



# City Council

## Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Monday, January 22, 2024

7:00 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

### 1. Call to Order

### 2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mara Bain	Mayor	Present	
Sam Husnik	Councilmember	Present	
Hanna Valento	Councilmember	Present	
Leif Erickson	Councilmember	Present	
Blake Roberts	Councilmember	Present	

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

### 4. Approve the Agenda (Action)

Mayor Bain requested to remove item 6.c. from the Consent Agenda.

**Motion:** Mayor Bain made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as revised.  
Motion seconded by Councilmember Valento. Motion carried 5-0.

### 5. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

*The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business.  
Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.*

Comments:

Susan Young, 9950 199<sup>th</sup> Street North, shared the Forest Lake Rotary is having their Rotary Plunge. This plunge helps raise money for nonprofit organizations or other important causes. Twenty teams are signed up and the resident encouraged a team from the City Council to raise money for an important cause. The Rotary Plunge will take place on February 17.

### 6. Consent Agenda Considerations (Action Items)

Mayor Bain requested to remove items 6.g.1 and 6.g.2 from the Consent Agenda to the regular agenda.

- a. Approve City Bills
- b. Approve Minutes from the January 8, 2024 City Council Meeting
- c. ~~Approve Payout of Termination Benefits to Patrick Casey (no packet materials)~~
- d. Resolution 1-22-24-01 – Presidential Nomination Primary Election Judges Appointments
- e. Contractor’s Request for Payment
  1. 2022-2023 Lift Station and Force Main Improvements Project – Request for Payment No. 13
  2. 2022-2023 Lift Station and Force Main Improvements Project – Change Order No. 2



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3. Water Treatment Plant No. 4 – Request for Payment No. 20
- f. Letters of Credit
  1. 880 15<sup>th</sup> Street SW – Letter of Credit Reduction No. 1
  2. Culvers Site Improvements – Letter of Credit Reduction No. 1
- g. ~~Special Events~~
  1. ~~Resolution No. 01-22-24-02 Granting Access to Forest Lake First Lake for 2024 Kids Pro Ice Racing Event~~
  2. ~~Resolution No. 01-22-24-03 Granting Access to Forest Lake First Lake for 2024 Rotary Winter Plunge~~
- h. Business Licensing and Permits
  1. Gambling Permits
    - A. White Bear Lake Area High School Wrestling Boosters – LG220 Gambling Exempt Permit
  2. Massage Business License Renewals
    - A. Essential Massage
    - B. La Grande Salon
    - C. Massage by K's Caring Hands
    - D. Melo LLC
  3. Massage Individual License Renewals
    - A. Abigail Schlecht
    - B. Charles Bachman
    - C. Kay Ketchum
    - D. Kaylee Gale
    - E. Laura Olds
    - F. Theresa Tryman
  4. Tobacco License Renewals
    - A. DB Liquor LLC dba Liquor Works
    - B. FKG Oil Company dba Forest Lake MotoMart
    - C. Forest Lake Tobacco Inc. – 668 Lake St S
    - D. Holiday Stationstore #2746253
    - E. Holiday Stationstore #2746311
    - F. Hwy 61 Stop and Go
    - G. KSIALL Company dba MGM Wine & Spirits
    - H. Kwik Trip Inc dba Kwik Trip #429
    - I. Northern Tier Retail LLC dba Speedway #4370
    - J. Walgreen co. dba Walgreens #07111
    - K. Walmart Inc. dba Walmart #2274
    - L. Wine & Roses Liquors Inc dba Wine & Roses Liquors
  5. Liquor License Renewals
    - A. Ashew Holdings LLC dba Friar Tucks
    - B. D & D of Minnesota Inc. dba Famous Dave's
    - C. Forest Lake VWF Post 4210 dba VFW Post
    - D. KSIALL Company dba MGM Wine & Spirits



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- E. Kwik Trip Inc dba Kwik Trip #429
- F. Mallards MN LLC dba Mallards
- G. Morales Food Inc dba Stellas on 97
- H. New Joy Garden MN Inc dba Joy Garden (3.2 beer)
- I. New Joy Garden MN Inc dba Joy Garden (wine)
- J. Northern Tier Retail LLC dba Speedway \$4370
- K. Old Log Cabin Inc. dba Old Log Cabin
- L. Other Guy's LLP dba Norman Quacks
- M. VR Companies LLC dba The Grillium
- N. Wine & Roses Liquors Inc dba Wine & Roses Liquors

**Motion:** Mayor Bain made a Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda Items 6.a. through 6.b., 6.d. through 6.f., and 6.h.

Motion seconded by Councilmember Husnik. Motion carried 5-0.

