what is the overall plan going to be. We've heard a recommendation for an additional officer today. I've heard nothing that supports that at this time. We need to decide what it is we're moving forward with, is it just the two sergeants, is it the two sergeants plus this executive assistant. We don't have a full understanding to make that decision.

Utke stated I believe we have hired Johnson under a contract. I fully support what he's doing. He's reworking our police department to put it in line and get everything up and running to the best of his ability, so that when we do get a new police chief it's a well-oiled

machine doing what it's supposed to, and I would fully support approving this promoting of two sergeants according to the request. I support what Johnson is trying to do.

Mikesh stated I do understand what Randall is saying, but we also put Johnson in this position to do all of the leg work for us. It doesn't mean we're hiring them, we still have the ultimate say to hire or not hire. He's doing the interviews, and then will tell us who would be a good candidate.

Randall stated he's saying internally. We don't have a full internal staff yet because we're down an officer. Leckner questioned if Johnson could explain his position.

Johnson stated in the summary I gave you I'm asking for two positions that will come from the current staff. If they are approved one would be appointed right away. The second one would be after the empty position is filled. Then the second sergeant would be filled because the plan that I've come up with for the new schedule would require six officers to be working that schedule. The second sergeant would be after the open position is filled. I never asked for anybody to replace those people or to hire additional people. There is no request in there to have an executive officer. The reason for two sergeants is they would want time off too. I don't want a person that I'm going to promote to a supervisory position to be seeing the night shift all of the time. These will be patrol sergeants they are not administrative sergeants. They will be working patrol also, except they will be supervising the shift that is on duty.

Randall questioned is there not reason to be concerned that we are allowing you to pick this person? Your request is you and some other supervisors from outside of the area would do the interviews and make the ultimate recommendation for promotion. Why shouldn't we be concerned that you get to pick this and the new police chief comes in and then has to deal with your picks? Johnson stated it's not for me to make the selection, it would be an outside committee to make the selection on the hiring. The ultimate hiring would be done by the Council, not me.

Randall questioned why shouldn't we wait when it's such a short time? Johnson stated you asked for reduction in overtime. The only way that can be accomplished is by reducing overtime. We can't stop using less pencils than what we are doing. If you want the overtime changed, a new schedule is how it's going to be done. People will be able to shift internally during the day. There will be four shifts, where a power shift will be able to switch to cover a person calling in morning, day, or afternoon shift, instead of having to call someone in for ten hours of overtime. That person would already be there and just work different hours.

Randall stated I appreciate that but it is really short term. At our last Council meeting we approved the new position for the chief of police and posting it, I see it's been posted. The deadline for applications is August 7th. I made it clear I wanted that person hired by September 1st if possible. We're coming on less than four weeks of dealing with this, so to allow someone else to come in and build their staff that they hopefully will work with for the next two decades. Johnson stated I think it goes along with the changes that you want. This is one of the changes, supervision. I'm not doing this for glory for myself, but I want to leave a legacy behind that when I was here this department is a little better than when I came in. And to do that, the officers here are good, but they need supervision and they deserve it now, not in a month, or later when a new chief will be in a position to do that.

Randall stated we're not even in a position right now to hire that second sergeant because we can't fill that open position. So why not ask for approval today to fill just the one position and leave the other one for the new chief to come in and fill, because realistically it's not going to be before our new chief is here. We haven't even been able to post for that position and we're already posting for the new chief of police position. Johnson stated that's a Council decision to make. I make the recommendation that is justified. The supervision is needed now. I think the authorization to hire two sergeants, one now, and one when the position is open the other sergeant can be hired immediately without going through the whole procedure.

Nordberg stated I'm really grateful that Johnson is here giving us his recommendations and I think he's already made some improvements. On the other hand I wonder personally if you coming in as the chief as you have in the past, would you be offended that the Council took away your privilege of appointing or hiring somebody just before you were hired and imposed this person on you. It seems like a new chief with that authority would want to do this. Johnson stated I can't speak for other chiefs or the people coming in. I can only speak to the position that I'm in right now. Nordberg stated I know and I appreciate that. But if there was someone else coming in October aren't we offending a potential employee? Johnson stated it sounds crude, but you're trying to deal with someone who's not here. Nordberg stated yes I know, but there's a certain amount of ego. Randall stated it's like the Supreme Court, they don't want to appoint that because they don't want to offend the incoming president.

Utke stated a new chief has enough stuff to learn I would think having a well-run organization to come into would be best. Do you want to have to come in and work with personnel right away? I think what Johnson is doing is perfect. It makes it much easier on that new person, but that new person may have other ideas. Randall stated that new person, likely may be coming into a brand new chief position, these two sergeants are their go to, next in line. Wouldn't that chief want to be able to form that team of supervisors on their own? Johnson stated if you carry that on further maybe that new chief wants all new police officers too. Randall stated they are protected by the union.

