

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL  
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**

**April 5, 2006**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Chuck Heitz, Lori Kampa, Duane Langsdorf, Patricia May, and Don Orrock. Also present: Assistant City Administrator Scott Johnson, Finance Director Corey Boyer, Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares, Police Chief Sean Rifenerick, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, City Planner Ned Noel, City Planner Annie Deckert, and City Engineer Brad DeWolf and Jared Voge of Bolton & Menk, Inc.

**3. PROPOSED AGENDA**

Council Member Heitz motioned to adopt the proposed Agenda with moving item 4C to the beginning of the Agenda. Seconded by Council Member Langsdorf, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

**4. BUSINESS**

**4C. Water/Sewer Expansion Plans – Intersection of Hwy 25/CR 14**

Brad DeWolf reviewed the preliminary layout and cost estimate for providing sanitary sewer and water utilities to the intersection of County Road 14 and Trunk Highway 25.

Jim Thares identified the site located at the south end of Big Lake Township and north of the Mississippi River. Mr. Thares identified that staff does not believe the Township is interested in allowing or discussing projects that are not contiguous to the City Corporate limits and discussed that it may be in the City and the Township's best interest to engage in additional joint planning efforts on these ideas so the proper planning for infrastructure can take place.

#### **4A.1 Police K9 Program and Review**

Chief Rifenberick discussed the current status of the K9 Program and identified reasons for retirement for the City's current K9 Officer Justice. Discussion was held on the K9 Officer, training, time frame and budget. The general consensus of the Council was to continue with the current K9 until the end of the year and to address retirement of the K9 during the 2007 budget planning process.

#### **4A.2 2007 Communications/Technology Improvements**

Chief Rifenberick informed Council that the Sherburne County Sheriff's Department will be updating their communications system which will affect all agencies in the County. Chief Rifenberick reviewed that the changes will directly affect the City in the summer of 2007 which will impact the upcoming budget. Council discussed funding options for this equipment.

#### **4B. Fire Department Land Acquisition Funding Options**

Corey Boyer reviewed discussions recently held at the Fire Board Meeting for the potential for acquisition of additional land located behind the current fire hall site. The identified site is approximately 4.5 acres at \$25,000 per acre for a total cost of \$112,500. Mr. Boyer identified that the cost would be split 50/50 with Big Lake Township. Dollars have not been identified for this purchase as the acquisition was not budgeted for in the 2006 budget nor was it listed on the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Boyer reviewed the two options most feasible for acquisition of the property which included tapping from available dollars from the General Fund reserves, or funding it through the bond issuance currently underway for the fire hall expansion project. Mr. Boyer also identified that the preliminary plans with the Township are that they would fund the acquisition up front and the City would reimburse them for our share. Council identified their concerns with the types of uses for the property due to the amount of water located at the site. Council directed staff to clarify the objectives of purchasing the land at the next Fire Board Meeting and report back to Council. Council also indicated that if the City were to purchase the land, they would prefer that General Fund Reserves be utilized to fund the acquisition.

#### **4D.1 Potential Redevelopment Projects**

Mr. Thares reviewed two potential redevelopment areas that developers have shown an interest in. The Putnam Avenue site is located south of Highway 10, and the Eagle Lake to Fern proposed project is located on the northside of Highway 10. One developer has shown an interest in both sites. For the Putman Avenue site, they are proposing a mixed use project that includes 15,000 sq ft of retail and a high-end, climate controlled self-storage facility with a store-front office. Mr. Thares identified that the developers have met

with a BLEDA subcommittee to come up with a proposed design for the site that meets or exceeds the City's downtown design Ordinances. Mr. Thares identified that the financial aspects of the project need additional review and will require significant TIF assistance. Council identified that they would like to see the developers Business Portfolio prior to committing TIF funds and that they would like the developer to focus on the Putnam Avenue project before planning for any other projects. Council also discussed the developers request to place a marketing sign on city property. Approval will be granted after a sign permit and the required fees are properly submitted.

#### **4D.2 Code Enforcement Process**

Annie Deckert reviewed the City's current code enforcement process and the City-wide clean-up sweep that occurs every two years. Ms. Deckert identified modifications to the violation notification process. The general consensus of the Council was to implement the new code enforcement process as discussed.

#### **4D.3 Yard Parking Enforcement**

Annie Deckert reviewed the Ordinance relating to yard parking. Ms. Deckert identified that staff is seeking clarification on what types of vehicles would be included in the yard parking Ordinance and that all residential zoning districts should be held to the same standards. Council directed staff to research comparable communities for their current yard parking enforcement and to report back to Council

#### **4D.4 City Website Review**

Annie Deckert compared the City's current website maintenance program with the GovOffice website product. Ms. Deckert identified that the EDA staff feels that a user-friendly website would be beneficial to both the community and staff. The GovOffice program has a one-time license fee of \$1,050 and a monthly user fee of \$45. The City's current web host costs are \$240 per year. Council directed staff to set up a task force to review needed features and to report back with its findings.

#### **4D.5 Street Name Policy**

Ned Noel reviewed the proposed street naming policy that would give the City full authority to name streets. This would alleviate street naming problems that have occurred in the past that include similar names, and having to readdress properties due to errors. This also can cause issues with the County's parcel mapping system and emergency services locating properties in a timely manner. Staff is recommending implementing the street naming policy. Council identified that they would be in favor of implementing a Street Name Policy giving the City full authority in naming future streets.

**5. OTHER**

Mr. Thares clarified the Eminent Domain development tool used occasionally by state and local governments. Mr. Thares identified that neither the City Council nor the BLEDA has used eminent domain in the recent past to benefit any commercial development projects.

Ned Noel discussed the property access dispute between Oppidan and the Dairy Queen, and informed Council that Oppidan is intending to place a chain link fence to separate their properties. Council indicated that they would prefer a fence not be placed on the site, but that if the property owner chooses to install the fence, it must meet all regulations of the fence Ordinance and that a U shaped fence is not recommended.

Council Member Heitz directed staff to investigate ownership of the dilapidated fence located by the alley along the railroad tracks.

Council Member Kampa asked for information on how long the CR 81 project will take to complete. Jared Voge estimated that the project will take at least four to five weeks. Council Member Kampa also directed staff to remove the landscaping brick piles from the ball field area along Glenwood Avenue.

**6. ADJOURN**

Council Member Langsdorf motioned to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Seconded by Council Member May, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

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Clerk

Date Approved By Council \_\_\_\_\_