

- MINUTES -
CHASKA CITY COUNCIL
MARCH 17, 2025

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Hubbard at 7:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Roll call was taken. Present: Mayor Hubbard and Councilmembers Benesh, Grau, Hatfield, and Sheveland.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Matt Podhradsky, City Administrator; Krista Mark, Communications Coordinator; Elise Durbin, Assistant City Administrator; Nate Kabat, Community Development Director; Liz Hanson, City Planner; and Christophe Morschen, City Attorney.

4. Adopt the Agenda

Motion by Councilmember Sheveland, second by Councilmember Hatfield, to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

5. Visitor Presentation

5.A. State of the Library – Kevin Spencer

Jodi Edstrom, Carver County Library Director, introduced herself and Kevin Spencer, Chaska Branch Manager. She stated there were nearly 1.5 million checkouts throughout the system. There was also a 25 percent increase in digital check-outs. She pointed out 46 percent of the checkouts were children's books. In 2024, they started a virtual library card program in collaboration with school districts.

Ms. Edstrom noted there was a 20 percent increase in adult program attendance, and their crafting event was successful. New technology has been implemented including new self-checks and mobile printing. The County's Charles J. Dahlke allowed the library to expand resources for Spanish speakers. Mr. Spencer added there was a 20 percent increase in checkouts at the Chaska branch after more Spanish materials were added.

Ms. Edstrom pointed out there will be no fines in 2025. The top books were *The Women, A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*, and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Mr. Spencer showed a pie chart. A large majority of the circulation in 2024 was children's books. 58,437 folks visited the Chaska Library and over 334 volunteer hours were donated. Over 4,200 people attended free programs at the Chaska Library, and staff promoted the library to 5,500 residents at community events.

Mr. Spencer stated 1,747 attended story times at the Chaska Library. There are two story times each week, and they are considering expansion of the offering.

Mr. Spencer pointed out there are several youth program options such as Lego building, learning about Chaska history, chess club, and a puzzle swap. For teens, they offered an opportunity to make zombie dolls, a trivia night, photo coasters, and a book club in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Spencer added there are ongoing adult book clubs, and there was a bookmark contest. There is a space near the library for community gardening. Anything grown there is donated to food shelves, and they look forward to expanding the garden and biking programming.

Mr. Spencer stated the Chaska Library has partnered with NorthStar therapy animals, the Scouts, and The Lodge. The Chaska Library has provided outreach to Spanish-speaking community members, Chaska Pride, and the kindergarten at Carver Elementary School.

Mr. Spencer noted the facility was rearranged a bit, and they participated in the GeoCache Odyssey. Friends of the Chaska Library have worked hard to support the Chaska Library through donations and sales.

Mr. Spencer stated in 2025, the Chaska Library will be offering free notary services. Furthermore, they plan to maximize the teen, kids, and Spanish collection areas of the library, expand story time and programming options, and connect with libraries that have recently been rebuilt.

Councilmember Hatfield pointed out Chaska has phenomenal librarians. She had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Spencer, and it was encouraging. Mr. Spencer offered to meet with more Councilmembers.

Councilmember Grau noted his appreciation of the library and the opportunities and the community gathering space it offers.

Councilmember Sheveland stated the programming for preschoolers has been impactful for her family.

Mayor Hubbard stated she uses the Libby app and library resources regularly. There are a number of growth and connection opportunities at the Chaska Library. The library offers so much more than physical books. It is a destination and promotes community.

City Administrator Podhradsky stated a larger library space would allow Chaska to host more events and programs.

5.B. Other

Kristen Bartley, 1418 Meadow Lane, explained backyard chickens are a passion of hers. She has worked with other municipalities to allow chicken keeping. Backyard chickens offer a number of benefits to families and the environment. She requested the City's ordinance be

changed to five hens and no roosters, 25 feet from neighboring residential structures, and allow for HOA rules to further restrict regulations.

Mayor Hubbard stated she has received emails from constituents who have expressed interest in chicken keeping. She thanked Ms. Bartley for her comments because it will allow the Council to reconsider the topic.

