

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
February 17, 2026
City Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King, Council Members Laura Helle, Oballa Oballa, Paul Fischer, Michael Postma, and Council Member-at-Large Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Jason Baskin and Council Member Rebecca Waller

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Police Chief David McKichan, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Planning and Zoning Director Holly Wallace, Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Director Jason Schon, Human Resource Director Trish Wiechmann, Finance Director Emily Burns and City Clerk Brienne Wolf

APPEARING IN PERSON: John Larsen, MN Department of Agriculture Representative

Mayor Steve King opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Item #1 Spongy Moth Management Presentation – MN Department of Agriculture

Minnesota Department of Agriculture Representative John Larsen presented to Council the plan for pest management of the Spongy Moth within the City of Austin and Mower County. The goal is to manage the spread of these pests. They will use an aerial application that is harmless to human and animal populations to place a pheromone into the air and confuse the pests during the mating season, thus preventing them from breeding. These pests are a defoliating pest and can cause enough stress to a tree to cause mortality. In 2023, the pest defoliated over 400,000 acres of forest.

Mr. Larsen stated this is a federally funded program and would come at no cost to the City. They would keep citizens up to date on when they would be in the area doing treatment and would be supplying informational materials to citizens and staff as well to help keep them informed. The targeted start for this project would be in late June to early July.

Item #2 – Administrative Report

None

Item #3 – Open Discussion

None

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 PM. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brianne D. Wolf, City Clerk