



**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024**

**CITY HALL, 1301 81ST AVENUE NE, SPRING LAKE PARK at 5:30 PM**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
  - A. NMTC Merger Discussion (*Buchholtz/Goodboe-Bisschoff*)
  - B. Liquor Ordinance Violations
  - C. Council Salary Ordinance Discussion
- 3. REPORT**
  - A. Administrator Report
  - B. Council Member Reports
- 4. ADJOURN**



# Memorandum

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**To:** Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council

**From:** Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer

**Date:** January 4, 2024

**Subject:** NMTC Merger Discussion

The North Metro Telecommunications Commission (NMTC) met on Wednesday, December 20 and received word that the Blaine City Council would like the Commission to explore a possible merger of the NMTC with CCX Media, or another Communications Commission. The Commission requested each of its representatives to bring this discussion to their City Council's to gain input on whether to proceed with contact CCX Media to see if there is interest in exploring a merger.

NMTC was created through a Joint Powers Agreement in 1980 to provide coordination of administration and enforcement of the member cities' franchise agreements, produce and broadcast video programming for the member cities, make video production facilities available to the citizens of the member cities, to promote the development of locally produced cable television programming, and ensure equitable service levels for the citizens of the member cities.

There are currently seven members of the Commission: Spring Lake Park, Blaine, Centerville, Circle Pines, Ham Lake, Lexington, and Lino Lakes. The Commission is governed by a seven member Board of Directors, with each City appointing a director to represent it. The voting is weighted, based on the number of subscribers each community has. The City Administrators/Managers of each member community form an Operations Committee to advise the Commission on day-to-day operational matters.

This request from the City of Blaine was precipitated due to a number of factors. First, the regulatory landscape is shifting, resulting in less available franchise fees and PEG fees available for community television operations. NMTC is in the informal process to negotiate a new franchise agreement, which, due to FCC rulings, will generate less revenue per subscriber than we currently receive under our expiring franchise. Second, residents have many options for cable TV service other than through a traditional provider like Comcast. Satellite TV and streaming services provide the same options, yet do not generate franchise and PEG fee revenues for the Commission. While NMTC's operations are financially sustainable today, will they continue to be in the future? Other Cable Commissions are asking similar questions. Finally, with NMTC Executive Director Heidi Arnson's retirement this month, this conversation should happen before NMTC recruits for its next Executive Director.

The next step would be to make a formal request to CCX Media to see if there is interest in exploring a merger. If there isn't, we would likely continue moving forward. If there is, the two Commissions would then need to outline a due diligence process to explore this question further.

Complicating the decision is a RFP that NMTC received from the City of Fridley for meeting services. This RFP could lead to Fridley exploring joining NMTC, which would add additional revenues to assist the sustainability. NMTC could also explore reaching out to other unaffiliated cities to determine their interest in joining the Commission.

Staff is seeking direction from the City Council on how you would like Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff and I to proceed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 763-784-6491.



# NORTH METRO TV

## Services and Responsibilities

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### Video Engineering

- Keep audio, video and networking operational for NMTV, the seven Member Cities, and the mobile production van.
- Troubleshoot and maintain networks. A lot of the system's video equipment runs on an IP network.
- Coordinate with schools, public buildings', and arenas' network administrators on subverting firewalls for live programming signal transport.
- Research methods of production as technology advances.
- Coordinate video equipment upgrades with vendors for any video related equipment for NMTV and for City Council Chamber production systems.
- Oversee bidding process, tear-out, new installation, and training.
- Create and maintain wire mapping documents for video and audio systems.
- Ongoing new equipment replacement research and recommendations. (Cameras, switchers, mics, audio boards, lights, recording devices, back-up power, surge protection, networking, and video transport.)
- Equipment repair.
- Emergency and preventive equipment maintenance.
- Provide training for city and NMTV staff in usage of video production system.
- Install equipment for and monitor HD channel signal transport from city hall to NMTV head-end.
- Coordinate with Comcast on transmission in Master Control, dedicated internet and public internet connections, and city cable equipment and signal issues.
- On-call for troubleshooting during events and city meetings.