City Administrator Podhradsky confirmed Staff has researched the option. He offered to schedule a Work Session.

Councilmember Hatfield asked if Ms. Bartley was in favor of the previously proposed ordinance. Ms. Bartley confirmed she supported the ordinance. However, the annual \$100 application fee is prohibitive.

Mayor Hubbard explained the fee is to account for Staff time. They will look into what neighboring cities are doing for chicken keeping.

6. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

6.A. Approve the March 3, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes

Motion by Councilmember Sheveland, second by Councilmember Benesh to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2025, City Council meeting.

Motion carried.

7. Consent Agenda

Councilmember Hatfield noted her excitement for Taste of Chaska.

Mayor Hubbard asked for details on the purpose of Consent Agenda Item 7A. Approve Addendum to the Chaska Community Center Party Package Agreement with U of M. City Attorney Christophe Morschen explained the Community Center has requirements when negotiating contracts. It is unusual for the Council to be involved in such small contracts, but it is related to using the University of Minnesota's insurance for events.

Motion by Councilmember Grau, second by Councilmember Hatfield to approve the Consent Agenda Items A through D:

- A. Approve Addendum to the Chaska Community Center Party Package Agreement with U of M

Motion for City Council approval and acceptance of the Carver and Scott County 4-H Club documentation for a birthday party.

- B. Approve Temporary Liquor Licenses for SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce
Motion to approve Temporary On-Sale Intoxicating License TW.25-1 and 3.2% Malt Liquor License 32.25-01 for the SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce at Taste of Chaska.

- C. Adopt Resolution No. 2025-20 Approving the Final Plat for Highpoint Vistas/Forestar/PC #2024-20

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-20 approving the Final Plat for Highpoint Vistas (PC #2024-20).

- D. POSTPONED TO APRIL 21st --- TABLED from 2/24/2025: Adopt Resolution No. 2025-14 and Ordinance No. 1055 Approving the Preliminary Plat and Rezoning for Fultonwood/Pulte Homes/PC #2024-21

Motion to postpone review of preliminary plat and rezoning request by Pulte for the Fultonwood development proposal to April 21, 2025.

Motion carried.

8. Action Items

8.A. Approve Fishing with Friends Letter of Intent for Seed Funding

City Administrator Podhradsky introduced the item to the Council and provided a presentation on it.

Gary Sorensen, representative of Fishing with Friends, explained the history of their group and previous program offerings. They used to teach youth how to fish, but they changed their approach to include the whole family. They will be hosting an event on June 1, 2025. Then on July 15, 2024, there will be Veteran's Day on the Lake which will include fishing and lake tours.

Loren Simer, Fishing with Friends, added anyone can sign up for a night cruise with them. George Russell, Fishing with Friends representative, pointed out the cruises are offered on Wednesday evenings in the summer. It is a free opportunity, and people can register online.

Mayor Hubbard and City Administrator Podhradsky pointed out they have had very positive experiences with Fishing with Friends.

Councilmember Benesh asked how the group is funded. Mr. Sorensen stated they receive donations from private donors and various Lions' groups. It is expensive to keep a boat on Lake Minnetonka.

Councilmember Hatfield pointed out there is an option to donate to Fishing with Friends on their website. She added folks with wheelchairs have felt very included and not burdensome during their interactions with Fishing with Friends.

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Benesh approve the Letter of Intent with Fishing with Friends and to authorize the Mayor to execute this letter on behalf of the City.

Motion carried.

8.B. Adopt Resolution No. 2025-21 Approving the Concept Plan for EDCO on Creek Road/Pope Design Group/PC #2025-02

City Administrator Podhradsky introduced the item to the Council and City Planner Elizabeth Hanson provided a presentation on it.

Councilmember Sheveland noted her appreciation that EDCO is incorporating their own products into their project. She thanked them for expanding in Chaska.

John Lewis, CEO of EDCO, explained EDCO is family-owned by the third and fourth generations of the same family. The site is a great fit. They make materials for buildings.