### g. Special Events

1. **Resolution No. 01-22-24-02 Granting Access to Forest Lake First Lake for 2024 Kids Pro Ice Racing Event**
2. **Resolution No. 01-22-24-03 Granting Access to Forest Lake First Lake for 2024 Rotary Winter Plunge**

Mayor Bain asked if there would be an ability to coordinate with emergency management for these events given the current ice conditions. She also asked for the Chief to give insight into the protocol. Fire Chief Newman stated there if there is not enough ice to hold the event, they will collaborate with event organizers. There are best practices regarding ice and ice measurement they will refer to.

Councilmember Valento asked if it would be best practice to abstain from voting due to their role on the Rotary Club Board.

**Motion:** Mayor Bain made a Motion to Adopt Resolution No. 01-22-24-02, Granting Access to Forest Lake First Lake for 2024 Kids Pro Ice Racing Event and Resolution No. 01-22-24-03 Granting Access to Forest Lake First Lake for 2024 Rotary Winter Plunge.

Motion seconded by Councilmember Erickson. Motion carried 5-0.

## 7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

### a) Kristina Handt Interim Administrator Contract (under separate cover)

City Attorney Johnson presented the administrator contract for the interim administrator position. The position would last until Forest Lake hires a city administrator. The City would need to provide 30-day notice when the position ends.

**Motion:** Councilmember Husnik made a Motion to Approve the interim administrator contract.

Motion seconded by Councilmember Valento. Motion carried 5-0.

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**b) Resolution 01-22-24-04 – Accepting Donation from Tired Iron Collision Center**

Chief of Police Peterson publicly thanked Tired Iron Collision Center for the donation of \$1,200 for the Shop with a Cop event. He recommended accepting the donation with gratitude.

**Motion:** Mayor Bain made a Motion to Adopt Resolution 01-22-24-04 Accepting Donation from Tired Iron Collision Center with gratitude.

Motion seconded by Councilmember Roberts. Motion carried 5-0.

**c) Resolution 01-22-24-05 – Accepting Donation from Forest Lake American Legion Post 225**

Chief of Police Peterson publicly thanked Forest Lake American Legion Post 225 for the donation of \$100 for the Shop with a Cop event. He recommended accepting the donation with gratitude.

**Motion:** Mayor Bain made a Motion to Adopt Resolution 01-22-24-05 Accepting Donation from Forest Lake American Legion Post 225 with gratitude.

Motion seconded by Councilmember Erickson. Motion carried 5-0.

**d) Approving Police Officer – New Hire**

Chief of Police Peterson shared that there was one vacancy open for a police officer position. One candidate completed interviews and thorough background checks. Chief of Police Peterson requested the approval to hire Zachary Boesel with the Forest Lake Police Department at Paygrade 9 and Step 5 under the 2023-2025 Law Enforcement Labor Services Labor Contract.

Councilmember Husnik asked how many applications were received. Chief of Police Peterson stated there is an open application and this position received four applications.

**Motion:** Councilmember Husnik made a Motion to Approve the hiring of Zachary Boesel to fill the open position of police officer at paygrade 9 and step 5 pursuant to the 2023-2025 LELS Labor Contract.

Motion seconded by Councilmember Valento. Motion carried 5-0.

## 8. Discussion

**a) City Administration Search (no packet materials)**

City Attorney Johnson shared that the City Council received proposals from DDA, Baker Tilly, and Gov HR USA. City Attorney Johnson asked the City Council for their next steps for the city administration search plan. City Attorney Johnson also asked if the City Council would like DDA to attend the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Councilmember Erickson shared positive feedback on the DDA proposal, specifically with the two-year guarantee and the value.

Mayor Bain asked for potential next steps, including in-person proposals with the firms, individual Council member meetings, reference checks, or meeting attendance.

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Councilmember Roberts questioned whether the City Council could request a two-year guarantee from the remaining firms.

Mayor Bain stated it would be helpful to receive specific city references for the named individuals working for the firms. Mayor Bain stated the firms could be invited to the meeting on February 12 and attend either in-person or virtually. Mayor Bain encouraged the City Council to be prepared to decide on the firm to hire a City Administrator by February 12.

Councilmember Erickson asked if these firms would help with other staffing searches as well. Mayor Bain confirmed it made good sense for the firm to hire additional positions.

Councilmember Roberts asked if there was pricing available for hiring remaining positions. City Attorney Johnson stated that DDA has the staffing study completed and can share the results of the staffing study on February 12.

Councilmember Erickson supported the idea of DDA presenting the staffing study and the City Council completing a workshop to discuss the study following the meeting.

Mayor Bain confirmed that the City Council saw initial information from the study. The City Council has not heard the complete presentation from DDA or discussed the information. Mayor Bain thought it would be unlikely to provide approval on the same night as the presentation.

Councilmember Roberts questioned whether there were benefits of advertising positions such as deputy clerk.

Mayor Bain encouraged the City Council to discuss expectations during a workshop. Mayor Bain requested the other firms provide a quote for the additional position searches. The City Council will hear the DDA presentation on the staffing study and the City Administrator search to determine the next steps.

