

CITY OF EXCELSIOR  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

MINUTES

City Council Work Session

Tuesday, January 22, 2013

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Mayor Gaylord called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Councilmembers present: Beattie, Caron, Fulkerson, and Mayor Gaylord

Councilmembers absent: Miller

Also Present: City Manager Luger

**2. Agenda Approval**

**3. Council/Commission Liaisons**

Luger stated that at the last City Council meeting the Council agreed to continue the discussion regarding the potential appointments of Council/Commission liaisons to a work session. Up until 2009, the City Council had traditionally designated liaisons to each of its advisory commissions, but decided to discontinue the practice due to time constraints.

Caron said that she liked having liaisons because it kept the Council connected to the advisory commissions. Fulkerson expressed concern with the time commitment. Beattie agreed that it is important to stay connected with the advisory commissions, but thought there might be other ways to accomplish this objective.

Caron reported that in the past the City held a potluck where the Council and all of the advisory commissioners got together. The potluck allowed everyone to connect casually and to find out what was happening with the Council and the other commissions.

Beattie stated that he enjoyed the joint work session between the Council and the Park and Recreation Commission and suggested the Council have one or two joint work sessions with each advisory commission. The Council agreed with this suggestion and requested that joint work sessions be held sometime in March or April with each of the advisory commissions.

Luger said that the Council should also spend some time discussing whether to continue requesting the advisory commissions to appoint a liaison when they are forwarding a recommendation on an application, policy, ordinance, etc. to the City Council.

Gaylord suggested that the Council discontinue the practice of requesting the advisory commissions to appoint a liaison since some of the meetings are taped and there are minutes of each meeting.

Caron said she would be supportive of discontinuing this practice if the Council had the minutes from the last meeting, which currently does not occur. Luger explained that the turnaround time between the advisory commission meetings and the Council meetings is often too short to get the minutes written in time for the packet.

Gaylord proposed making the tape the official record of the advisory commission meetings and moving to an abbreviated form of minutes to save staff time. Caron mentioned that the Planning Commission is the only advisory commission meeting that is currently taped. Gaylord asked how much it would cost to tape the other advisory commission meetings. Luger responded that she was unsure of the cost.

Fulkerson said that she was not supportive of moving to abbreviated minutes for the advisory commission meetings because it puts more of a burden on the Council Members. She would rather read the minutes than watch the tape. Caron agreed.

Gaylord suggested that it become optional for the advisory commissions to appoint a liaison to the Council meeting. If a liaison is appointed, it should be mentioned on the agenda and staff should provide some guidance to that liaison so they know what to expect at the Council meeting. The Council agreed with this suggestion.

Luger said that the Council also needs to decide whether to appoint a Council liaison to the newly formed Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Chamber of Commerce. Caron reported that she has been appointed to the new board for one year and would be willing to serve as the liaison. The Council agreed that it made sense to appoint Caron as the liaison to the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Chamber of Commerce.

#### **4. Appoint Council Members to Interview Advisory Commission Applicants**

Luger mentioned that for the last several years, a Councilmember has been appointed to assist the Chair of each of the advisory commissions in conducting the interviews of the applicants and bringing forward a recommendation to the Council regarding the recommended appointments. However, the Chair for each of the advisory commissions are no longer serving on the commission so the Council has to decide how to conduct the interviews.

Gaylord asked how applicants are selected for appointment. Luger explained that typically the Chair of the advisory commission and the Councilmember assigned to that advisory commission agree on which applicants to recommend to the City Council.

Gaylord asked if the Council has ever decided not to reappoint an applicant. Caron responded yes, there was an applicant for the Planning Commission that was not reappointed due to the need to diversify the experience levels of the commissioners.

Gaylord asked if the Council always fills the open seats on the advisory commissions. Luger said that there was an applicant for the Park and Recreation Commission that was almost not reappointed due to concerns expressed by the Chair even though there were not enough applicants to fill the open seats.

The Council discussed potentially changing the application form or requiring that a resume be attached to the application so they can learn more about the applicant. The Council agreed that the appointment process is important and that it would be best to have the Vice-Chair for the advisory commission conduct the interviews with the Councilmember who has been assigned to that advisory commission. Beattie volunteered to interview the Heritage Preservation applicants, Caron volunteered to interview the Planning Commission applicants, and Luger mentioned that Miller is interested in interviewing the Park and Recreation Commission applicants.

## **5. City Council Protocols**

Luger explained that over the years, the City Council has established three unwritten protocols that guide staff on how to respond to requests from individual Council Members. The first protocol is that any Councilmember can request an item be added to a regular or work session agenda, but a majority of the Council has to approve whether a speaker can be added to any agenda.

The second protocol is that staff generally places items requested by Council Members on the soonest feasible agenda, but if staff runs into a scheduling dilemma, those items come to the full Council for prioritization.

The third protocol is that Council Members should be careful not to make statements that imply their opinion represents the opinion of the City Council unless they have been given authorization to do so.

Luger also mentioned that the City of Excelsior operates as a 'Plan B' form of government with the exception of what is written in the City's Charter. Under this form of government, the City Council delegates all administrative duties to the City Manager and the City Manager is responsible for delegating those duties to the appropriate staff member(s).

Luger said that she is comfortable with Council Members contacting staff members directly with questions or requests for information to assist in the decision making process, but Council Members cannot individually assign duties to staff. The full City Council provides direction to the City Manager and the City Manager is responsible for ensuring the work is completed.

The Council agreed to continue the use of the protocols that have been established in the past.

**6. Adjournment**

Beattie moved, Fulkerson seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Luger  
City Manager