



**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**City Hall—Council Chambers, 590 40th Ave NE**  
**Monday, May 22, 2023**  
**6:00 PM**

**Mayor**  
*Amáda Márquez Simula*  
**Councilmembers**  
*Connie Buesgens*  
*Kt Jacobs*  
*Rachel James*  
*Justice Spriggs*  
**Interim City Manager**  
*Kevin Hansen*

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## **MINUTES**

The following are the minutes for the Meeting of the City Council held at 6:00 pm on Monday, May 22, 2023, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 590 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Columbia Heights, Minnesota.

### **WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Márquez Simula called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Present: Mayor Márquez Simula; Councilmember Buesgens; Councilmember Jacobs; Councilmember Spriggs; Councilmember James

Also Present: Lenny Austin, Chief of Police; Aaron Chirpich, Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager; Mitch Forney, Community Development Coordinator; Kevin Hansen, Interim City Manager; Jim Hauth, Public Works Director; Jim Hoeft, City Attorney; Sara Ion, City Clerk; Martha Grave, Community Volunteer; Ed Higgins, City Resident; Amina Jama, City Resident and College Student, Ayanle Jama, City Resident, Jennifer Pyper Munro, City Resident; Deghaa Shabbeleh, City Resident; Erica Solomon, Executive Director of National Council of Jewish Women.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Columbia Heights is a vibrant, healthy and connected City. We are here to actively support the community, deliver equitable services, build and strengthen connections, improve upon our past, and uphold our successes. We strive to be better and ensure Columbia Heights is a great place for everyone, today and in the future.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, RECOGNITION, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GUESTS**

#### **A. May Menstrual Hygiene Day.**

Mayor Márquez Simula proclaimed May 28, 2023 as Menstrual Hygiene Day and read the City's proclamation.

Amina Jama, High School Student, accepted the proclamation and noted she has been working with the high school to provide free menstrual products to those who menstruate and thanked the Council for walking alongside her.

Erica Solomon, Executive Director of National Council of Jewish Women, stated they have been working on partnership with representative Sandra Feist and Steve Drazkowski to pass legislation to make the products readily available for students in schools. Funding was

included in the k12 education budget and passed last week and also included the higher education budget for Minnesota State College and University of Minnesota campuses.

Mayor Márquez Simula noted the public library has menstrual products, which is a product that is needed like soap and paper towels.

**B. June 2, 2023 National Gun Violence Awareness Day.**

Councilmember James read the City's proclamation and Mayor Márquez Simula proclaimed June 2, 2023 as National Gun Violence Awareness Day.

Martha Grave, Community Volunteer, accepted the proclamation and explained she is part of Moms Demand Action, which is a grass roots movement of Americans fighting for public safety measures that can protect people from gun violence. She noted she was accepting the proclamation on behalf of the Northeast Metro Chapter of Moms Demand Action. She thanked the Council for taking the step to recognize survivors of gun violence. She added the majority of adults in the community have experienced some kind of gun violence and noted 59% of American adults report that they or someone they care about has experience gun violence in their lifetime with Black and Latino community members having even higher rates. Firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens in the U.S. and Minnesota and 99% of people who die in shootings in the U.S. are victims of other types of gun violence including gun suicide, accidental shootings, police shootings, and homicides. Lives can be saved through simple actions such as participating in orange day by wearing orange June 2-June 4 in recognition of Gun Violence Awareness Day, gun owners can securely store their unloaded guns, parents can incorporate conversations on gun storage with their children, friends, caretakers, and communities can learn about the impact of gun violence.

**C. June Immigrant Heritage Month.**

Councilmember Spriggs read the City's proclamation and Mayor Márquez Simula proclaimed June 2023 as Immigrant Heritage Month.

Ayanle Jama, City Resident, accepted the proclamation and stated he is part of the Somali Public Affairs Committee which advocates for Somali Americans and immigrants. He expressed his gratitude for the Council and the opportunities he has experienced in America and as a Somali immigrant. He described his journey of coming to America and the hard work it took to understand the American culture. He is now a husband and father of three children. He was the first person in his family to graduate from college and is a community leader and advocate. He added he would not have those opportunities if he did not come to America. He noted the importance of recognizing the contributions that immigrants have brought to America and noted immigrants add to the rich tapestry of the national identity. He stated the community must work together to welcome immigrants, support them, and address the challenges of discrimination, marginalization, and social and economic inequality. Through collective efforts, American can be a welcoming and an inclusive nation.

### **Motion for Resignation**

Councilmember Buesgens stated in response to the concerns about a Councilmember's behavior last summer she would like to make a motion to request the current Council to ask KT Jacobs to resign.

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Mayor Márquez Simula to request that KT Jacobs resign her position.*

Mayor Márquez Simula stated she has had many community members ask where the current Council stands on Councilmember Jacobs's actions from last summer. She explained the reason she seconded the motion was because of a professional undertaking and elected official's word needs to be paramount to everything the City hopes it to be.

*4 Ayes, 1 Abstained. Motion Carried 4-1. Ayes: (Mayor Márquez Simula, James, Spriggs, Buesgens) Abstained: (Jacobs).*

Mayor Márquez Simula noted the Council is requesting Councilmember Jacobs to resign her position.

Councilmember Jacobs stated she would not resign at this time.

Mayor Márquez Simula thanked Councilmember Buesgens for making the Council's position clear.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

*Motion by Councilmember Jacobs, seconded by Councilmember Buesgens, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

- 1. Approve the May 1, 2023 City Council Work Session Meeting Minutes.**  
MOTION: Move to approve the May 1, 2023 City Council Work Session meeting minutes.
- 2. Approve the May 8, 2023 City Council Meeting Minutes.**  
MOTION: Move to approve the May 8, 2023 City Council meeting minutes.
- 3. Approve the May 10, 2023 City Council Corner Meeting Minutes.**  
MOTION: Move to approve the May 10, 2023 City Council Corner meeting minutes.
- 4. 2024 Water Meter Replacement Equipment Purchase.**  
MOTION: Approve purchase of water meters and radios from Core & Main for the 2024 Residential Water Meter Replacement Program in the amount of \$1,954,977.79. With funding provided through bond sales in 2023 or 2024 as well as existing funds collected by the Residential Water Meter fee.
- 5. Approve Permits for the 2023 Jamboree.**  
MOTION: Move to authorize staff to close Huset Parkway from 39th to 40th Avenues beginning Tuesday afternoon, June 20, through Sunday, June 25, 2023.

MOTION: Move to authorize the Police Department to issue a parade permit for the Jamboree Parade to be held on Friday, June 23, 2023 beginning at 6:00 p.m. for the following streets: 45th Ave to Quincy St south to 40th Ave west to 5th St.

MOTION: Move to authorize fireworks at dusk on Saturday, June 24, 2023 and to waive the Fire Department fireworks display permit fee.

**6. License Agenda.**

MOTION: Move to approve the items as listed on the business license agenda for May 22, 2023 as presented.

**7. Rental Occupancy Licenses for Approval.**

MOTION: Move to approve the items listed for rental housing license applications for May 22, 2023, in that they have met the requirements of the Property Maintenance Code.

**8. Review of Bills.**

MOTION: Move that in accordance with Minnesota Statute 412.271, subd. 8 the City Council has reviewed the enclosed list to claims paid by check and by electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$1,213,697.91.

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**9. Adopt Resolution 2023-27, Approving Loan Modification with Alatus for the 4300 Central Avenue NE Redevelopment Site.**

Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich stated in July of 2021, the City partnered with Alatus LLC, to acquire the priority redevelopment site at 4300 Central Avenue NE. To facilitate the acquisition and redevelopment of the site, the City made a bridge loan to Alatus to purchase the property, demolish the existing buildings, and cover costs associated with environmental testing and clearance. To provide the loan, the City issued Taxable General Obligation Temporary Tax Increment Bonds. The City then used the bond funds to make a loan to Alatus for the purchase of the site. The maximum principal amount of the loan issued to Alatus was \$5,935,000. The bond/loan proceeds are held in escrow with a title company and the funds are distributed when eligible expenses are incurred by Alatus. The maturity date of the loan is currently set as July 31, 2023.

Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich noted at the time of making the loan to Alatus, it was expected by both parties that the redevelopment of 4300 Central Avenue NE would be underway before the maturity date. To repay the City's loan, Alatus needs to close on permanent financing for phase one of the project. Due to market conditions, the project has been delayed and phase one is now expected to start in late 2023, or the spring of 2024. This means that Alatus will need more time to repay the City's loan. To achieve this objective, Staff have worked with the City's redevelopment counsel at Kennedy and Graven to prepare loan modification documents. Staff and the City's counsel are recommending an extension of the repayment date to December 15, 2023. In addition to an extension of the maturity date, the revised loan documents also extend the final

draw date to October 31, 2023. This date sets a new limit for when Alatus can seek reimbursement for eligible costs.

Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich mentioned in addition to the loan maturity deadline with Alatus, the City needs to consider its plans for repayment of the bonds. The bonds currently have a maturity date of February 1, 2024. Under the original redevelopment plan, Alatus would repay the City's loan, and the City would then use the proceeds of the loan repayment to pay off the bonds. At the February 1, 2024, deadline, the bonds must be repaid whether or not Alatus has closed on their phase one permanent financing. In other words, the City is ultimately responsible for repayment of the bonds, whether Alatus is ready to pay off the loan or not. Due to the delay in getting the project started, the City and Alatus may have to consider a second bond issuance to extend the temporary financing period for the benefit of both parties. Under this scenario, the City would issue a new series of bonds to pay off the first series and issue a new loan to Alatus. This solution would provide an additional two years for Alatus to close on their first phase of permanent financing. This potential scenario was contemplated and discussed in 2021 when the City agreed to partner on this project. Ideally, this option will be avoided and used as a last resort, as it is inefficient from a bond issuance cost perspective. A new bond issuance will also be subject to current interest rates and increase the total cost of borrowing for the project. All additional costs under this scenario will be paid by Alatus and not the City.

Mayor Márquez Simula asked what the date for the demolition would be. Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich stated the exact date is not set yet but it will be in July 2023.

Councilmember James asked if the extension changes the current rates. Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich stated it does not and added the bond interest rate will not change. The reissuance and cost of increased interest would be Alatus' responsibility.

Councilmember Spriggs noted Alatus would be responsible for all additional costs. Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich added the City has pledged its credit as a backup and would get the project as collateral.

Mayor Márquez Simula asked Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich to share more about Alatus and the relationship the City has with them. Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich noted Alatus is the developer that has completed the Ratio and City Hall project and have cultivated the relationship over the years.

*Motion by Councilmember James, seconded by Councilmember Spriggs, to waive the reading of Resolution 2023-27, there being ample copies available to the public. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

*Motion by Councilmember James, seconded by Councilmember Spriggs, to approve Resolution 2023-27, a resolution approving modification of certain terms of a loan from the City to Alatus Columbia Heights II LLC, and approving forms of amended and restated loan documents. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

**10. Adopt Resolution 2023-28, Accepting Donation of Sustainable Functional Art from Canvus, LLC.**

Interim City Manager Hansen noted Interim Public Works Director Hauth would review the item.

Interim Public Works Director Hauth stated the City of Columbia Heights was approached by Canvus LLC., a company based in Rocky River, OH. They were interested in finding a partner to donate a “Welcome Collection” of functional art pieces to the City of Columbia Heights. Their goal is to create and distribute sustainable seating and flower bed pieces to companies, governmental organizations, schools, and other large campus organizations. The pieces they create are sourced from recycled post-consumer materials. These materials include wind turbine blades that have reached the end of their useful life, recycled rubber from tires and shoes, recycled film plastic, and surplus textiles from carpeting, clothing, and PET bottles. Each piece has a QR code with information about where the materials used in its creation came from.

Interim Public Works Director Hauth mentioned after a conversation with Canvus it was determined their product and mission fit well with many initiatives currently underway in the city. The sustainability and reuse nature of their products, along with the ability to receive them primed and ready to paint, combined both the city’s desire to increase sustainability efforts and public art throughout the community. Canvus will begin matching donors, large corporations, and foundations that look to support the company’s mission of sustainability, with organizations willing to accept and install their functional art pieces in June. The city will receive 8 functional art pieces from the “Welcome Collection”. Columbia Heights will be responsible for accepting, offloading, and installing the pieces in city parks and public spaces. The Canvus donation program begins in June with a goal of matching Columbia Heights with one of their donors within 90 days. Once matched, Canvus will begin production and deliver products 8-12 weeks later. The package has a retail value of \$37,839.

Councilmember Buesgens asked if it was possible to share the images of the pieces on social media or the City website for the public to see.

Councilmember Spriggs asked if the time frame would be late summer/early fall. Public Works Director Hauth agreed and stated it will depend on the number of donors but the process begins on June 1, 2023.

Councilmember Jacobs asked if the planters would be filled in the fall or wait until spring. Interim Public Works Director Hauth stated that planters would be placed in the fall but planted in the spring.

Mayor Márquez Simula asked who decides if it is a planter or bench. Interim Public Works Director Hauth stated it has not been decided yet but is opened for discussion.

Councilmember Jacobs asked if residents would be able to give input on where the pieces should be placed. Public Works Director Hauth replied that he did not see why not and would work with the communications staff.

Councilmember James noted the project aligns with the methods of sustainability in the City and is excited to receive the items. Interim Public Works Director Hauth added the QR codes on the pieces will share where the material came from.

Councilmember Buesgens shared that the Canvus LLC website notes 5,000-8,000 wind turbine blades reach the end of life each year.

*Motion by Councilmember Jacobs, seconded by Councilmember Buesgens, to waive the reading of Resolution 2023-28, there being ample copies available to the public. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

*Motion by Councilmember Jacobs, seconded by Councilmember James, to adopt Resolution 2023-28, being a resolution accepting donation of the "Welcome Package", 8 post-consumer recycled functional art pieces, with a value of \$37,839 from Canvus, LLC of Rocky River, OH. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

**11. Consideration of a Rental License Exemption for 4424 6th St NE.**

Community Development Coordinator Forney stated in late January 2023, the owner of 4424 6th St NE approached the Community Development Department requesting an exemption from the single-family rental moratorium. He explained that Section 2 of Ordinance 1678, which established the single-family rental moratorium, states that "The City may make an exception for any application in individual cases in the event that extreme financial hardship as determined by the City in its sole discretion." As it is the homeowner's right to appeal to the council, Staff have brought forth the appeal along with supporting documents for discussion and review. He noted the emails between Staff and the property owner were included in the agenda packet and property owner was present at the meeting.

Community Development Coordinator Forney noted if a 10% rental density cap is put into place as planned, 4424 6th Street would not qualify for a rental license post-moratorium. Staff recently updated the current rental licenses list which shows that the block in question already has 3 single-family rentals on the block. If an exemption is granted during the moratorium, the owner would still have to re-apply for a license under the rental density cap, in which they would not qualify. The property could be granted an exemption by the Council to the density cap once the ordinance has been passed.

Community Development Coordinator Forney added, if approved, Resolution 2023-29 would grant a temporary rental license exemption to the homeowner with a few additional requirements. The homeowner is required to complete the license application process

within three months from the passage of the resolution. This puts a limit on how long they can take to bring the house into rental compliance if needed. The temporary rental license will be valid for one year from the date that the license is approved. This provides the homeowner and tenant the ability to rent the home for a full one-year lease. After the term of the temporary license, the license will be revoked without the ability to renew. The homeowner will then have to apply for a traditional rental license. At this time, the moratorium and all its changes shall be in effect and the traditional license application will be subject to any limitations and requirements adopted by the code. The resolution clearly states that by giving the homeowner a temporary license, in no way is the City ensuring that a traditional license shall be given or available after the revocation of the temporary license.

Councilmember Buesgens expressed her concerns about the property being listed as “homestead” when looking on the Anoka County tax record. Second, it is listed as a rental on Next 7<sup>th</sup> Properties LLC currently. The owners failed to apply for a rental license and did not meet the extension of the exemption the Staff gave them. In regard to the letter, she noted the City is not putting the owners in a financial “pickle,” it was the decisions that were made. She noted based on the information, she has major concerns in giving the owners and exemption.

Councilmember Jacobs agreed and noted the information indicates a disregard for good business practice.

Councilmember Spriggs asked what circumstances would grant an exemption and believed it would be a good time to grant it. He noted he understands what it is like to have a new baby and having things fall through the cracks. He asked the property owner if they owned a couple of properties. The property owner stated he did.

Councilmember Spriggs asked if buildings are built on the properties or if there were tenants in them. The property owner stated he did not. Councilmember Spriggs asked what the current plans were and what cities they were in. The property owner noted most of the sites are in St. Paul and they have a desire to offer affordable housing for those in need. He mentioned he would work with a general contractor to build a home and sell it to families with a 60% AMI opportunity of ownership.

Councilmember Spriggs asked what his other business was. The property owner stated he has run Element Boxing and Fitness in St. Paul for 12 years. He explained the financial hardship of paying for his personal homestead and another property while having a family of five.

Councilmember Spriggs asked if the property owner lived in the Columbia Heights home. The property owner explained he had lived in the home previously but has been unable to sell the home.