McKinney stated I think the position is such that with the union contract that we have to deal with pretty much outlines who your candidates will be. In reality, whether he/she comes in a month or two, the list of people who are going to be in that position is very limited. You are going to be interviewing somebody for the chief's position who will know who the sergeants are and if he/she thinks they are bad sergeants he/she won't take the job. We'd like to move forward with this because all of the scheduling and overtime, and all of the things that we are trying to put together in the way of supervision are pivotal on this sergeant's position. Don't lay it on the fact that we don't know who's coming next. Lay it on the fact you're not ready to make a decision.

Randall stated I think the two go hand in hand. I'm ready to make the decision that we need some sergeants, but I think it should be a new chief who's right around the corner, it should be their decision. We're not talking about a new chief coming in next year. We're in a transition process and it should be their decision. All this scheduling, you can still set the ground work for it, and maybe the new chief comes in and you just spent all of this time on this new schedule that you are so worried about for supervision and the new chief comes in and says I don't like this new schedule. I appreciate the hard work that went into eight hours shifts, but I don't like it. I'm going to talk to my officers and they, or we as a

team came up with this, and I like it and I'm going to go with that. The thing that I'm concerned about is unfortunately we're going to give these poor officers some whiplash with the changes now and possibly when we hire a new chief. I appreciate that you're trying to help us with the overtime and I'm not saying that the new scheduling is bad, but we don't know that it will last, we don't know that it's what the new chief is going to keep.

A motion was made by Utke, seconded by Leckner, to approve the Job Description for Non-Union Police Sergeant and to Authorize Staff to Promote Two Officers from the Existing Police Department Staff to the Two New Non-Union Positions.

The vote was called.

The following Councilmembers voted in favor: Leckner, Mikesh, Utke.

The following councilmembers voted nay: Nordberg, Randall.

The motion carried.

8. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: Mark Harmon stated I talked to a couple of our community leaders and got a recap of what has been going on with Discovery Circle. The project is in flux as to whether it's approved, not approved. As a resident of Discovery Circle I believe my voice is shared with others. We want a resolution. Either end the project, or move forward. You have polled the entire area and it's been demonstrated by that petition that there is a lack of support by the area. It's been said the project could be abandoned but there is an issue of enforcing compliance for the septic system ordinance. We represent 26% of the residents in Park Rapids that are using a septic system. Because we are of a small population of a whole we'd ask that you consider, everyone would be in compliance or come into compliance with the septic ordinance, separating these two issues. They are dependent upon each other, but as opposed to prolonging this issue on Discovery Circle and moving it off the CIP for 2017, and considering it for 2019, that puts us as residents through this whole consideration and process one more time. That's our general consensus. We don't want to do that. There are people in our neighborhood that have failing septic systems. We need to make decisions based on our own livelihood and futures. The financial burden is spelled out. There are statutes out there that assessments can't be put above what the true assessments on our properties could be, which could put a significant financial burden back onto the city. I believe these have been spun around and around. On behalf of the people that are opposing this and the people that are for this project we're asking you to split the two issues and handle them separately. Since you have asked for the opinion of the residents what kind of interest that we have within the Circle and we have provided that data. We have done a lot of work within the community by talking to people. We have also approached each and every one of you on the Council and staff members. Mathisrud has done so much work on this. Unfortunately Leckner is in a position that he has to abstain because he's a resident there. I would ask that you consider his position back in, not necessarily as his own opinion but to be a representative of the community to state the facts that have already been petitioned. We want a conclusion. I'd ask that it be driven to a close before August is up. We need to have a decision made. I believe the Council has exhausted way more resources than this

deserves and whether you choose to end it or move forward, please someone step up and lead this thing to a halt or go forward, but please, conclude it.

Nordberg questioned you wanted us to split it into two discussion points? Harmon stated yes or no as to whether to abandon the project and take it off of the CIP, and not to keep putting it in this pending status. Issue two is having some way to actually enforce the ordinance about the septic compliance. We need a conclusion on issue one. For those of us with failing septics, we need to come into balance and start making financial decisions for our own families and futures and to have the city make their decision on this. Whether this is decided on in three months or a year from now, it doesn't change the fact that we have to follow those laws. If there is a point that you can separate those and make two educated decisions for what's best for both sides.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS:

9.1. Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Legislative Update by

Elizabeth Wefel: Elizabeth Wefel stated The Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is an organization of eighty-eight cities across the state. We focus on issues that really impact Greater Minnesota, including local government aid (LGA), property tax relief, economic development, annexation and land use, transportation, and environmental regulation. We had hoped for a tax bill and a transportation bill this year. We were also looking for a big bonding bill. One of the challenges that we ran into was sharp divisions between the GOP House and the DFL Senate and governor. They were divided on a number of issues including that \$900 million surplus and how to pay for transportation. Those divisions really had an impact on what happened at the legislature this year.

