

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL  
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**

**AUGUST 13, 2009**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Kampa called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Raeanne Danielowski, Chuck Heitz, Lori Kampa, and Duane Langsdorf. Council Member Dick Backlund arrived at 4:12 p.m. Also present: City Administrator Scott Johnson, Finance Director Corey Boyer, Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Police Chief Sean Rifenberick, Public Works Director Mike Goebel, and City Engineer Brad DeWolf of Bolton & Menk, Inc. Liquor Store Manager Jan Kostrzewski arrived at 4:25 p.m.

**3. PROPOSED AGENDA**

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

**4. BUSINESS**

**4A. 2010 Budget Workshop**

Corey Boyer reviewed additional proposed budget adjustments since the last Budget Workshop in July. With these proposed reductions and the use of \$45,000 in reserves, the City is still facing a \$58,000 budget gap. Proposed cuts include 1) Budgeted Building Department wages reduced based on a 32 hour work week, 2) re-allocation of the Public Works Assistant wages from Parks and Streets to the utility enterprise fund, 3) reduced contracted building inspections budget due to expected continued slowdown in building activity, 4) removal of street light electricity costs from the General Fund in anticipation of setting up a street light utility enterprise fund, 5) a 2-day furlough for all non-union employees, and 6) other operational cuts in training, subscriptions/dues, supplies, etc. The additional cuts total approximately \$200,000.

Boyer reviewed the preliminary net tax capacity number from Sherburne County and indicated that the City should see a 1% increase in 2010. Boyer also informed Council that the City has been awarded a COPS grant in the amount of \$180,000. These funds must be used to hire an Officer or to retain a current Officer. Hiring a new Officer would leave the Police Department down one Officer, the Public Works Department would be down one full-time position and one part-time position, the Liquor Store is down the full-time night clerk position, and Administration is down one full-time receptionist position, and one full-time Assistant City Administrator position. Boyer noted that with reduced staffing, City services will be impacted.

With the reductions discussed, there is still a \$58,000 gap between revenues and expenditures. Staff is seeking Council discussion on addressing this remaining budget shortfall.

Scott Johnson discussed the proposed furlough program which identifies furlough days for City Hall and police department administrative staff to be taken on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and November 22<sup>nd</sup> of 2010, and for public works and liquor store employees to take their two furlough days when duties and schedules allow. Two furlough days per year would be a budget savings of approximately \$10,000.

Mike Goebel discussed water shut-off procedures on past due utility accounts. Discussion was also held on moving weed/grass/snow inspection duties to the Building Department. Goebel also noted that he has not received a commitment from the Hockey Association on maintaining the ice rinks this winter season. Council directed staff to forward the RFP used for snow plowing services to all Council Members for their review.

Discussion was also held on the staff time that would be needed to administer the proposed Street Light Utility Fee. A raise in the tax rate would have the same cost affect on residents and would provide a possible tax write-off whereas a fee would not. Council noted that "Education is Key" when relaying budget information to residents. Staff was directed to draft a press release and to provide information on the City website, cable channel, and at the September Town Hall Meeting.

Council discussed the COPS Grant and whether to hire a new Officer or retain a current Officer. Council Members Backlund, Heitz, and Kampa indicated they feel a new officer is needed in the department, and Council Members Danielowski and Langsdorf indicated that retention of a current officer is warranted due to budget concerns. Council also discussed implementation of a Street Light Utility Fee Program. All Council Members indicated that raising the tax rate approximately 3.5% would be an easier adjustment for tax payers versus incorporating a new monthly fee.

Council also discussed having the City Attorney attend only one Council Meeting per month which would save the City approximately \$4,000 per year. Staff was also directed to remove the Building Consultant budgeted amount from the 2010 Budget. Council directed staff to invite the Building Inspector to meet with the Personnel Committee to discuss job duty requirements.

## **5. OTHER**

Tony Eisinger informed Council that the Public Works Department offered to provide their radio grant dollars to the Fire Department which saved them approximately \$19,000. Jan Kostrzewski informed Council that the Liquor Store exceeded \$300,000 in sales for the month of July.

**6. ADJOURN**

Council Member Heitz motioned to adjourn at 5:32 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Langsdorf, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck  
City Clerk

08-26-09  
Date Approved By Council