

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
MARCH 21, 2023**

OPEN MEETING

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Krachmer at 5:30 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Mike Krachmer and Council Members Erik Goebel, Steve Rogers, Kelly Jozwowski, and Katherine Doll Kanne. The following member was absent: None.

Also present were: City Administrator, Kevin Watson; Assistant City Administrator, Kaylin Clement; Planning/Community Development Director, Nolan Wall; City Engineer/Public Works Director, Jesse Farrell; Fire Chief, Chris Hearden; City Attorney, Caroline Beckman, and City Attorney, Richard Podvin; and Representatives from Tubman, (Jen and Emily).

FUTURE CITY COUNCIL REQUESTS

Krachmer asked the Council if they had any requests they would like to discuss at future workshop meetings. Doll Kanne asked if tree replacements could be added as an item to see what the plans are moving forward. Krachmer suggested a report from staff be presented and then discussions can follow.

Goebel suggested discussing lowering the speed limit on city-owned residential roads since the city survey revealed a lot of positive responses on the topic. Doll Kanne was curious about what the Ramsey County Sheriff's office would have to say about the topic. Watson said he thinks they would be indifferent since Arden Hills just lowered their speed limits. He stated that there is a process to be followed, but he hasn't looked into it. Krachmer said that most city streets don't get specific enforcement around speeding unless there's an issue. Watson said when he receives calls from residents about speeding, he will call traffic enforcement and they will go out to observe for a while. However, what they've typically discovered is that it is the neighbors that are speeding and they get pretty upset when pulled over since they've been driving on the road a long time. Watson said that he can get feedback from the Sheriff's office, but they wouldn't stop us from making changes to our speed limits. Watson said there would be a cost involved for signage. Hearden said that by State Statutes, if a speed limit on a residential street is not posted, the speed limit is 30 mph. Krachmer thought he saw somewhere a city had posted at most of the entrance points to their city signs saying "unless otherwise posted, residential speed limits are..."

Rogers brought up the issue of adding a dog park to the city. He said the issue was discussed with the previous Council. He sees lots of people walking dogs. He thought that if the right location could be found, adding a dog park would be a way to build community where people could get to know each other and would be another amenity to add to the city. Watson said that

he could see adding a dog park coming out of the Parks Master Plan process. Doll Kanne brought up the county property on Vadnais Blvd., at Edgerton Street and Centerville Road, stating that she was wondering if the county would ever give up control of the site to the city for a dog park. She felt the area is under-utilized. Others present felt parking could be an issue at that site, but the site could be discussed when working on the Parks Master Plan.

Goebel asked about the process for getting non-motorized boats on west Vadnais Lake. Watson said that he thinks it is possible, but it is a matter of getting the details worked out with St. Paul Water who owns the property around the lake. Goebel thought allowing non-motorized boats would be a nice amenity for residents considering most of our waterways are non-navigable. Watson said St Paul Water doesn't want anyone on the east side of Vadnais Lake so they may be concerned with letting people use boats on the west side. Watson felt it was a good idea, but it may take some work to get St. Paul Water on board with it.

Krachmer asked about the role of the city in promoting local ranked-choice voting. He said it's a topic he's been interested in and supporting for a long time state-wide. He indicated that it has been adopted in other local municipalities. Watson said he would check into the process to see if Vadnais Heights is even eligible since we are a statutory city.

Doll Kanne would like to discuss what our next native planting will be in the parks. Farrell suggested discussing it during staff updates at the regular meeting.

MUNICIPAL PROSECUTION UPDATE

Beckman stated that she's always happy to give updates on what's happening in the criminal world. She welcomed those present to stop out at Maplewood's Court or downtown at the Ramsey County Law Enforcement Center. She also stated that Podvin from her office spends a lot of time in court on zoom. Beckman commented that they have several attorneys from their office handling prosecutions and it's a full-time job.

Podvin stated that their office handles all the petty misdemeanors, misdemeanors, and gross misdemeanors that occur within the City of Vadnais Heights. However, they only handle adult criminal prosecution out of their office. The Ramsey County Attorney handles the juvenile prosecution as well as the felony prosecution for Vadnais Heights. He continued that his office also prosecutes city code violations on unsafe, dangerous properties.

Podvin gave examples of petty misdemeanors, misdemeanors, and gross misdemeanors for further clarification. He then went into detail talking about charging and how it takes place. When citations are issued, many times the fee can be paid without going to court. He talked about court appearances and arraignments, stating that most court appearances are initially handled on zoom. Their office sees about 50-55 cases three times per week, but that includes other Ramsey County suburbs as well. Beckman added that they also prosecute for Roseville, North St. Paul, and White Bear Township. Beckman stated this is beneficial to all communities they serve since they can consolidate and not bill us for a full day in court.