

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

MARCH 21, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kampa called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Council Members present: Dick Backlund, Raeanne Danielowski, Lori Kampa, Duane Langsdorf, and Mike Wallen. Council Member absent: none. Also present: City Administrator Todd Bodem, Finance Director Paula Mastey, Senior Planner Katie Larsen, Economic Development Assistant Sandy Petrowski, Public Works Director Mike Goebel, Liquor Store Manager Jan Muehlbauer, Assistant Fire Chief Paul Nemes, and City Engineer Brad DeWolf from Bolton and Menk, Inc.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. COUNCIL/STAFF ROLES DISCUSSION – ROBERT THISTLE (LMC)

Todd Bodem introduced Mr. Robert Thistle, facilitator from the League of MN Cities, noting that Mr. Thistle was donating his time at this workshop. Mr. Thistle provided a brief summary of his work history and background.

Mr. Thistle stated that in reviewing some of the City's policies/procedures, he has observed that Big Lake has one of the most comprehensive sets of policies and procedures in place that he has come across and they are very good. He asked if there were particular issues or questions the Council/staff had prior to his presentation.

Council Member Mike Wallen asked Mr. Thistle to define a Council Member's role. Mr. Thistle explained that the City Council is the policy body that is elected to direct the City, not to run it, and is responsible to give the authority of running the City to the Administrator. The City Administrator then manages per the guidelines set by the Council and, along with Department Heads, follows the Council's direction.

Mr. Thistle recommended that after each election, there should be a review/discussion about the City Council Members' role to assure that the rules are clearly laid out for the entire Board. He further stated that it is important for the channels of communication to be open among the Council but that the information being discussed/shared should not circumvent the City Administrator's role/structure that has been set/agreed to by the Council as this can blur the lines of responsibility which can make it difficult to have an efficient staff. Mr. Thistle suggests that the Council review the Council's Duties and Responsibilities, and Bylaws approximately every six (6) months, noting that the League of Minnesota Cities' website has a log of information for viewing.

With regards to quality of service, Mr. Thistle stated that the only way to improve the quality of service being provide to citizens is to have well trained/motivated people and that the most successful cities are ones with long tenancy of the City Council as well as long-term employees to ensure that the vision/plan of the City is followed the that quality services are provided. He stated that another important role of Council is to help bring in/encourage others to become involved in city government (i.e., the next generation of leaders) and that it may be beneficial to hold a workshop to determine how to go about engaging the City and have residents come in to participate/become involved in the process.

Planner Katie Larsen asked if Mr. Thistle had any suggestions on how staff/administration can keep the consistency of the City's vision when going through elections that happen every two years, with the potential to change the members of the City Council.

Mr. Thistle stated that workshops such as this one would be very helpful after new members are elected; the more open communication there is at the front end, the healthier the organization will be. Also, providing an orientation for new Members or for the full board on a yearly basis to review the current goals and to ask what the Council Members like, do not like, or would like to see change/remain. He closed by stating that a successful organization is one that works the goals/direction that has been established by the City Council.

4B. CITY VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR DISCUSSION

Todd Bodem stated that the current process for contracting out the annual vehicle maintenance and repair services is to go out for bids, review the overall bid for each submittal, and offer the contract to the company that provided the lowest bid. Staff provided a draft policy that provides more detail to the bid process for vehicle maintenance for the Council's review; if it is the consensus of the Council to proceed with the proposed policy, it will be included on the consent agenda at the next regular Council meeting. If there are issues or changes that are desired, the document can be revised and brought back to the Council for further consideration.

Finance Director Mastey suggested that an option would be for staff to request interested vendors to submit their name/contact information for inclusion in the bid process.

Administrator Bodem clarified that in moving forward, part of the submittal process could be to request that the bids are sealed and not opened until a scheduled date/time for bid opening.

Council Member Backlund stated that he still believes that the process is not fair and that the award of contract should be rotated between local vendors.

This policy will be brought back to the next Council meeting for consideration/action.

4C. BLEDA APPOINTMENT DISCUSSION

Todd Bodem discussed the Council liaison vacancy on the Big Lake Economic Development Authority Board (BLEDA) since the resignation of Council Member Backlund from the BLEDA. Administrator Bodem suggested that Council Member Backlund change Council liaison positions with another Council Member on another Committee.

Mayor Kampa stated that she would like to know Council Member Backlund's reasons for his decision to resign and his concerns with any other current BLEDA members, as he had previously brought these issues forward in a public forum.

