

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park City Council Regular was held on April 20, 2026 at Spring Lake Park Community Center, 1301 81st Avenue N.E., at 7:00 PM.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Ken Wendling
Councilmember Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff
Councilmember Lisa Dircks
Councilmember April Moran
Mayor Robert Nelson

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Police Chief Josh Antoine, Parks and Recreation Director Anne Scanlon, Attorney John Thames, Engineer Phil Gravel, Deputy City Clerk Wanda Brown

VISITORS

Fire Chief Dan Retka	SBM Fire Department	Spring Lake Park
Kristi Cobbs	8085 Jefferson Street NE	Spring Lake Park
C. Meyer	459 81 st Avenue NE	Spring Lake Park
Kristen Larson	451 Maple Street NE	Spring Lake Park

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA – None

5. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Kristi Cobbs, 8085 Jefferson Street NE, addressed the council to express concerns about recent city decision-making processes. She noted that two recent issues—the council’s statement regarding ICE enforcement and the decision about the flag—both passed on 3–2 votes, which she felt did not reflect the views of many residents. Ms. Cobbs highlighted community worries regarding federal immigration enforcement and stated that some council members appeared unaware or unwilling to acknowledge related local impacts. She emphasized that city government is nonpartisan and urged the council to represent community interests rather than personal or political beliefs. She asked the council to use respectful and inclusive language, to

improve how resident input is considered, and to work toward decisions that better reflect the full community.

6. PRESENTATION

A. SBM Fire Department Quarterly Report – Chief Retka

Fire Chief Retka provided a comprehensive quarterly update on SBM Fire Department operations. He reported that SBM's service area expanded on January 1 with the addition of Circle Pines and Centerville, increasing coverage to approximately 106,000 residents. He stated that call volume continues to rise, with 874 calls in the first quarter of 2026, with a significant increase in overlapping calls. He reviewed improvements in response times resulting from fully staffed stations in Spring Lake Park, Blaine, and Circle Pines, noting that SBM remains well below the national seven-minute standard.

Chief Retka presented data on incident types, highlighting a continued decline in significant fires due to faster response times and an increase in public service and alarm-related calls. He also described regional growth trends, including rising call density in northeast Blaine, which supports long-term planning for a future fire station in that area.

Chief Retka highlighted the contributions of SBM's Fire Corps volunteers, he said their role in rehab and care operations, and the department's growing leadership in regional training. He stated that SBM now leads multiple county training academies and has contracts to support promotional processes and officer training for departments including Saint Paul and Brooklyn Park.

Chief Retka also updated the council on recent developments with the Lexington Fire Department. He said following severe staffing shortages, Lexington Fire was taken offline, and SBM is currently providing full coverage under an administrative contract while a long-term agreement is developed.

Chief Retka gave a review of SBM's financial performance. He emphasized that SBM continues to provide high-quality service at one of the lowest per-capita costs in the state, supported by efficient operations, regional partnerships, and diversified revenue sources. Strategic equipment reductions, staffing stability, and safety improvements—such as zero lost-time injuries and reduced workers' compensation costs—were also noted.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of March Claims List – General Disbursement #26-05 - \$446,384.23
- B. Mayor's Proclamation – Administrative Professionals Day – April 22, 2026
- C. Mayor's Proclamation – Loyalty Day – May 1, 2026
- D. Revenue and Expenditure Report – March 2026
- E. Statement of Fund Balance – March 2026
- F. Application and Certification for Payment #14 – City Hall Renovation/Expansion Project

- G. Approval of Right of Way Application – CenterPoint Energy
- H. Contractor’s License

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to approve Consent Agenda.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

8. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Police Report

Police Chief Antoine reported that the Police Department responded to 728 calls for service in March 2026, compared to 849 calls in March 2025, reflecting a decrease partly attributed to ongoing training and fewer traffic stops.

Chief Antoine stated that School Resource Officer (SRO) Smith handled nine calls for service at the High School and Park Terrace Elementary, 16 student contacts, 23 miscellaneous escorts and calls, and 13 follow-up investigations related to school matters. He noted that Detective Imig spent much of the month training incoming SRO Smith.

Chief Antoine stated that Detective Imig managed 23 cases, including 19 felonies, 2 gross misdemeanors, and 4 misdemeanors. He stated that Detective Imig is monitoring multiple forfeiture cases, some extending two or three years through the judicial system, and he completed interrogation/interview training for detectives.

Chief Antoine reported a busy month of administrative and professional activities. He stated that he completed administrative training on the Tyler RMS and CAD systems, which are expected to streamline reporting and dispatch workflows. He noted that the department’s new policy application, recently approved by the City Council, will reduce costs by approximately half compared to the previous policy system.