**b) Deputy Clerk Position (no packet materials)**

Interim City Administrator Handt reviewed the history of the administrator/clerk and deputy clerk positions. The DDA study suggested separating the administrator/clerk roles as other comparable cities have a clerk and an administrator position.

Councilmember Valento shared that the City is understaffed and communicated the value of separating the clerk and administrator positions to alleviate additional stress in one role.

Councilmember Erickson stated the job duties of the two roles are very different. Mayor Bain communicated that there has been a lot of transition in the deputy clerk role. It is difficult to re-train the position every two to three years.

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Mayor Bain asked Interim City Administrator Handt for the next steps to hire these positions. Interim City Administrator Handt indicated the next steps would be to update the job descriptions and determine the pay grades the positions would fall into.

Councilmember Erickson asked if splitting these roles would impact the proposals from the firms. City Attorney Johnson confirmed the other firms would be made aware of these changes.

**c) Public Meeting Virtual Attendance Options**

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the disruption of the January 8 City Council meeting through the virtual attendance option. The Zoom links are now updated with secure features. Community Development Director Wittman asked the City Council if they wanted to continue offering the virtual attendance option.

Mayor Bain asked for additional options to livestream the meetings in place of Zoom. Community Development Director Wittman shared that the City Council meeting could be streamed via YouTube and Facebook

Mayor Bain asked if the Zoom account was low-cost. Mayor Bain expressed hesitancy with removing remote options based on positive previous participation. This is also an option for vendors to participate remotely.

**d) 2024 Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting Date**

Community Development Director Wittman shared that the Washington County Assessor's Office set the Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting date for April 8 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. The City Council adopted the 2024 meeting calendar and published the meeting for either April 15 or April 29. Community Development Director Wittman asked the City Council for the preferred meeting date to coordinate with Washington County.

Mayor Bain suggested the City Council set the meeting for April 15 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and the City Council can meet for the City Council Workshop at 6:30 p.m.

**e) 2024 New State Funding**

Finance Director Knopik shared the City received a one-time Public Safety Aid for \$918,000 at the end of 2023 from the State Legislature. In 2024, the City will receive approximately \$210,000 for local, affordable housing aid. Staff will have recommendations for fund usage before fund disbursement in June.

Mayor Bain communicated that housing funds are used in areas where Forest Lake does not have a large footprint. Mayor Bain encouraged staff to provide recommended usage for the funds.

Mayor Bain asked if the funds are committed to the City over a four-year period. Community Development Director Wittman stated the funds are new and are dependent on the



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government in place. The funds are guaranteed for four years. The City Council will need to determine who will distribute the funds to meet housing goals and capitalize on housing partnership opportunities.

Councilmember Erickson asked if the County CDA and other non-profit partners could help keep the money local. Community Development Director Wittman confirmed there would need to be evidence to show how and where the finances were used. The City needs to consider where there are gaps to use these funds efficiently and effectively.

### 9. Staff Updates

Community Development Director Wittman shared they will attend a local transportation meeting to discuss the expansion of transportation in Forest Lake and area cities. This meeting will provide follow-up with partners from past meeting discussions.

Interim City Administrator Handt thanked the staff for their welcome over the past week, noting early voting for the primary started last week.

Public Works Director Adams communicated that the hockey rinks are open and will be maintained as temperatures allow.

City Engineer Goodman stated staff submitted for another I & I grant. The potential allocation will be communicated in February. The City should receive a minimum of \$50,000. On Tuesday, February 6, there will be an Open House from 4:30-6:30 p.m. for the County State Highway 32 project. They will hold another public engagement meeting for the Broadway Avenue maintenance project.

Chief of Police Peterson has partnered with the City of Forest Lake Lions Club and AARP to present information on senior scams. They have started to organize the City of Forest Lake Safety Camp, Coffee with the Cops, and Night to Unite.

### 10. Mayor and City Council Updates

Councilmember Roberts welcomed Interim City Administrator Handt and thanked City Attorney Johnson for the assistance during the transition. Councilmember Roberts suggested if the staff takes on additional roles, they should be compensated.

Councilmember Valento welcomed Interim City Administrator Handt and expressed appreciation for City staff.

Councilmember Husnik attended the School Board meeting and met with MnDOT aeronautics at the airport.

Councilmember Erickson agreed with the comments expressed by Councilmember Valento and Councilmember Roberts.



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Mayor Bain expressed appreciation for the City staff in assisting to create a smooth transition.

### 11. Closed Session

**Motion:** Mayor Bain made a Motion to Move into Closed Session Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §13D.05 Subdivision 3(b) for confidential attorney-client discussion regarding threatened litigation re contract dispute with Taylor West contract for the Downtown Stormwater BMP's ON1.126684. Motion seconded by Councilmember Valento. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Bain, seconded by Husnik to open the meeting.

Council reconvened the regular meeting to Adjourn.

Motion by Bain, seconded by Valento to adjourn the meeting at 8:34pm.