Council Member Backlund stated that his concerns were still that it appears that one BLEDA member has moved out of the city limits and also that another Member works for the local bank, which he believes is a conflict of interest in some of the BLEDA decisions (i.e., the Jerky Shoppe occupying a BLEDA-owned space).

Council Member Danielowski suggested that, in order to not lose any member of the BLEDA who truly has an enthusiasm for the BLEDA and the City, consideration could be given to creating an "Ex-Officio/Member At Large" position on the BLEDA which would be a non-voting position but would allow participation. Mayor Kampa stated that if that were to be the direction of the BLEDA, then that issue would need to be brought forward to the Council for consideration.

It was the consensus of the Council that the discussion of a potential "ex-officio/member at large" position and possible appointment to the BLEDA be discussed at the BLEDA level and, if necessary, brought back to the Council for consideration.

Mayor Kampa asked if any Council Member was interested in serving as City Council Liaison on the BLEDA Board. Council Member Wallen volunteered to serve as the BLEDA's Council Liaison for the remainder of the year. With Council Member Wallen moving to the BLEDA Liaison position, the position of Council Liaison on the Parks Committee is now available; Council Member Backlund volunteered to serve as Council Liaison on the Parks Committee for the remainder of the year. The proposed change in the two Liaison positions as discussed will be on the consent agenda of the next Council Meeting for consideration.

Mayor Kampa briefly reconvened the workshop at 6:27 p.m. Mayor Kampa reconvened the workshop at 6:35 p.m.

4D. 2011 YEAR END DEPARTMENT REPORTS

The following individuals reviewed their department's 2011 year end reports and answered questions of the Council: 1) City Administrator Todd Bodem and Senior Planner Katie Larsen for the Community Development Department; 2) Finance Director Paula Mastey for the Finance Department; 3) Assistant Fire Chief Paul Nemes for the Fire Department; 4) Liquor Store Manager Jan Muehlbauer for the Municipal Liquor Store; 5) City Administrator Todd Bodem for the Personnel Department; and 6) Public Works Director Mike Goebel for the Public Works Department.

Department Heads/representatives provided the 2011 year-end information for the following departments:

Community Development Department

Planner Katie Larsen reviewed the 2011 Executive Summary for the Community Development Department, which included information on the following:

- Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)
- Farmer's Market
- Manufacturer's Week
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Marketing of Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
- Metro Transit Marketing
- Planning and Development Projects (i.e., The Crossing at Big Lake Station, Klein Bank Site Plan Review; Cherrywood of Big Lake; Holiday Station; Community Attitudes Survey; Northern Star Apartments)
- 2011 Building / Zoning Permit Activity (Building Official Larry Wasmund will be leaving Inspectron in April; another Inspectron staff person will replace Mr. Wasmund – an update will be provided to Council as it is available)

Administrator Bodem informed the Council of a ribbon cutting ceremony that will take place on Tuesday, May 15, 2012, at the Cherrywood of Big Lake project site. A request to set a special gathering for this event will be brought before the Council for consideration at a future meeting.

Finance Department

Finance Director Paula Mastey provided a brief update on the following:

- Discussed the General Fund 2011 revenues and expenditures.
- 2011 Enterprise Fund revenues/expenditures for:
 - Water Fund - Revenues increased slightly (+7.6%) from 2010; however, came in 25% under budget for 2011 (-\$418,000). Expenses slightly higher than anticipated (at 104.8% of budget) mainly due to increased electrical costs.
 - Sewer Fund – Revenues appear lower than anticipated. Expenditures almost 4.5% under budget for 2011 (-\$92,000)
 - Storm Sewer Fund – Revenue is over budget by 5% (+\$9,100). Expenses are under budget 3.7% for 2011.
 - Liquor Fund – Revenues less than anticipated under budget by 2.8% (-\$88,000). Expenses for 2011 are close to anticipated at 0.5% over budget.

Finance Director Mastey stated that she foresees beginning the next budget process in late May, which is approximately one month earlier than in previous years).

Administrator Bodem discussed the current lease of the Library space and the potential sale of the facility. Also discussed was the Rental Analysis (rent vs. lease) drafted by the Finance Director and asked for the Council's input.

Mayor Kampa asked staff to check into the Windstream building to determine if they would be interested in selling their facility (for potential use for a multi-use city facility as it is a good location for such a building).

Further information will be obtained and brought before the Council at a future meeting for discussion.