Wefel stated our biggest goals were trying to get LGA back to the 2002 level, and a couple of economic programs that we were working on, including more money for BDPIs, improved broadband, a comprehensive transportation package, and funding for water and waste water infrastructure. The Senate bill last year did include the LGA increase that we were looking for. It would have been phased in over two years. But the House bill cut LGA by taking large amounts away from three out of the four largest cities. We had concerns with that. Once you start making cuts without basis you end up really undermining the program. It didn't happen last year because there was no tax bill.

Wefel stated because of the extreme positions between the two parties we did spend a lot of time in between sessions on this. We went across the state, and on conference calls, and we got more significant editorial coverage than we've had in the last ten years. We had fourteen meetings with legislators in their districts sitting down with the mayor, councilmembers, and staff, to help legislators really understand what LGA and some of these other programs really meant for our cities. We think it did have an impact. We saw the tax bill that they rolled out the last week of the session did include an ongoing \$20 million LGA increase, Greater Minnesota got the majority of that money. LGA would have increased for the City of Park Rapids.

Wefel stated we tried to get something done for workforce housing. There was a tax credit included in the Senate. We haven't been able to get the support of the House on that. It seems to be a statewide issue. They didn't support it so it dropped out. We also think the state wide CI property tax is significant for our cities. If that change had been

made it would have exempted the first \$100,000.00. That doesn't affect the local levy that Park Rapids has in place, but it helps the small to mid-size businesses. It's real tax relief. But the tax bill got vetoed. We do need to get a tax bill done. Without it we are going to lose that property tax relief and the other important pieces that were in there.

Wefel stated we are continuing to hope for a special session. The CGMC adopted a resolution last week that we sent to the legislature signaling CGMCs support for having a special session. We spent a lot of time working on regulatory stuff last year. We saw a big proposal to put significant amounts of bonding money into clean water in a way we haven't seen. It needs to happen going forward. We have a lot of cities dealing with existing regulations, and new regulations coming down the road dealing with both water and drinking water. \$167 million would have made a significant dent in getting things done. There are also policies changes that will be significant for cities going forward. It increases the funding cap for PC grants from \$3 million to \$7 million. It will also increase the state share of project costs, by up to 80% for some projects. One of the policies changes was to make more of the funds available for drinking water in addition to the wastewater. We lobbied on this aggressively. We did statewide media efforts on this. We blanketed the legislature in terms of pushing forward on support. It was widely embraced by the legislature. They didn't get it quite at the funding level that we wanted but they did put significant amounts into that bonding bill, as well as making those changes. But as you know, the bonding bill also failed at the last minute.

Wefel stated we also put a lot of work into the BDPI program. For more money, plus policies changes that would allow our cities to make better use of this. Those policies changes would have increased the allowable amount of grants, and make the grants more flexible. We did get that in the supplemental finance bill, those policies changes are made. This is a program that so many of our cities use.

Wefel stated we made progress with broadband, but not quite what we were hoping for. The Senate, Governor, and the House all supported putting money into the program. There was \$35 million that went into there. \$5 million for areas with poor service. I believe in Park Rapids and some areas around here have internet service but it's what we would classify as underserved. There was some money specifically set aside for that problem. One thing we are concerned about is there was some language put in at the last minute that allows big providers to challenge grants if they promise to provide better service. That's something that we will look at in further years, because we are very worried about what it will do to the program.

Wefel stated transportation continues to be a muddle. We continue to have this debate over whether we use new revenue or existing revenue, plus there's an ongoing controversy about what to do with the light rail line. There was an attempt to compromise, and the bonding bill did include about \$200 million for transportation, but that went nowhere. Everything fell apart at the end, which was unfortunate.

Wefel stated no transportation, no bonding bill, and the tax bill that was passed by wide margins got vetoed because of a \$100 million drafting error. There are different opinions as to whether or not that veto needed to happen. Either way, we need a special session. We are hearing assurances from some legislators that a special session may happen after the primary. We're hoping that will go forward because there are a lot of significant programs in that bonding bill that Minnesota needs. If it doesn't happen then that stuff gets pushed down the road. We are surveying our members because we believe

we need to take a more action stance on transportation to try and break this log jam because it is stuck. We're looking at what position do we take on how to fund transportation or do we want to be voicing an opinion on transit. Active lobbying really does make a difference. Our work did have an impact. We were able to push back on some negativity and get LGA moving in the right direction. We also saw with the money that went into the environmental program that these efforts are coupled with your efforts and it's something that we need to continue to push on. We have some upcoming items that we hope you can make it to, our conferences, the legislative action day, and our labor seminars. Thank you for your participation, we appreciate it.