### Channel Management

- Provide all equipment necessary to program NMTV and city channels. Including devices to transport signals from City Hall, servers to record signal, software and servers to play programs on channels, devices to create graphics pages on channels. Servers to stream channels live on the internet and OTT ( Over the top) channels like Roku and AppleTV.
- 24/7/365 programming of channels.
- Signal testing for live meetings on cable meetings and live Zoom meetings.
- On-call during live meetings to troubleshoot problems.
- Provide bandwidth for live meeting cablecast and recording, live streaming channels on the internet and video on demand.
- Schedule all programs on channels. Coordinate all schedules with city staff.
- Upload city related videos to city websites/YouTube pages

- All NMTV channels are available as an app on Roku and Apple TV. This means that any citizen with any device (TV, cable service, no cable service, computer, phone, tablet) can access all NMTV channels, including city channels.
- Conduct regular system software updates.
- Maintain detailed programming database in Cablecast to facilitate ease of tracking statistics or creating specific reports with multiple sort criteria.
- Monitor health of UPS systems and health of multiple RAID systems in Cablecast equipment and replace hard drives as needed.

### **Video-On-Demand**

- All city meetings are provided via video-on-demand, with bookmarked agendas, for instant access to specific agenda items.
- Link video-on-demand libraries to city websites.
- Maintain video-on-demand meetings archive for amount of time requested by each city.
- Provide DVD or USB copies of meetings, upon request, to cities.

### **City Meeting Coverage**

- Schedule staff to record and live-stream all city meetings.
- Assign a back-up staff person for every meeting.
- Create and edit manuals for operating equipment in council chambers.
- Hire and train staff to operate council chamber equipment.
- Coordinate meeting schedules and monitor for changes.
- Communicate with staff regarding any equipment issues during production.
- Follow-up with recording staff regarding potential news stories from meeting agenda.

### **Closed Captioning**

- Provide closed captioning services on all live city meetings and sporting events.
- Provide closed captioning on all pre-recorded programs.
- Provide closed captioning on all playback platforms including cable channels, streaming channels, Youtube, video-on-demand, and OTT channels such as Roku and AppleTV.

### **Meeting Podcasts**

- Provide audio of city meetings as a podcast.
- Podcasts available on seven podcasting platforms including Spotify, iHeartRadio, Amazon Music, Apple, and Google.

## Meeting Transcription Service

- Developing transcription service for city meeting audio.
- Intended to make writing minutes easier.
- Currently testing, with good success.

## Staff Program Production

- Weekly production of NMTV News.
- Election programming.
- Weekly production of Sports Den, a high school sports highlights program, during school year.
- High school sporting events.
- Youth league sporting events.
- High school coach and captains interviews.
- City promos.
- City issues.
- Police and Fire department videos.
- City staff profiles.
- Mayor's Minutes.
- City event coverage...parades, festivals, charity events.
- Videos for internal city staff use....such as training videos.
- Arrive Alive.
- Business profiles.
- Non-profit profiles.
- Serve as an on-call production house for cities.
- Staff of full-time, award-winning video professionals on call to meet all of cities' video needs.

## Educational

- Traveling lecture series at Senior Centers, Libraries, Senior living facilities, Anoka County History Center, City Park & Rec Departments, and Continuing Education.
- Internet literacy for seniors – taught at the Mary Ann Young Center
- Teach video production classes to public.
  1. Documentary filmmaking.
  2. Narrative filmmaking.
  3. Screenwriting.
  4. Creating public service announcements.
  5. Recording sound.
  6. Cameras and mics.
  7. Editing.
  8. Studio production.
  9. Private, specialized workshops.
- Provide professional video production equipment for use by public at no cost.

- Have work programs/internships for special needs students.
- Provide internships and employment to video production students.

## **Commercial**

- Live streaming services for non-profit fund-raisers, concerts, sporting events, and other presentations.
- Home Movie Transfer program. Staff can transfer personal home videos, films, slides and photos to DVD or USB formats.
- Your History
- MN Media Archive
- Studio and other equipment rental.
- Drone services.
- Video production services.
- Closed captioning.

## **Drone Services**

- Provide Inspire 2 and Avata drones and fully licensed drone pilot.
- Capable of exterior and interior drone shoots.
- Maintain drone registration and pilot certification.
- On-site/on-line surveys of drone flight location.
- Obtain FAA permissions and authorizations.
- Obtain permissions and authorizations from other governing bodies as needed.
- Upload and sync all approved authorizations into drone software.
- Capture of aerial video and photos.
- Image enhancement and encoding.
- Posting final product to various platforms.

## **Miscellaneous Services**

- Provide licensed music for productions.
- Maintain relationships with MN State High School League and school staff for event coverage permissions.
- Provide website and social media content.
- Still photography for publications or websites.

## **Franchise Administration**

- Franchise renewal.
- Handle subscriber complaints.
- Monitor franchise compliance.
- Franchise violation notifications.
- Franchise settlement agreements.



