

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2009**

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Council Members present: Dick Backlund, Raeanne Danielowski, Chuck Heitz, Lori Kampa, and Duane Langsdorf. Also present: City Administrator Scott Johnson, Finance Director Corey Boyer, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Senior Planner Katie Larsen, Police Chief Sean Rifenberick, Public Works Director Mike Goebel, Liquor Store Manager Jan Kostrzewski, and City Engineer Brad DeWolf of Bolton & Menk, Inc.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. Rail Park Feasibility Report

Janna King, Economic Development Services and Michelle Keller, Keller Consulting, LLC, provided a presentation on the Feasibility Report for the proposed Big Lake Regional Rail Park and answered questions from Council Members.

Council Member Danielowski questioned the location of the proposed rail park as there are larger tracts of land on the south side of highway 10. King noted that property owners must be willing sellers. Council Member Heitz discussed the need for the project to be publicly owned to access grant funding. Council discussed the next steps necessary to determine the feasibility of this type of project. The steps would include 1) an anchor tenant would need to be committed to the project, 2) clarification of rules, 3) responsibilities, and ownership would need to be established for the project, 4) establishment of a development financing strategy, and 5) consideration of a joint exploration with Sherburne County.

4B. 2010 Budget Discussion

Corey Boyer reviewed the status of the 2010 General Fund Budget. Budget adjustments since the last Budget Workshop include 1) Employer paid insurance renewals provided a \$20,000 savings, and 2) Payoff of turn-out gear lease realized a \$6,000 savings in the Fire Department budget. Staff also asked for feedback from Council on the replacement of the Police Department Administrative position, and credit card processing fees. Boyer noted that with the adjustments that have been accounted for in the budget, the budget

expenditures are down to 2005 spending levels and the overall 2010 property tax levy would be reduced resulting in an approximate tax rate of 42.7% which would amount to a 2.6% increase over the 2009 tax rate.

Sean Rifenberick reviewed areas of the 2010 budget that will be affected by the police department. The roof at the police department will need to be replaced at an approximate cost of \$50,000. Staff is recommending the hiring of a part-time transcriptionist instead of a full-time Administrative Assistant. The 2009 and 2010 funds saved by not hiring a full-time secretary could be used to cover the costs of the roof replacement.

Staff also discussed employee and General Liability insurance renewals for 2010. Boyer noted that any further cuts to the 2010 budget would most likely need to come from personnel.

Council discussed the 2.6% tax rate increase that is necessary to balance the 2010 budget and thanked staff for their hard work during these difficult economic times.

4C. Utility Fee Update

Corey Boyer reviewed the proposed fee changes for 2010 utility rates. Staff is proposing no changes to the water user rates or base fees. The sewer user rates would increase from \$4.15/1,000 gallons to \$4.30/1,000 gallons and storm sewer fees would increase from \$2.65 to \$3.25. These increase amounts should limit a user's increase over 2009 fees to approximately 3%. Boyer noted that the 2010 fee schedule will be brought to Council at the December meeting for final approval.

4D. Semi-Tractor Parking and Residential Off-Street Parking Update

Katie Larsen reviewed discussions held at the November Planning Commission Meeting regarding semi-tractor truck parking on residential driveways. Larsen informed Council that the Planning Commission recommended that the existing Ordinance remain intact with future discussions to involve the possibility of amending the Ordinance to allow for semi-trailer trucks to park in residential driveways with special provisions. The Planning Commission also recommended that those semi-trailer trucks currently parking in residential driveways could be considered grandfathered.

4E. NSP Redevelopment Activity Update

Scott Johnson reviewed the status of NSP Redevelopment activity being processed, and the proposed City sponsorship of the redevelopment process rather than attempting to sell vacant lots into the market. Johnson noted that the City could oversee the developer's steps, processes, and outcomes of each new home being built on these properties. Council discussed liability concerns with overseeing the projects. Council also questioned if the buyers would be able to utilize NSP Funds if the properties are sold as vacant lots. Council directed staff to bring this item back to the January Workshop.

5. OTHER

Council directed staff to contact the owners of the Carousell Works to request they fill holes in their parking lot. Discussion was also held on the Park Board's review of a possible future dog park area being established in the City. Council also discussed the need for completion of the sidewalk areas on the south side of Highway 10 and directed the City Engineer's Office to provide a cost estimate on completing necessary areas. Council directed that this item be added to the December Workshop for further discussion.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Heitz motioned to adjourn at 6:44 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Danielowski, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

12/09/09
Date Approved By Council