Councilmember Spriggs noted the Council could deny the exemption and put a family of seven on the street with two failed businesses, which he did not believe was a wise decision.

Councilmember James asked the property owner what his plan would be in the 12 months before the exemption expires if the Council approved it. The property owner stated he would pursue a traditional rental license. Councilmember James mentioned he may have difficulty getting approved since it does not align with the Council's goal have having more single-family homes in the City. She added she is inclined to grant the exemption in order to give the property owner more time to sort out the home.

Councilmember Jacobs asked the property owner when he tried to sell the Columbia Heights home and why he was unable to sell it. The property owner mentioned it was in 2022 and had a lien on the property so he was unable to sell it. He noted the homestead has nothing to do with his LLC.

Councilmember Buesgens noted the qualifications for an exemption includes something where the resident does not have control over the situation. She asked the property owner how long he has rented the home and why he did not apply for a rental license. The property owner replied he was unfamiliar with the steps required. Councilmember Buesgens noted it was decisions the property owner made to get him there.

Councilmember Spriggs explained he had recently ripped out a deck from his home and did not know he needed to have a permit to do so, noting it is hard to know all the rules and he appreciated that the property owner came to the City to make a case. He asked how Mayor Márquez Simula felt.

Mayor Márquez Simula stated she agreed with Councilmember Spriggs and Councilmember James and noted it would be an extension of 12 months.

Councilmember James noted it has not been a common occurrence for exemption requests and added the resolution states the property owner must apply for and complete the entire licensing process within three months.

Councilmember Buesgens stated the property owner should apply for a non-homestead tax since the taxes that should be paid are not going towards the City, County or schools.

*Motion by Councilmember Jacobs, seconded by Councilmember Spriggs, to waive the reading of Resolution No. 2023-29, there being ample copies available to the public. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

*Motion by Councilmember Jacobs, seconded by Councilmember Spriggs, to approve Resolution No. 2023-29, a resolution approving the single-family rental exemption request for the rental application at 4424 6th St NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421. 3 Ayes, 2 Nay. Motion Carried 3-2. Ayes (Márquez Simula, James, Spriggs) Nay (Jacobs, Buesgens).*

## CITY COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

### Report of the City Council

Councilmember James stated she donated blood at the Columbia Heights Police Department blood drive and encouraged residents to donate. She attended the Council Corner, the Council Police Academy, HeightsNext Cheers for Beers, Columbia Heights Recreation open house, Crestview open house and craft fair, and the open house and sale at Community UMC Church. She noted the Council was wearing orange for Every Town in Orange Day that will be June 2-June 4 to share the message of ending gun violence.

Mayor Márquez Simula added the reason for the color orange was due to a girl wearing orange who was killed due to gun violence and orange represents safety for hunters.

Councilmember Buesgens stated she has been working in Lomianki garden with Blooming Sunshine Garden and attended the Police Academy, Cheers for Beers, and Council Corner. She noted the Daughters of American Revolution awarded a community service award to Columbia Heights resident Kat Audette-Luebke for establishing the Blooming Sunshine Garden in Lominaki Park. A free piano from the Methodist Church that is moving will be delivered to the Council and there will be an application process for anyone who will want to paint the piano.

Mayor Márquez Simula added HeightsNext is paying for the moving of the piano.

Councilmember Spriggs mentioned he attended the Council Corner, Council Academy, 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue Reconstruction meeting, Cheers for Beers, and donated blood at the Police Department drive. He did an interviewed with *Sahan Journal* about the situation at the Legends and is still working on finding solutions about the rent. He watched the legislation session in order to see what would affect the City. He announced on June 3, 2023 there will be Pets in the Park, Art in the Park, and the High School pow wow.

Councilmember Jacobs noted she attended the Council Police Academy, symposiums on the history of mental illness and the cure and mental health in indigenous communities, and the Police Department blood drive. She acknowledged Willie Nar for suggesting a program honoring community members who have served in the military. Columbia Heights and Fridley Kiwani members will be honoring 30 servicemen and women and will hang banners on Central Avenue throughout the week. Proceeds from the sale of the banners will provide scholarship funds for local students and support other local nonprofits. She thanked Public Works in getting the banners in place and Willie Nar for the idea. She facilitated five resident reach outs.