- Cable Company transfer of ownerships.
- Technical audits.
- Fee audits.
- Needs assessments/viewer surveys.
- Monitor FCC and State activities that affect franchise.
- Monitor public-rights-of way rulings.
- Work with legal counsel to create model ordinances that benefit Member Cities, such as Drone Model Ordinance/Usage.



# Memorandum

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**To:** Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council  
**From:** Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer  
**Date:** January 4, 2024  
**Subject:** Liquor Ordinance Violations

On December 30, 2023, the Spring Lake Park Police Department completed compliance checks of our licensed liquor establishments. Three licensed establishments failed their compliance check.

Taco Lindo, 8188 Hwy 65 NE	1 <sup>st</sup> violation within any three year period
Sunset Grill, 8466 Hwy 65 NW	2 <sup>nd</sup> violation within any three year period (last violation was 11/30/21)
Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits, 8155 Hwy 65 NE	2 <sup>nd</sup> violation within any three year period (last violation was 11/30/21)

SLPC 11.08.010(V) provides minimum periods of suspension or revocation for violations of the City's liquor ordinance or M.S. Ch. 340A, as they may be amended from time to time:

1. Felony violation - revocation
2. Other violations:
  - a. First violation within a three-year period, at least 1 day suspension in addition to any criminal or civil penalties which may be imposed.
  - b. Second violation within a three-year period, at least 3 consecutive days suspension in addition to any criminal or civil penalties which may be imposed.
  - c. Third violation within a three-year period, at least 7 consecutive days suspension in addition to any criminal or civil penalties which may be imposed.
  - d. Fourth violation within a three-year period, the license shall be revoked.

SLPC 11.08.010(W) also imposes a civil penalty of up to \$2,000 for each violation of M.S. Ch. 340A and SLPC 11.08.010, according to the following schedule.

1. First violation within any three year period: \$500
2. Second violation within any three year period: \$1,000
3. Third and subsequent violations within any three year period: \$2,000

SLPC 11.08.101(V)(4) provides the City Council with flexibility to impose the administrative penalty in addition to or in lieu of any suspension or revocation under this section.

Staff recommends that Taco Lindo's 1-day suspension be waived in lieu of payment of the \$500 civil penalty. This is consistent with how the City has treated first time violators.

Staff is seeking direction on how to handle Sunset Grill and Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits' violations. Does the City Council wish to impose a 3 consecutive day license suspension in addition to the civil penalty? Or is the City Council satisfied with issuing a \$1,000 civil penalty?

If the City Council wishes to impose the license suspension along with the civil penalty, the Council will need to conduct a hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act (M.S. §§ 14.57 to 14.70, as may be amended from time to time) prior to imposing the suspension and civil penalty.

If the City Council wishes to only impose the civil penalty, staff will send out a letter imposing the penalty, providing an opportunity for the licensee to be heard at a hearing held pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act. The licensee is able to simply pay the penalty and waive their right to the hearing prior to the hearing date.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 763-784-6491.



# Memorandum

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**To:** Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council

**From:** Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer

**Date:** January 9, 2024

**Subject:** Council Salary Ordinance

Mayor and City Council salaries are established by ordinance. Pursuant to State Law, the salary ordinance must be adopted prior to a municipal election and cannot be implemented until after that election.

Since there is a municipal election upcoming in 2024, staff has taken the liberty of conducting a salary survey. We chose cities with similar characteristics to Spring Lake Park.

Below are the results of the salary survey:

City	Population	Mayor Salary	Council Salary
Circle Pines	5,005	\$4,500	\$3,750
Falcon Heights	5,227	\$5,400	\$3,600
Spring Lake Park	7,200	\$7,451	\$5,961
Mahtomedi	8,075	\$7,200	\$6,000
St. Francis	8,342	\$6,000	\$4,800
St. Anthony Village	9,007	\$8,700	\$7,956
Arden Hills	9,637	\$7,500	\$6,750
Little Canada	10,499	\$6,700	\$5,850
East Bethel	12,038	\$6,300	\$5,700
Vadnais Heights	12,623	\$7,500	\$6,000
Mounds View	12,946	\$8,250	\$7,452

The last time the Mayor and City Council salary changed was in 2008, effective January 1, 2009.

If the City Council wishes to adopt an ordinance amending the Mayor and City Council salary, the Council would need to provide guidance to City staff no later than June 3 so the ordinance can be drafted and the request can be included in the 2025 City budget.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 763-784-6491.