

**Subject:** Pledge of Allegiance

**Date:** Thursday, June 27, 2019 at 11:53:02 AM Central Daylight Time

**From:** FYDIBOHF23SPDLT on behalf of Tim Brausen

**To:** Jacque Smith, Tom Harmening

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Hi Jackie. I was hopeful that I could trouble you to review my email response below for tenor and tone. Thanks. -  
Tim

Thank you for contacting me. Our city is enhanced by an active citizenry engaged in its management and willing to share their opinions with us on a variety of issues.

In the interest of streamlining our meetings and as part of revising our set agenda, it was decided that we would suspend saying the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning every televised meetings. Some, myself included, felt that the rote repetition of the Pledge at our meetings did not further our desire to be a welcoming and inviting community to diverse citizens in our City, nor did it serve any apparent purpose relating to our City's business. We agreed that on certain occasions when desired we would recite the Pledge, but it did not need to be part of every meeting. We also changed the start time of our meetings to 6:30 p.m. to make it easier for more people to attend and for us to get our business done earlier in the evening. (All of the Council members are part-time employees of the City, who also work day jobs, and we like to get home to our families too.)

This decision has generated surprising emotion from a variety of sources, most of them outside of St. Louis Park. Based on the tenor and tone of some of these communications, there are lots of people in our country that are looking for issues to be angry and agitated about.

Please be assured that we didn't take this action to be disrespectful to any person or any institution, nor because we lack patriotism. We took this action from a desire to make the meetings comfortable and welcoming to the diverse populace we see at our meetings, and to focus us on the City's business. Pledging fealty to our flag and our nation is not the purpose of our meetings; local governance is.

People can disagree with the decision, but please respect our right to set the rules for our Council to operate.  
Regards, Tim

P.S. Our action does not stop anyone else from commencing their work day with the Pledge. Feel free to do so.

**TIM BRAUSEN**  
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