



City of Blaine

City Council

August 31, 2023 | 9:00 AM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order by the Mayor

The special meeting was called to order at 9:00AM by Mayor Sanders followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the Roll Call.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

PRESENT: Mayor Tim Sanders, Councilmembers Terra Fleming, Leslie Larson, Tom Newland, Jess Robertson and Lori Saroya.

ABSENT: Councilmember Chris Massoglia.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Safety Services Director/Police Chief Brian Podany; City Attorney Tom Loonan; Communications Manager Ben Hayle; and Senior Management Analyst Lisa Derr.

4. Awards - Presentations - Organizational Business

None.

5. Communications

None.

6. Open Forum

Open Forum is an opportunity for the public to present an issue or concern to City Council. There is a maximum of fifteen minutes set aside for open forum. Each presentation should be limited to no more than three minutes. If your item needs follow-up from the City, staff will arrange for

that follow-up and will contact you to let you know what is being done. Thank you for coming this evening.

Mayor Sanders opened the Open Forum at 9:02AM.

There being no input, Mayor Sanders closed the Open Forum at 9:02AM.

7. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

8. Approval of Consent Agenda:

All items listed under the "Consent Agenda" are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember or citizen so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

None.

9. Public Hearing and Items Published for a Certain Time

None.

10. Development Business

None.

11. Administration

11.1. RES 23-150 Contract Policing Services in Blaine Schools

Sponsors: Brian Podany, Safety Services Manager/Police Chief

Safety Services Director/Police Chief Podany stated Minnesota Statutes Chapter 121A governs student rights, responsibilities, and behavior. In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature included multiple provisions in the education bill that affect school resource officers and other officers providing contracted services to public schools, such as working at a football, basketball, or hockey game, or school dance. The statutory changes affect how and when use of force may be used in situations involving student restraint or preventing bodily harm or death to the student or another. Various interpretations have emerged from different associations and entities, as well as the Minnesota Attorney General's Office. Despite the iterations that have resulted, there remains confusion and considerations for the Minnesota Legislature. He presented further information regarding what the law reads as well as what has transpired since then.

Chief Podany explained the City of Blaine currently provides contract policing services, including school resource officers, to three school districts within the city's limits. This includes the Anoka Hennepin School District (AHSD), Centennial School District (CSD), and

Spring Lake Park School District (SLPSD). Currently, the AHSD and SLPSD contracts are school year to school year and have not yet been signed for the 2023-2024 school year. The CSD contract is currently a three-year contract and the city is entering the second year of the contract. The CSD contract has a 90-day termination clause, but the city is in discussions about a potential contract suspension until the issue is addressed adequately. He commented on the discussions he had with the Attorney General and explained he had urged Governor Walz to call a special session to address this matter. He then reviewed letters received from the Anoka County Attorney and legal counsel Eckberg Lammers. He explained he participated in an event at the Capitol yesterday where he was seeking ways to address the concern and stated as a parent and a police officer he was struggling with this. He requested the council suspend its contract for policing services with the schools until issues have been addressed adequately.

Mayor Sanders thanked Police Chief Podany for all of his efforts to address this concern and for being proactive. He reported this was a safety matter and he was disheartened by the fact the State took a one size fits all approach because this would have large unintended consequences. He appreciated how Police Chief Podany has been working to find a solution with the school districts, because everyone wants schools to be safe. He agreed there should be a special session to address this matter because nothing was more important than children and their safety. He did not support emboldening lawless behavior. He explained SROs are not restraining or confining students unnecessarily, but when situations arise where that type of force is necessary, officers have to be able to respond according to state law and their training and there is nothing worse than ambiguity and confusion around the rules of engagement for our officers and the public.

Motion by Councilmember Robertson, seconded by Councilmember Newland to adopt Resolution No. 2023-150, suspending the contract for policing services with the Centennial School District and to not renew contracts with the Spring Lake Park School District and Anoka Hennepin School District until issues have been addressed adequately.

Motion adopted unanimously.

12. Other Business

None.

13. Adjournment



Signed by

Tim Sanders, Mayor

Signed by

Moved by Councilmember Robertson, seconded by Councilmember Newland, to adjourn the meeting at 9:28AM.

Motion adopted unanimously.