9.2. Request to Provide Free Water/Sewer, Abate Special Assessments, and Provide Additional Handicapped Parking Spaces for the Senior Citizens Center Club Inc. at 102 Second Street West:

Wayne Reynolds, the President of the Senior Citizens Club, stated a year ago the officers in charge of the group were going to disband and turn the building back to the city. A group of us decided we didn't want that to happen so we've been trying to get things going there. We had a lot of help from people in the community who have made donations of time and money. We've made a lot of progress. The building is looking very nice now. We are now open Monday through Friday. We increased the number of activities from one a year ago to where we have something going on every day of the week. Our problem is our expenses exceed our revenue. We're working to take care of that too. We have fundraisers that are currently underway, and more coming next year. This year we focused on getting the building back in shape. Next year we'll focus more on the expenses.

Reynolds stated we'd like to ask the city for our water and sewer costs be waived if possible. We've checked with other senior centers in the area. Some communities waive it and some don't. There are several that do. We also have an assessment for some work that was done in the alley. We'd ask that also be waived if possible. The third thing I'd like to ask for is handicapped parking. We are starting to get a lot of people coming to the center and we don't have adequate parking for some of the handicapped people that are seniors. We're asking for two or three handicapped parking spots in front of our building. There are a couple near Main Avenue on Second Street. I don't know if they need to be there, or they could be moved to the senior center. The problem is there is a physical fitness facility right across the alley from us. People come in there in the morning and fill up the whole block and there's no place for anybody that's handicapped. They have to walk a block or more to get to the center. If we could get some handicapped parking in front of the senior center we'd appreciate it. Hubbard County is one of the fastest growing counties in Minnesota. That's mainly due to seniors moving here to retire. You have a large senior population in the area. We'd like to help keep them entertained.

Nordberg stated they have made big improvements, they have new members. His comments on senior demographics is right on. We've been without a senior center for some years. Our packet does a good job of showing how we have been over this before with non-profit organizations. There's the issue of the precedent, and the fact that we have said no officially before. That doesn't help this case right now. The issue of the parking spots, I'm not sure if the spots on Second would be allowable for them. I would like to look at that. But as far as the funding I'm afraid we have too many precedents already in black and white that say no.

Utke stated I would fully agree with you. It's a very good organization but we have other equally good organizations that would be asking for the same thing. We have non-profits with current assessments. It's been tried and tested in past, and as much as we'd like to be the good guys, we know what we need to do.

McKinney stated you should go on record to refer the parking issue to staff. I know that we are in compliance with handicap parking requirements with the number of spaces that we have. Burlingame stated Jon Olson and I looked at that. There's ample room, and we think it's reasonable, to add a handicap sign to the parking space that is right next to the alley. Handicapped parking requires an additional six feet width for vans. It would work on that spot. McKinney stated it almost takes two spots to make one handicapped spot. Nordberg stated he's saying there's enough room in the alley not to take away from a second space. The door opens from the passenger side so it would open to the alley. Burlingame stated the ADA require that you have a ramp. The ramp is already there. Utke stated Second Street is very busy with the workout facility, the restaurant, and now the senior center. Burlingame stated several years ago we added an extra handicapped space for the workout facility. I think it's more than reasonable to add one for the senior center. Nordberg stated it has multi functions, for the armory, for Vallarta, so it will serve more than one function. If it doesn't take away from another parking space that's a plus too.

A motion was made by Nordberg, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to deny the request from the Senior Citizen's Center for financial considerations on their water/sewer billings and their special assessments, and to refer to staff the implementation of an additional handicapped parking space outside of the Senior Center.

Discussion: Randall questioned for the handicapped space is there a way to designate that space solely to the senior center during the day, Monday through Friday? They want it designated to them but during the day you could have anybody parking there and going to other destinations. McKinney stated it's a public street. You'd have a problem giving vendors specific rights. Randall stated it's a real possibility it will be used for something else. Nordberg stated they have a parking issue just like the armory has. I don't think I've seen designated parking anywhere in Park Rapids. Randall stated if you start with one, where do you stop?

10. CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS: McKinney thanked the Council and staff for the support and help I received this last couple of weeks. I really appreciated it.

11. DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES: Fieldsend stated we lost a lot of trees in Deane Park, which we have been cleaning up. The bathrooms there are just getting started. They will soon move two doors for the fire hall project. We will be relocating trucks shortly. An architect has looked at city hall, and we discovered some water problems that we will have to address.

12. MINUTES/REPORTS/INFORMATION: There were no comments.

13. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Nordberg stated the packet included information about River Heights. They have active contracts for their parking lot, with new lights, and an elevator. That should get people's cars off of Riverside Avenue.

14. ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

[seal]

Mayor Pat Mikesch

ATTEST:

Margie M. Vik
City Clerk