

**STAFF SUMMARY
CITY OF MINNETONKA
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2007
PAGE 1**

Council Present: Dick Allendorf, Al Thomas, Tony Wagner, Brad Wiersum and Mayor Jan Callison

Council Absent: Bob Ellingson, Terry Schneider

Staff: John Gunyou, Geralyn Barone, David Maeda

Callison called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m. and explained the interview process.

1. Boards and commissions interviews

Sue Sjeklocha has both professional and volunteer non-profit experience. She has lived in the city for over 25 years. She said she is interested in serving because she wants to give back to the community. She indicated she has consensus building skills that would be useful and said one of her strengths is being courageous. Allendorf asked for an example of this and Sjeklocha gave an example of an action she took as a board member of Simpson Housing Services- a Minneapolis homeless shelter. She said safety concerns had been raised and to get the issues addressed she made a motion to close the shelter. The motion failed but the attention drawn led to action on the safety issues.

Wagner asked why Sjeklocha had made serving on the planning commission her number one choice. She said that the issues dealt with by the commission often were at the human level and were emotional issues and that she wanted to be a part of the solution in working through those issues.

Kathryn Graber is a lifelong Twin Cities resident and has lived in Minnetonka for the past eight years. She said she has been volunteering all her life and now would like to get more involved in the community and learn more about how government works. She said she is detail oriented and likes to learn from different perspectives. Thomas asked for one thing Graber liked about living in Minnetonka and one thing she did not like. Graber responded that the answer was the location of the city for both categories. She said the city's location makes it easy to get to but because it is easy to get to, traffic is heavy.

Wiersum asked why Graber after many years of nonprofit volunteer work now wants to shift to public service. She said that she wants to learn how city government works and by getting more involved she would become more informed and could better effect change.

Diane Hayden has lived in Minnetonka for 15 years and has three children. She previously served on the Park Board from 1994 to 2003. She said she was instrumental in getting the referendum passed to provide more funding. She has volunteered at her children's schools but has missed working on the Park Board

**STAFF SUMMARY
CITY OF MINNETONKA
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2007
PAGE 2**

and would like to return.

Thomas said that since the time Hayden left the board, a lot of the programs have moved from the thinking stage to being operational. He asked her perspective on this shift. Hayden replied that because of her children she has spent a lot of time visiting parks not only in Minnetonka but also in Plymouth and Edina. She said that she has seen first hand what makes parks attractive to families and little changes like adding monkey bars or an outhouse to a park makes it even more popular. She said that of all her life's work the thing that has impressed her daughter Alexis most is her service on the Park Board.

James Helsdingen received his undergraduate degree in history from Eastern Illinois University. He went on to earn his MBA in accounting from the University of St. Thomas. He currently works as a C.P.A. Helsdingen said that he has the time and desire to serve his community and wants to learn more about city government.

Wiersum asked why Helsdingen's primary interest is serving on the Economic Development Authority. Helsdingen said that he felt that was the best fit with his past experience and his current job. He said some of the biggest issues facing the city are the subdivision of lots and building of houses and making sure that the right decisions are made to maintain the beauty of the city. He said although the EDA might be the best fit he would be willing to serve the city in other areas as well.

Bill Yaeger has lived in Minnetonka for around 20 years. He said that after earning his bachelor's degree from Mankato State University he assumed he was going to move back to Edina where his parents' home was located. But he found a perfect condo in Minnetonka and said he would now like to give back to the city that he has gotten so much from. He currently owns a finance company that provides automobile loans to those with poor credit. He served six years on the Bassett Creek Watershed District's board. He said two terms on the watershed district's board was enough and he now wishes to try something different for the city.

Allendorf asked how Yaeger's company's business of providing loans to those with bad credit to buy good cars isn't a recipe for disaster. Yaeger said that by limiting the profit margin for car dealers the financing works and that many considered bad risks for a loan because of poor credit scores are people who have gone through a divorce or lost a job but really are not bad credit risks.

Callison asked Yaeger to expand on a comment made in his application on the need to change the focus of the city from growth to quality. He said that the extra things in life that a city can provide add to the residents overall quality of life and that Minnetonka needs to continue to look at adding attractions that will bring

**STAFF SUMMARY
CITY OF MINNETONKA
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2007
PAGE 3**

people to the city.

The session was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Maeda
City Clerk