1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rice called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Present at roll call: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Freeburg, Skogquist and Wesp.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Lee; City Planner Clark Palmer; Public Services Director Mark Anders, Police Chief Eric Peterson; and City Attorney Scott Baumgartner.

Absent at roll call: None.

3. COUNCIL MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the July 27, 2020, Worksession.
Minutes of the August 3, 2020, Closed Executive Session.
Minutes of the August 3, 2020, Budget Presentation and Regular Meeting.

Motion by Councilmember Skogquist, seconded by Councilmember Freeburg, to waive the reading and approve the July 27, 2020, Worksession, the August 3, 2020, Closed Executive Session, and the August 3, 2020, Budget Presentation and Regular Meeting minutes as presented.

Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Freeburg, Skogquist and Wesp voted in favor. Motion carried.

4. OPEN FORUM

4.1 Police Activity Update.

Police Chief Eric Peterson shared information on upcoming events including Home Alone Safety, Back to School Drive, Ruby’s Pantry ice cream treat event, and National Preparedness Month. He shared about the increase in disorderly behavior and intoxication in the bar areas and their work to add more officers to address the concerns then shared current statistics regarding COVID-19 impacts in the City and Anoka County.
OTHER INFORMATION UNDER OPEN FORUM

John Mulligan, 637 East River Road, spoke about the increase of noise in the City from vehicles and loud music and how it has been affecting his enjoyment of the City. Chief Peterson encouraged anyone with concerns surrounding noise complaints to contact 911 in order to respond while it is occurring and provide warnings and tickets if necessary.

Councilmember Wesp asked about other actions that would help with noise concerns. Chief Peterson explained that staff will relay these complaints to the patrol sergeants for monitoring, especially around the car wash area, then spoke about recent car cruising concerns along Coon Rapids Boulevard and impacts in Anoka. Mr. Mulligan also shared how pedestrians have been shouting and being disrespectful to residents along 7th Avenue.

5.  PUBLIC HEARING(S)

None.

6.  CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Wesp, seconded by Councilmember Barnett, to approve Consent Agenda 6.1 through 6.3.

6.1 Approve Verified Bills.

6.2 Revising and Setting Council Calendars.

6.3 Recommended Approval of an LG220 Gambling Permit for Anoka Rotary for a Raffle at Green Haven Golf Course and Event Center on October 21, 2020.

Councilmember Skogquist asked about the $5,000 for the Fire Department and $20,000 for Police Department to purchase office equipment for social distancing and asked if there will be similar costs for other departments. City Manager Greg Lee said there have been discussions about additional needs but that City Hall is fine.

Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Freeburg, Skogquist and Wesp voted in favor. Motion carried.

7.  REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

None.

8.  PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATION

None.
9. **ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**


**RESOLUTION**

Mr. Lee shared a background report stating Anoka Area Hockey Association has submitted an application for a State issued LG230 off-site gambling permit to allow them to conduct a raffle at the Anoka Area Ice Arena, 4111 7th Ave North on December 9, 2020. This is a State issued license but requires the approval of the municipality in which the event will take place. Staff has reviewed the application and no concerns or objections have been expressed.

Motion by Councilmember Freeburg, seconded by Councilmember Skogquist, to adopt a resolution Recommending the Issuance of a State issued LG230 Off-Site Gambling Permit for Anoka Area Hockey Association raffle on December 9, 2020.

Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Freeburg, Skogquist and Wesp voted in favor. Motion carried.

10. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

10.1 **Discussion on Human Rights Commission.**

Mr. Lee shared a background report stating at the March 2019 Worksession, the Council discussed the City’s Human Rights Commission (HRC). The HRC was re-established in 2003 and at that time was made up of 15 people. They met on a regular basis to get things going, but from 2003-2007 Commission membership, attendance and participation dwindled and the Commission was reduced to 5 members in 2007. They continued to have difficulty being able to meet quorums requirements and very rarely had topics on the agenda to discuss. In 2009 the City Code was amended so that the HRC would only meet on an as-needed basis. The HRC has not met since 2012. At that worksession, staff provided information regarding the history of the HRC and the process that is in place should a person feel their rights have been violated. He outlined the process for an individual to contact the City with a human rights concern. At that worksession, the consensus of the Council was to not make any decisions on whether or not the City should consider disbanding the HRC at this point, but that role of the HRC should be altered to something that is more of outreach commission. Staff was directed to work to disband and repeal the HRC in its current form and create a subcommittee to the Parks & Recreation Board that would promote diverse arts & cultural activities and events and promote inclusiveness for all residents of the City. This has been completed. The Parks & Recreation Board developed the Arts and
Culture Commission to promote programs that highlight Anoka as a community in which arts and cultural activities are recognized, promoted and valued as vital components of community life. Staff’s position is that having a City HRC is redundant since the State of Minnesota has a dedicated department, to respond to human rights issues and because human rights issues are handled at the State and Federal level. Mr. Lee shared direction from the July 27, 2020 Worksession and Council consensus to initiate actions toward recognizing diversity and addressing community participation, acceptance and inclusiveness going forward and disbanding the Human Rights Commission as it exists today and work toward creating a separate outside organization in which a City staff person would participate in but would be made up of entities such as the school district, the County, religious organizations, public persons, etc. and operate on their own, much like the Anti-Crime Commission does.

City Planner Clark Palmer shared voicemails from Human Rights Commissioner Dilcher about how it was untimely to disband the Commission based on the recent civil unrest and why the Commission was not included in discussions to date and from resident Margaret Anderson about the importance of retaining the Commission and require them to meet on a regular basis and communicate their purpose and work with the League of Minnesota Human Rights and other resources to ensure the rights of the residents of Anoka.

Sue Dergantz, 342 Wilson Street, spoke about League of Women Voters and their support of the Commission and the need to include more people of color on the Commission. She recommended support policies in opportunities of employment, education, public service and others and the need for an adequate budget and adding youth members that reflect the diversity of the community, involve businesses and ensure the rights of everyone in the community is respected.

Mike Erickson, 2200 2nd Avenue, spoke about the role of the Commission to continue to eliminate hate, prejudice, and respect diversity and the need for an emergency preparedness plan and for the Commission to meet, reinvigorate and empower to educate the community and bring a sense of community back to the City.

Jay Wagner, 512 Oakwood Drive, spoke against discussions to disband the Human Rights Commission and how their lack of mission and vision was due to a lack of support of those in leadership. He said this would be an opportunity to show the citizens of Anoka by valuing diversity and calling for reconvening of the Commission to hold difficult conversations.

Virginia Louden, 559 Logan Street, shared her support of the Commission and to find ways to make it better instead of being idle because there was no encouragement for new people to join.
Lindsey Belanger, 819 Johnson Street, spoke about how some people are not comfortable going to the police and the need for collaboration of people of color and other marginalized groups to work with everyone and noted just because we may not be experiencing concerns what does that say to those who are.

Councilmember Freeburg shared comments about discrimination and how the Council had no concerns with the Commission being resurrected but if there was no interest why have the Commission in place.

Mr. Erickson spoke about racism and anecdotal and false equality and differences in being bullying based on race and how this needs to be stopped through education.

Holly Peterson, 3740 Edith Patch Drive, supported a town hall meeting to further this discussion and the need for Council to be more aware of issues in the community.

Mr. Mulligan suggested involving the faith community in these discussions as well.

Erik Bobick, 327 Monroe Street, spoke in favor of continuing the Human Rights Commission and their purpose statements to promote human rights and dignity, eliminate discrimination, and enthusiasm to Anoka proud. He said this Commission should be allowed to meet more than as-needed and offered his application for appointment to the Commission.

Councilmember Freeburg thanked the public for coming and said the City listens to the community and how the Council should listen more and agreed on the need for the Commission to remain.