Mayor Márquez Simula stated she attended the Columbia Heights Communications Advisory Council at the school district, Cooking with Cops, Council Corner, the last Youth Commission meeting, the scholarship awards, and handed out \$10,000 worth of scholarships from the Rotary Club of Columbia Heights and Fridley. Columbia Heights school gave out over \$270,000 of community funds and one students received the Gates Scholarship which is full ride at an Ivy League school. She attended the Police Council along with the rest of the Council, Cheers for Beers, and the Daughters of American Revolution award at Blooming Sunshine Garden. She thanked Public Works for their work at Blooming

Sunshine Garden. She attended the Alexander House Developer Committee meeting, Fire Relief Association meeting, and was interviewed by the *Sahan Journal* with Councilmember Spriggs. On May 5, 2023 she helped present a wreath for Curt Ramsdell, an officer in Columbia Heights who was killed in line of duty in 1977.

Police Chief Austin thanked Mayor Márquez Simula for attending and participating in the wreath laying ceremony and remembering the life of Curt Ramsdell. Each year on May 14, starting at 6 pm until May 15 at 6 pm, a wreath is laid every 20 minutes for every officer in the State who has been killed in the line of duty. He noted Mayor Márquez Simula was the first elected official from Columbia Heights to participate in the ceremony. He reviewed the background of Officer Curt Ramsdell and noted he was shot and killed on July 30, 1977 while transporting a prisoner to the Anoka County jail. A jailer was also shot and wounded as he ran to the scene to help. Officer Ramsdell was with the agency for 14 years and was survived by his wife and two children. It was the anniversary of Tim Bull who was with the Minnesota State Patrol and a Columbia Heights graduate and was killed in the line of duty on June 7, 1997.

Councilmember Jacobs asked if there was an open date for Railworks. Community Development Director/Assistant City Manager Chirpich replied there is not a specific date but are targeting for September.

### **Report of the City Manager**

Interim City Manager Hansen stated Pets in the Park will be at Keyes Park on June 3, 2023 from 11 am until 2 pm. There will be pet supply vendors, adoption agencies, demonstrations from the Fridley canine unit, and free professional pet photographs. The City wide garage sale will be from June 9-June 11 and publishes for anyone who registers for it. Registration will close on May 31, 2023.

Interim City Manager Hansen noted construction is underway on 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and will begin on the east side. Mail notices with the website address for updates have been provided and the City of Minneapolis will be providing weekly updates every Thursday at 10:30 am on Zoom.

Councilmember Spriggs asked if the meetings would be recorded. Interim City Manager Hansen replied he was unsure but there would be minutes available.

Councilmember James asked if the lane closure was westbound or eastbound. Interim City Manager Hansen noted they are working on the westbound lane and the eastbound lane will be opened.

Councilmember Buesgens asked if there would be an update on 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Interim City Manager Hansen stated there are two projects happening on 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and he does not know the timeline for either of the projects. Both projects are at State Aid for their review and approval.

### **COMMUNITY FORUM**

Ed Higgings, City Resident, stated the citizens of Columbia Heights would like to invite the community to the KT Jacobs recall petition kickoff in order to gather in support for the recall campaign of KT Jacobs. It will be held at Huset Park on May 30, 2023 at 5 pm. At the event, the community will discuss

the importance of initiating a recall for Councilmember Jacobs. Snacks and beverages will be provided for all attendees. A diverse range of community leaders, activists, and advocates have been invited.

Jennifer Pyper Munro, City Resident, expressed her appreciation in taking the time to bring up the vote. She noted she would be attending various events throughout the City to continue to engage in conversations with other residents regarding the recall effort. She encouraged residents to come to the event on May 30, 2023 at Huset Park at 5 pm.

Degha Shabbeleh, City Resident, explained how she felt empowered with the menstrual proclamation and resonated with an immigrant speaking during the meeting. She noted one Councilmember does not resonate that for her and does not feel safe or seen. She wondered if the Councilmember was afraid of her and if so asked that the Councilmember would step down. She appreciated the good that has been done in the community. She stated if she is unseen and does not feel safe along with many others, hopefully the Councilmember will resign. She thanked the rest of the Council for seeing her and voicing her concerns.

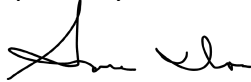
Councilmember Jacobs noted she would be leaving the meeting as a policy was not being executed.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember James, to adjourn. All Ayes, Motion Carried 4-0. Absent: (Jacobs).*

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Sara Ion, City Clerk/Council Secretary