

**STAFF SUMMARY
CITY OF MINNETONKA
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009
PAGE 1**

Council Present: Dick Allendorf, Bob Ellingson, Amber Greves, James Hiller, and Mayor Terry Schneider. Tony Wagner and Bob Ellingson were excused.

Staff: Geralyn Barone and David Maeda

1. Boards and Commissions Interviews

Michael Garelick

Garelick said he originally moved to the city because of its beauty and power of its neighborhoods. When he lived in St. Louis Park he was actively involved, serving on the planning commission. He has had a 45 year career in real estate and currently serves on the Hennepin County Board of Equalization. He said his recovery from cancer led to his becoming a hospice chaplain.

Garelick said his experience as a guardian ad litem for the Hennepin County Juvenile Court and as a volunteer mediator for the Minnesota Department of Human Rights have provided the opportunity to use his communication and listening skills. He is interested in serving on a board or commission to give back to the community.

Allendorf noted that Garelick indicated a preference for serving on the community commission but his application indicated his first choice was the planning commission. He asked Garelick to elaborate. Garelick said he would serve wherever he was needed. He wants the city to maintain its quality of life.

Wiersum asked how Garelick's mediator skills would help him as a board and commission member. Garelick replied that his skills would assist in consensus building.

Schneider noted the city already contracts for mediation services. Garelick said he was aware of the organization the city uses.

Benita Bjorgo

Bjorgo said she was interested in serving on the EDA. She has a finance and banking background and currently works as the treasury operations and risk manager for Capella University. She said she came from a modest household and learned about affordable housing issues when her mother moved into an affordable housing unit.

**STAFF SUMMARY
CITY OF MINNETONKA
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009
PAGE 2**

Schneider asked where Bjorgo received her MBA. Bjorgo replied the degree was from the University of St. Thomas.

Wiersum asked what Bjorgo considered the city's top economic development issues. Bjorgo identified foreclosures as the top issue. She said although other communities have been hit harder, a foreclosed house impacts a neighborhood.

Hiller asked Bjorgo to explain why the city needed affordable housing. Bjorgo replied affordable housing would allow families with modest incomes to move to the city.

Schneider noted that the city has been discussing changing the EDA to have it become more pro-active.

Greves asked Bjorgo to comment on how the city is doing in engaging the public in the discussion about village centers. Bjorgo said the city has done a good job but there are always different ways to engage residents.

2. Adjournment

The study session adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Maeda
City Clerk