Motion by Councilmember Freeburg, seconded by Councilmember Skogquist, to retain the Human Rights Commission in the City of Anoka.

Councilmember Barnett thanked everyone for sharing their comments and stressed the importance of putting the onus on the Boards and Commissions and challenging them with their background and knowledge to take the next steps on how to partner better. She said she did not to create a group of the same type of people then suggested a separate entity outside of the City such as the Lions Club or Women of Today would be better as it would be a community group passionate about one topic who could partner with the City and allow for more members and voices across the community.

Mr. Bobick disagreed as he felt a group that fell outside of the City would be harder to work with. Councilmember Barnett responded how Boards and Commissions were not policy creating committees and how an outside group would still have the support of the City Council.
Councilmember Wesp spoke about the Anti-Crime Commission and Youth First commissioned in the 1990s based on needs to address petty crimes and assist youth then spoke about the recent peaceful rally at the high school regarding civil rights and the importance of making the City comfortable and safe for all residents. He said the Human Rights Commission could be done privately and managed by the Council and spoke about other Commissions have vacancies and suggest privately in conjunction with Anoka for the best outcome.

Mr. Bobick said he would like to see further discussion from the City and having access as an official commission as the network was already in place and other cities were willing to help with resources.

Councilmember Skogquist read a letter from Anoka High School students regarding the Human Rights Commission and the need to be proactive and the importance of being part of the City’s infrastructure. He shared their comments regarding the need to make the Commission different and bigger and include high school students and other groups such as the faith community and that a town hall forum to outline structure could be used to involve other groups who have not felt included.

Mr. Palmer read emails into the record from Tiffany (no last name provided in email) and Laura Lucarelli in support of retaining the Human Rights Commission in Anoka.

Councilmember Wesp asked how issues of race are handled at the high school. Chief Peterson spoke about the school’s policies in place but if an issue raised to the level of a racially biased-motivated crime then police become involved.

Mayor Rice said the Council’s actions will provide a background going forward then referred to the 400 signatures on a petition of support and agreed with a future town hall forum.

Ms. Dergantz shared fellow member Lori Anderson from Coon Rapids facilitated a Transformative Circle group and suggested a similar model to find people of color to attend and begin to break down barriers.

Mr. Wagner stressed the need to have the City support this Commission and encouraged the Council to appoint a staff liaison who has enthusiasm for this type of work.

Mayor Rice supported continuing the Commission but noted people who come to the City have shared that they feel welcome already and was confident if there was not an established Commission but a separate organization the public would still be recognized and welcomed.
Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Freeburg, Skogquist and Wesp voted in favor. Councilmember Barnett voted nay. Motion carried.

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

12. **UPDATES AND REPORTS**

12.1 **Tentative Agenda(s).**

The Council reviewed the tentative agendas of the upcoming Council meetings.

12.2 **COVID-19: City Operations, Changes, and Impacts – Questions, Comments, and Discussion.**

Mr. Lee said staff did not have any current updates regarding COVID-19 to share.

Councilmember Wesp confirmed the CARES funding worksession topic would be held next week. Mr. Lee said a good portion of funding would go to cover costs incurred by the City with the remaining being suggested be placed into a fund to help businesses.

Councilmember Barnett asked for update on Jackson Street and outdoor seating capacity. Mr. Lee said the intent was to keep the outdoor seating until fall or until the businesses no longer wished to have it in place. Public Services Director Mark Anderson said the parklet in front of 201 was scheduled to close after Halloween.

Councilmember Skogquist suggested reviewing heating options for the fall.

12.3 **Staff and Council Input.**

None.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Freeburg made a motion to adjourn the Regular Council meeting. Councilmember Wesp seconded the motion.

Upon a roll call vote: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Freeburg, Skogquist and Wesp voted in favor. Motion carried.

Time of adjournment: 9:00 p.m.