

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL  
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 7, 2007**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Orrock called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Dick Backlund, Chuck Heitz, Lori Kampa, Patricia May, and Donald Orrock. Also present: City Administrator Scott Johnson, Finance Director Corey Boyer, Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares, Public Works Director Mike Goebel, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, City Engineer Brad DeWolf from Bolton and Menk, City Attorney Matthew Brokl of Campbell Knutson, and City Planner Nate Sparks of Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.

**3. PROPOSED AGENDA**

Council Member Heitz motioned to adopt the proposed Agenda. Seconded by Council Member Backlund, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

**4. BUSINESS**

**4A. Fee Schedule Review**

**4A.i. Planning/Development Fees**

Corey Boyer reviewed planning/development related fees charged by comparable communities. Mr. Boyer explained that city's charge fees differently, and that some rely more heavily on escrows, while others don't charge the escrows up front and they may attempt to recover costs upon completion of the application. He identified that, of the communities surveyed, Big Lake was the only city to charge escrows on every application type. Mr. Boyer discussed the option of only requiring escrows on development-related application types. Mr. Boyer reviewed potential costs for various applications. Matt Brokl explained that the fee amount must justify the costs. Council directed staff to prepare a revised fee schedule with escrows only on development related applications and revisions on various planning fees.

**4A.ii. Park Dedication Fees**

Corey Boyer discussed the current park dedication fee the City charges in relation to surrounding communities. Mr. Boyer also reviewed how park dedication fees relate to land values in the City and the City's park plan. Discussion was held on increases that have occurred since 2004 and the City's option to take the park fee rather than the dedication of

land. Matt Brokl discussed laws relating to the fees being in line with the value of the land. Council discussed the impact the current fee could be having on new development, and directed staff to lower the park dedication fee from \$3,500 to \$2,500 until land values stabilize in the future.

#### **4B. RFP Discussion**

Scott Johnson discussed the current consultant contracts in place and the process for obtaining Requests for Proposals. Council explained that they have been satisfied with the level of service the current consultants are providing, but felt it prudent to proceed with surveying comparable communities to be sure our consulting fees are comparable.

#### **4C. List of Claims Payment Process**

Corey Boyer reviewed the current process the City uses to pay bills and discussed the resolution approved by Council in 2002 authorizing staff to pay claims prior to Council review. Mr. Boyer reviewed a survey of surrounding communities and the processes they follow and also reviewed current spending controls in place to ensure compliance with City funds. Council reviewed the pros and cons of holding payments and directed staff to bring this item back to a future meeting with recommendations on an acceptable process.

#### **4D. Vehicle Maintenance Quote Process**

Scott Johnson reviewed the process the City follows in obtaining price quotes for City vehicles. Council directed staff to obtain price quotes from vehicle maintenance shops located within the City boundaries.

#### **4E. North Star Commuter Rail Invoice Discussion**

Corey Boyer discussed a letter received from Tim Yantos, representing the Northstar Corridor Development Authority in relation to staff/consultant review of the Northstar project. Mr. Yantos has indicated that they had been notified by the former City Administrator that they would only be responsible to reimburse the City for Technical Consultant Services relating to the maintenance facility only through preliminary engineering. Staff is seeking Council direction on how to proceed with charging City services related to this project. Council directed staff to request a definition of preliminary engineering and the timeline of when it ended.

#### **4F. Planning Discussion**

##### **4F.i. I-3 Zoning District**

Nate Sparks reviewed previous discussions held on the establishment of an I-3 zoning district at the Planning Commission, EDA, and jointly with the Big Lake Town Board. This type of district would allow for outdoor storage without a Conditional Use Permit which could give the City an advantage to getting businesses with outdoor storage to locate in Big Lake. Council discussed the need for the City to retain judicial control over outdoor storage and directed staff to continue with necessary revisions to the I-2 district to clarify accessory uses.

**4F.ii. Agricultural Zoning District**

Nate Sparks reviewed the different types of agricultural districts and which types would be effective within the City limits. If Council wishes to implement an agricultural district, staff is recommending the new district replace the FRD Zoning District. Mr. Sparks explained that a new district could be formulated that is agricultural friendly while maintaining the future ability to subdivide at an urban density. Council discussed potential tax rates on agricultural districts and directed staff to draft a policy to control tax rates at time of annexation.

**5. OTHER**

Administrator Johnson discussed the status of the public works expansion project and informed Council that the plans and specifications will be presented at the next Council Meeting. Administrator Johnson also asked Council if they would like to be contacted when a department head is on vacation. The general consensus of the Council is that they felt it would not be necessary to be notified for vacation time.

**6. ADJOURN**

Council Member Kampa motioned to adjourn at 8:16 p.m. Seconded by Council Member May, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina M. Wolbeck  
City Clerk

02/14/07  
Date Approved By Council