**Routine appointments turn into argument in SLP**

**Paige Kieffer**

Spring Lake Park City Administrator David Buchholtz swears in Mayor Cindy Hansen Jan. 7 at City Hall.

The first Spring Lake Park City Council meeting this year got off to a rocky start Jan. 7 at city hall.

The meeting started with the swearing in of returning Council Members Ken Wendling and Brad Delfs and Mayor Cindy Hansen.

Delfs and Wendling ran as incumbents while Hansen ran against Council Member Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff in a heated election for the mayor’s seat. Hansen won her bid for re-election with about 68.4 percent of the vote, while Goodboe-Bisschoff, took about 30.9 percent.

After being sworn in, Hansen made a statement.

“First and foremost I’d like to thank God, my family and friends for their love and support in this campaign that has been ongoing for the last eight and a half years. I truly could not have made it
through these last few months without them,” Hansen said. “I would also like to thank the Spring Lake Park staff for continuing to run the city in a professional manner despite all of the chaos you were exposed to the last couple of weeks. I’d also like to thank Spring Lake Park residents for their support, trust and their vote. (Council Members) Brad (Delfs), Bob (Nelson) and Ken (Wendling), the four of us don’t always agree on things, but I love how we’re able to respect these differences and still bounce off ideas and form wonderful goals for our city. Thank you so much for all of your support. We set a record at North Metro cable because never before has there been an entire council at a debate with three of them supporting their mayor. I could not have done it without their support.”

Later in the meeting, the majority of the City Council was ready to vote in favor of the council members’ committee assignments when Goodboe-Bisschoff questioned why she was only assigned to one committee, the Coon Creek Watershed District Citizens Advisory Commission, while the mayor and the other council members were assigned to seven or more committees.


Hansen then told Goodboe-Bisschoff she was being disruptive and threatened to throw her out of the council chambers.

“We talked about this in private,” Hansen said. “I did not want to air this to the public, but I guess this is where you want it to go.”

Goodboe-Bisschoff agreed that she wanted to discuss it.

“You have had plenty of examples of this,” Hansen said, addressing Goodboe-Bisschoff. “All council has given you examples at meetings when you were on a committee how inappropriate you were. You kept it up. You were even inappropriate at meetings and insulted members.”

“I asked questions,” Goodboe-Bisschoff said, interrupting.

“It’s my turn to speak,” Hansen yelled. “I am the mayor and you will give me that respect.”

Hansen continued to list how Goodboe-Bisschoff acted, in her opinion, inappropriately, such as getting involved in a private issue between a resident and Spring Lake Park Schools Superintendent Jeff Ronneberg. The mayor said she later received a call about that incident.

Hansen said Goodboe-Bisschoff was also removed as an Anoka County election judge for refusing to follow rules and regulations.

Lastly, Hansen mentioned that Goodboe-Bisschoff was found guilty of illegal campaign finance practices after failing to fill out how a check would be spent on her finance campaign form.
On Dec. 3 Goodboe-Bisschoff had called the incident “a stupid error of mine,” and said she was “incorrect in doing it.”

“It’s my belief that you are a liability to this council and the residents, and therefore I will not expose the liability that you expose us to, to our residents and the city, and I will not lose precious volunteers because of your actions on various committees,” Hansen said at the Jan. 7 meeting. “The voters have spoken by a landslide on how they want their government run. For the two years you have been on council you have never, ever given me the respect I have earned and deserved as mayor, and you will speak to me and address me as ‘madam mayor’ as the rest of staff and council does or you will not speak. This council deserves respect and not just interruptions, and you cause pure chaos during the campaign and no more Barbara. This ends this discussion.”

Goodboe-Bisschof’s committee responsibilities were also shrunk last January when Hansen said, “Until you can prove to me that you have learned diplomacy, I am pulling you from as many commissions as possible.”

The City Council ended up voting in favor of the appointments and committees with Goodboe-Bisschoff dissenting.

paige.kieffer@ecm-inc.com