Councilmember Hatfield asked if there will be new jobs at the site. Mr. Lewis stated they plan to move existing staff to the new site. However, the expansion is to support future growth of the business.

Mayor Hubbard noted her appreciation for the investment in Chaska.

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Grau to adopt Resolution No. 2025-21 approving the Concept Plan for EDCO (Creek Road) (PC #2025-02).
Motion carried.

8.C. Items related to Cannabis and Public Smoking

City Administrator Podhradsky introduced the item to the Council and Assistant City Administrator Elise Durbin provided a presentation on it.

Mayor Hubbard asked if the City rejects an application or doesn't receive an application from the State's lottery winners, then is the State responsible for selecting a new applicant from the lottery. Assistant City Administrator Durbin confirmed that is correct.

Councilmember Sheveland asked if the fees are intended to cover staff time and effort. Assistant City Administrator Durbin stated the fees are to cover administrative and enforcement efforts by Staff.

Councilmember Benesh asked if an unfavorable application can be denied even if there is space for another cannabis site. City Administrator Podhradsky explained Chaska cannot deny someone that has been approved by the State unless there are issues of noncompliance with local Ordinances. He added the lottery system doesn't favor existing businesses. Some businesses across the State have positioned themselves to become cannabis retailers, and they aren't guaranteed a license.

Assistant City Administrator Durbin continued her presentation.

Mayor Hubbard pointed out that the Council has participated in multiple Work Sessions on the topic. The State is responsible for the lottery system, and the City is responsible for enforcement. Chaska aims to promote success for retailers. They have considered geographic limitations, but the zoning already creates some buffers. Instead, the Council has focused on public smoking prohibition.

Councilmember Sheveland added there is an educational opportunity for the police department to understand if someone is impaired due to cannabis use.

8.C.i. Adopt Ordinance 1056 Regulating the Sale and Use of Cannabis

Councilmember Grau thanked Staff for their research and work on the topic.

Motion by Councilmember Grau, second by Councilmember Benesh, to adopt Ordinance No. 1056 regulating the sale and use of cannabis within the city of Chaska. Motion carried.

8.C.ii. Adopt Ordinance No. 1057 Prohibiting Public Smoking

Motion by Councilmember Benesh, second by Councilmember Hatfield to adopt Ordinance No. 1057 approving the Chaska Smoking and Commercial Tobacco Use Ordinance. Motion carried.

9. Bills

9.A. Accounts Payable Claims Roster 3-17-2025

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Sheveland to approve the bills as presented. Roll call was taken. Voting aye: Councilmembers Benesh, Hatfield, Grau, and Sheveland, and Mayor Hubbard. Voting nay: None
Motion carried.

10. Other Business

10.A. City Administrator's Report

10.A.i. Bi-Weekly Report 3-17-2025

Councilmember Benesh:

- Wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Councilmember Sheveland:

- Attended a St. Patrick's Day event which was advertised on the Chaska Parks and Recreation Department website.

Councilmember Hatfield:

- Pointed out Coffee with a Cop is March 19, 2025, at the Target Starbucks.
- Noted the Chaska history books are for sale at the History Center.
- Stated there was a Downtown Business Alliance meeting and they reviewed community resident surveys. She summarized the results of the survey.
- Added some new parking signs have been installed downtown.
- Stated she and Mayor Hubbard tried out curling recently. There are leagues open.
- Noted the SouthWest Transit expansion will be completed soon, and she provided details on the changes.

Councilmember Grau:

- Encouraged folks to participate in the southwest Chaska survey regarding the new parks.

Mayor Hubbard:

- Stated the Employee Appreciation Breakfast had a good turnout despite the snowstorm.
- Congratulated Officer Van Dahlen on his new role.
- Pointed out the Chaska Community Center Carnival was a great event.
- Noted the groundbreaking ceremony for 82nd Street project is April 1, 2025 and another one for the 10/41 project will be April 8, 2025.
- Stated there will be an Easter Egg Hunt on April 19, 2025.
- Added a tree planting event will be on April 19, 2025.

- Explained the Christmas in May is coming up.

11. Adjourn

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Sheveland to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Motion carried.