B. Parks and Recreation Report

Director Scanlon reported on the continued progress at Sanburnol Park, where the Park Crew is installing fourteen new raised community garden beds constructed in partnership with Spring Lake Park High School. She noted that the Parks Department is still awaiting updates on the CDBG grant.

Director Scanlon said that planning for Music in the Park has been finalized, and this year will include the Department’s first partnership with the City of Mounds View. She said The Relish Brothers, a student-run hot dog cart business, will provide concessions for three of the six scheduled concert nights.

Director Scanlon stated that 38 classes and programs were offered during March. She said of those events included a Teen Night at a Timberwolves game with participation from Spring Lake Park, Mounds View, and Arden Hills; a spring break camp at Able Park; a day trip to the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Casino; and a day trip to an Elvis performance. She stated that the annual Easter Egg Hunt drew more than 200 participants.

Director Scanlon said preparation for Tower Days is underway with new family-focused and interactive activities planned. She noted that the festival will feature “Ninja Anywhere,” an American Ninja Warrior–style obstacle course. She said that the Tower Days buttons were designed by local youth Nolan Zugler (age 10) and Alexander Boji.

Director Scanlon reported significant growth in the department’s marketing reach. She noted that the recent digital billboard advertising on Highway 65 featured four rotating ads displayed for two weeks, running at least once per minute. She made note of the Department’s strong social media engagement, with Facebook posts reaching over 8,000 views in the past two to three months.

Director Scanlon announced two upcoming community initiatives. She stated that on May 7, the department will host a Plant and Garden Swap in the City Hall parking lot, inviting residents to exchange tools, plants, and clippings. She said the Soil and Sunshine Garden Club will participate in the event. She stated that the Earth Day Cleanup will take place at Able Park on Saturday, April 25, offering another opportunity for residents to engage in reuse and sustainability efforts.

9. ORDINANCES AN/OR RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 2026-20, Affirming the NMTC as the Broadband Franchising Authority for the City

Attorney Thames stated that the NMTC partners are requesting an explicit designation from the City, formally appointing them as the City’s negotiator for the related contracts.

Motion made by Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff to approve Resolution 2026-20, Affirming the NMTC as the Broadband Franchising Authority for the City.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

B. Resolution 2026.21, Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Advertisement for Bids – 2026 Street Improvement Project

Engineer Gravel reported that the next step in the street project is ready for council action. He said he is asking the City Council to approve the resolution to move the project forward.

He noted that the bids will be received on May 11, and the council will review the bid numbers once they are available.

Motion made by Mayor Nelson to approve Resolution 2026-21, Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Advertisement for Bids – 2026 Street Improvement Project.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Purchase Police Chief Squad

Chief Antoine explained that the department typically purchases unmarked squad cars every eight to ten years as included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He said due to the addition of the new captain position, an additional unmarked squad car is needed this year.

Chief Antoine stated that the current 2017 Dodge Ram police reserve truck is nearing the end of its service life. He said the department has received a high trade-in offer of \$20,000. Chief Antoine recommended trading in the truck at the dealership providing the best value, pending council approval.

Chief Antoine said to meet operational needs, the department proposes retaining the 2021 Charger for the reserve program and purchasing a new unmarked chief's squad. Chief Antoine requested approval for the truck's trade-in value plus up to \$19,000.00 to cover the vehicle purchase and necessary squad equipment, noting that unmarked squads still require lights, sirens, and response capabilities. He said the existing equipment from the truck can be reused in the new squad. He noted that the purchase is already budgeted within the five-year CIP.

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to approve the Purchase of Police Chief Squad.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

B. Consider Approval of the Appointment of a Seasonal Community Service Officer (CSO) Position as a Pathway to Sworn Officer Upon POST Licensure

Chief Antoine updated the Council on the Department's recent hiring process. He reported that all applications and interviews have been completed and a top candidate has been identified. He recommended offering the candidate a seasonal Community Service Officer (CSO) position while they complete required police skills training in June and prepare for the POST licensing exam in August.

Chief Antoine proposed a seasonal CSO role that would allow the Department to begin training the candidate early and secure their employment prior to full licensure. He stated the position would be limited to 100 working days, consistent with other seasonal city roles, and would end if the candidate does not complete licensing requirements. He said the funding for the position is available within the current budget due to a recent officer resignation. Chief Antoine stated that upon successful completion of the POST exam, the candidate would then be promoted into a full-time police officer position.

Motion made by Mayor Nelson to approve the Appointment of a Seasonal Community Service Officer (CSO) Position as a Pathway to Sworn Officer Upon POST Licensure.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

11. REPORTS

- A. Attorney's Report – None
- B. Engineer's Report - Report accepted as presented.
- C. Administrator Report - None

12. OTHER - None

13. ADJOURN

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to adjourn.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM

Robert Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer