

# EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL WORK MEETING

September 22, 2025

The East Bethel City Council met on September 22, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. for the regular City Council Work meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT:           Ardie Anderson           Suzanne Erkel           Brian Mundle  
  Tim Miller                 Jim Smith

ALSO PRESENT:               Matt Look, City Administrator

## 1.0 – Council Salaries Discussion

Look stated that the prior Council discussed the salaries, and there was interest in bringing this back up to see what direction they would like to take going forward.

Look noted that there would be enough money in the budget if they would like to modify the salaries. Look added that the last time the salaries were changed was 2005.

Look stated that if they decided to change the salaries, it would not go into effect until January 2027, after the next election.

Erkel asked why the delay was in effect. Anderson noted that it is State law.

Anderson stated that he has noticed that surrounding cities have kept their salary the same and added a per diem for any extra meetings.

Erkel stated that she is interested in moving forward with an increase, and it would be automatic with the negotiations. Look noted that they have done that automatic increase at the County, and then the Commissioners have the choice to take it or not.

Anderson stated it would be nice for it to be set in stone so that they would not have a need for discussions like this.

Mundle asked how much of an increase they are considering. Erkel stated that she was thinking of a 10% increase.

Anderson stated that it would be a \$ 52.50 increase for the Mayor and a \$47.50 increase for Councilmembers, for an overall increase of \$960 to the budget.

Look clarified that they would like a 10% increase for adjustment and then follow COLA for subsequent years.

## 2.0 – Animal Containment City Service

Look stated that he wanted to have a discussion to see where they currently stand with this. Look noted that the Animal Humane Society sent the City a letter saying that they will not be providing impound services anymore, but will continue to accept strays found by the public.

Look noted that the question is now whether the City will provide the impound service.

Anderson asked what other cities are looking at doing. Look noted that a lot of them are going with the individual who has impound services located in Isanti.

Mundle stated that they have the option to find out what other animal control services are out there. Mundle noted that there used to be a kennel at the Public Works building, and staff would have to come in and take care of the animals.

Mundle asked if Look has been in communication with the Humane Society. Look stated that he has not been in contact with them; he is only referencing the letter received.

Erkel asked if the City would require the dog owner to reimburse any costs to the City. Look stated that generally no, unless it was a bite or rabies incident.

Look noted that there is a certain risk if the City provides this service, because there is liability.

Miller asked if there is an offset anywhere when they get charged by the Humane Society, but the owner also pays to pick up the animal from the Humane Society. Look noted that he would have to look at the invoices to see the specific times they get billed.

Miller asked if the Sheriff's Department also bills the City when they pick up an animal. Look noted that it is included in their contract.

Look stated that the Humane Society does charge them, but they break it out.

Anderson asked, on average, how many animals get dropped off there a year. Look stated that based on the law enforcement that bring them in, it would be around 24 a year, but is not sure how many the public brings in per year.

Look noted that ideally, owners would have proper fencing and leashes to avoid this problem.

Erkel asked where the Anoka animal control facility is. Look stated that it is near the Police and Fire Station on Harrison.

Anderson noted that they want staff to check with the Humane Society to make sure they have a correct understanding of the letter and check if there are any other potential for other RFPs moving forward.

### **3.0 – Park/Trail Fees Discussion**

Look stated that this was brought back with specifics after Ayshford put together information on the options of a flat fee or a percentage of property, and it was decided that a flat fee was going to be the way things would be done.

Look asked if the fees are enough or if they should increase them. Look noted that currently they have a \$2,000 park dedication fee for new lots, single-family home developments, and a \$1,500 unit fee for multi-family homes.

Look stated that they want to encourage development, not discourage it with too high fees, but also cover their costs. Look also stated that trails can be a costly item to maintain.

Look stated that to cover some of the known expenses that come about, and build up a fund could be created with the trail fees.

Erkel stated that she would like to look at it because when she looks at the park budget, she always wonders why they do not have the money to do the things they would like to do.

Erkel stated that she would love for them to be able to do more things with the parks, like a fitness trail, permanent bag toss, horseshoes, etc.

Miller stated that one of the most frustrating parts of being the liaison for the Parks Commission is that they have a great team, but not enough funding to get what they want to get done.

Miller stated that if there were a way to increase and bring in revenue, everyone in the City would enjoy it. Miller stated that he knows there are lots of grants available, but they are usually after the fact.

Anderson asked if, when Capstone is done with their trails, do they inherit them. Look stated that they do.

Look asked how much of an increase they are thinking and if they would like to add the trail fee portion. Miller and Erkel agreed that they would like the trail portion. Erkel noted that they think they should increase the park dedication fee to at least \$4,000.

Look asked what they would like to set as the trail fee. Erkel suggested doing \$1,000 per unit. Look clarified per property.

Erkel asked when a new business comes in, they pay park dedication. Look stated that they pay \$2,000 per acre for light commercial developments. Erkel noted that it should be \$4,000.

Erkel noted that she would like to hear the Parks Commission's opinion on this as well.

Anderson asked for clarification on the trail vs the sidewalk in the Code. Look stated that they could require sidewalks by code and still charge a trail fee; it is up to the policy that is made.

Miller asked if cul-de-sac streets do not need a trail or sidewalk. Look stated that based on their current Code, they do not, since it is a dead end.

Look noted that cul-de-sac streets generally do not have the same amount of traffic as other streets do.

Look noted that this would go into effect for any new developments after it is adopted, but existing developers would be grandfathered in to the \$2,000 fee.

#### **4.0 – Adjourn**

Work Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lilian Rokosz

*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*