

**STAFF SUMMARY  
CITY OF MINNETONKA  
SPECIAL STUDY SESSION  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2002  
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**Council Present:** Terry Schneider, Dick Allendorf, Al Thomas, Ken Tauer and Karen Anderson

**Staff Present:** John Gunyou, GERALYN BARONE

Mayor Anderson called meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**1. Interviews for Advisory Boards**

Mayor Anderson welcomed the boards and commissions applicants to be interviewed. She explained that they should focus on telling the council the most important things about themselves.

The Council began the interviews:

Elizabeth Diebold, 17605 Susan Drive. Ms. Diebold's background includes experience in a Fortune 500 company, with an emphasis on project planning and implementation. She comes from a "think tank" environment based on team facilitation. She is currently working as a real estate agent and has time to give back to the community. She currently volunteers in the Minnetonka school district.

Anderson asked where she had lived most recently and Elizabeth answered that she had lived in Salt Lake City for six years.

Tauer asked how she knows Woody Love, who she listed as a reference. Diebold answered that Love is a business partner as is Sue Scribner.

Thomas asked if she knew about the sign ordinance and if she'd heard anything about it. Diebold answered yes and that she had. She explained the realtor philosophy that the cost of signs is less than that of ads.

Schneider noted that the EDA and Planning Commission had been struggling with questions of environmental protection, density and affordability and asked how she viewed these issues. Diebold responded that the community needs police, firefighters and teachers to be able to afford living within it. She noted that much of Minnetonka's housing stock is at an age where there'll be conversion and many requests for subdivision. She added that there are opportunities for affordable housing.

Schneider asked her opinion about open space versus affordability. Elizabeth answered that there is a lot of city-owned public space and that, if this is preserved, open space won't be a problem. She noted that it's important to maintain these open spaces and parks.

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Anderson ended the interview by noting that there are currently only one opening on the Park Board and two openings on the Community Heritage Commission, but that openings on Minnetonka's boards and commissions come up regularly during the year and Elizabeth's application will be on file for a year.

Thomas Heffernan, 18609 Covington Road. Mr. Heffernan began by saying he wasn't sure what he was interviewing for because he's filled out several applications, including some for the State. Mayor Anderson explained boards and commissions service and noted the preferences he had marked on the application.

Mr. Heffernan said that he retired about 15 years ago and that his last position was as tax director for US Gypsum Corporation in Chicago. US Gypsum had locations in 60 cities and Thomas actively dealt with tax assessors regarding property values. He described himself as experienced in dealing with public officials. He also said he is active in SCORE and discussed how people going into business apply for SBA loans. He has volunteered to prepare income tax returns for the elderly for the past several years.

Mr. Heffernan is a 1948 graduate of NYC College of Law and his primary practice involved federal taxes. Thomas stated that it would be an absolute error on his part to stay home and do nothing and noted that he found his experience as an election judge very satisfying.

Mayor Anderson asked where he has been helping seniors with tax returns. He said at the Community Center and thanked her for making the facility available to help people apply for SBA loans.

Allendorf asked if he was active in any senior programs. Thomas answered no, but had participated in exercise groups from time to time as well as one trip.

In answer to Schneider's question regarding counsel, Thomas answered that he often acts as counsel for SCORE, providing the practicalities of going into business to interested applicants.

Jim Landree, 903 Sunnyview Lane. Mayor Anderson introduced Jim, noting that he had applied for the vacant Ward 3 council position, and asking him if he had a preference for board service. Mr. Landree replied that he was interested in serving on the Police Advisory Committee. He said he lives behind Circuit City and is his Neighborhood Watch captain. He works with the Crones and Colitis Foundation. His experience includes ownership of a limo and motor home business in Los Angeles for 16 years, which involved a variety of experience with movie studios. He

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added that he has lived in Minnetonka for seven years and does a lot of volunteer work.

Anderson asked him what it's like living by Ridgedale. He said he keeps prodding his neighbors to get involved and he tries to set an example by doing neighborhood clean up at the pond behind Circuit City. However, no trespassing signs have now been posted at that site.

Tauer asked him about his opinions regarding the preservation of the environment versus development. Jim noted that Minnetonka has lots of deer and other wildlife and said he favors wildlife rather than trying to dispose of it.

Mayor Anderson thanked Jim for being an advocate for his neighborhood.

Mary Isaacson Luker, Ms. Luker works for Opportunity Partners as vice president of marketing. She is interested in providing employment opportunities and values diversity in the workplace. She also noted her 20 years of experience working in health care and that she served on the California Health Board. She has lived in Minnetonka since 1996. She also mentioned that, while in California, she served with an incorporation group that successfully created a town in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Mary stated that she really values Minnetonka's collaborative approach and its openness with its citizens.

The mayor responded with appreciation, saying that the city tries to get out as much information as possible.

Allendorf asked if Mary recalled any issues in her neighborhood and how they were handled. She recalled that she delivered letters when a house was being relocated and was pleased with the receptive attitude of those involved and with how the situation was handled. More recently, she said there was a difficult issue involving luxury apartments, which was also handled well – fairly and justly, with plenty of opportunity for input.

Schneider asked her why work with the Planning Commission, the EDA and the Charter Commission appealed to her. Mary answered that she believes her skills and knowledge would be of particular value to these groups.

Patrick Murphy, 16831 Saddlewood Trail. Mr. Murphy is a native of Madison, WI, went to St. John's University, served in the Peace Corps, and was a contemplative, Trappist monk six years. He possesses a Masters Degree in Medieval Studies and contemplative prayer. He chose to become a businessman rather than joining the priesthood and was President of DecoPac, a division of McGlynn. In 1995, he stepped down as CEO to help with his autistic son. He lived in Excelsior and was

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involved with its Heritage Preservation Committee. He currently is at Northwest Mutual working in the areas of estate planning and business planning. He stated a keen interest in history and preserving a community's identity.

Anderson noted that Minnetonka has an active Community Heritage Commission as well as an active Historical Society. Schneider noted Murphy's interesting background and stated that Patrick would add a lot to the Heritage Commission. Allendorf asked what the link was between Murphy's degree and business. Murphy replied that he set up a business to market honey cups nationally while he was a monk.

Thomas Spriggs, 11474 Deer Ridge Lane. Prior to the past two years in Minnetonka, Mr. Spriggs resided exclusively on the east coast. He stated that he would like to put roots down in Minnetonka, that he likes the quality of life and values the environment. He stated that a community must have a good economic balance between competing interests. He also noted that he had found himself volunteering here more than ever before.

Tauer noted that Spriggs indicated that he would prefer service on the Park Board, the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District, and the EDA. Spriggs noted that he is a volunteer with the DNR (deer count) and the local chapter of the Audobon Society. He said he really likes Minnetonka's trail system and is very interested in economic development.

Anderson noted that the EDA most recently focused on affordable housing and that current economic issues may require an expanding effort in the area of housing. Allendorf pointed out that Murphy lives in an area with train activity and asked how that activity has been over the last three to four months. Spriggs answered that it has not been noticeably different and that he's only been impeded by a train once or twice. He added that being blocked by a train is minor compared to mosquitoes!

Anderson mentioned that study the county is doing regarding the trail being considered for the light rail transit system. Spriggs was not familiar with it. Allendorf noted that Spriggs does not live in the area of that trail.

## **2. Adjournment**

The special study session adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Magrew  
City Clerk

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By: Terri DesLaurier  
Administrative Assistant