Fire Department

Assistant Fire Chief Paul Nemes reviewed the Fire Department's 2011 year-end report, including the following:

- Number of calls (232) and time spent on calls (4,285 hours) were up in 2011 from 2010.
- Thirty-two (32) firefighters on staff with three open positions at this time.
- Years of Service: thirteen members with 1-5 years; five members with 5-10 years, five members with 10-15 years; two members with 15-20 years, and seven members with 20+ years.
- Breakdown of calls for City, Big Lake Township, Orrock Township, and out of area calls (mutual aid)
- Types and conditions of fire equipment.

Liquor Store

Liquor Store Manager Jan Muehlbauer discussed the following information:

- Sales in 2011 were \$3,113,799.41.
- Customer counts in 2011 were a total of 144,774, which is only slightly up from 2010.
- Total number of Park Permits sold at the Liquor Store in 2011 was 312.
- Customer Counts: number of customers in 2011 was 144,774 (up slightly from 2010).
- Number of employees: two (2) full-time employees; thirteen (13) part-time employees.

Personnel Department:

Administrator Bodem briefly reviewed the report on the 2011 activity of the Personnel Committee and Human Resources Department, which included the following:

- Finance Department: Resignation of full-time Finance Director and hiring of Finance Consultant (Abdo Eick & Meyer, LLP).
- Administration Department: Resignation of City Administrator in 08-2011; contracted with Interim City Administrator in 08-2011; utilized Central Minnesota Jobs & Training Services to staff a temporary, part-time receptionist; hired a permanent full-time City Administrator in 12-2011.
- City Hall Restructuring: City Hall space needs analysis and efficiency review in 09/2011; elimination of the Community Development Director position; process began to coordinate hiring of permanent full-time Finance Director; start the transition of eliminating outsourcing of utility billing and handling it in-house; upgraded the Planner/Community Development Assistant to Economic Development Specialist; authorized the hiring of a full-time receptionist/cashier.

- Liquor Store: Termination of one part-time employee; resignation of one part-time employee.
- Police Department: two full-time officers departed in 2011; two full-time replacements hired.
- Public Works Department: One full-time employee resigned in 11/2011; a coordinated effort was made to hire a replacement that didn't happen until 2012.
- 2011 Contract Union Re-Opener: Re-opened the insurance portion of contract to negotiate and ultimately approved to settle at 2.5% increase for union employees; non-union employees received the same increase during the budgeting process.

Public Works Department:

Public Works Director Mike Goebel discussed the following information from the report:

- Number of employees: Thirteen full-time employees (one employee resigning in 11/2011); eleven part-time seasonal employees; one full-time position and one permanent part-time position remain open due to budget costs.
- Sherburne County Sentence To Serve (STS) crew worked numerous hours and one individual hired to work off 20 hours or restitution; one Workforce Center staff utilized on occasional basis.
- Number of after-hour call outs in 2011: 59
- Compost Site: Compost cards are being issued and are needed for entry to site.
- Discussed multiple tasks/activities performed in the Street Department, Parks Department (including installation of fitness equipment, planting of prairie restoration & trees, treatment of lakes, reduction in mowing hours and skating rink hours; number of vehicle traffic at Lakeside Park, award of SHIP grant and boat inspection grant), Water Department (including water usage, leak detections, the number of delinquent account water shutoffs performed), and Wastewater Department

5. OTHER

The Council briefly talked about possibly utilizing Facebook for the marketing of the City. Council Member Danielowski stated that the Marketing Committee is in favor of looking into using Facebook as a marketing tool. Mayor Kampa stated that she is not opposed to the use of this type of marketing as long as it is kept current. Council Member Danielowski suggested that a committee could be created to coordinate and update a Facebook page for the City. Mayor Kampa asked that the Council be kept informed of any progress on this issue.

Senior Planner Larsen reported that fifteen (15) RFP's for the Municipal Space Needs Analysis have been submitted and will be reviewed by staff and the Building Committee (Council Members Backlund and Wallen) with the final applications being brought before the Council for review at an April meeting.

Planner Larsen also reported that it appears that the City's application for funding for the Rail Park did not become part of the recent bonding bill but staff is waiting for a confirmation of that from Representative Kiffmeyer's office. The City is still pursuing the funding through the Tiger Grant and a TED grant as well.

Liquor Store Manger Muehlbauer as for clarification on what was going to be moving into the space on the west end of Lake Shopping Center (old location of the liquor store). Council Member Danielowski stated that the owner of the space (J. Weicht) has rented out the space for a couple weekends and that it is a temporary rental with only a portion of the space being use and no modifications being made to the structure.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Langsdorf motioned to adjourn at 7:41p.m. Seconded by Council Member Wallen unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Recorder

Date Approved By Council