

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 8, 2020**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Seth Hansen, Rose Johnson, Paul Knier, Mike Wallen, and Scott Zettervall. Also present: City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Police Chief Joel Scharf, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, City Planner Michael Healy, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, and Consultant City Planner Sara Woolf from Landform.

**4. OPEN FORUM**

Mayor Wallen opened the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m. No one came forward. Mayor Wallen closed the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m.

**5. PROPOSED AGENDA**

Council Member Knier motioned to adopt the proposed Agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Hansen, unanimous ayes, Agenda adopted.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Hansen motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of items 6C and 6F for separate consideration. Seconded by Council Member Zettervall, unanimous ayes, Consent Agenda approved. The Consent Agenda consists of: 6A. Approve List of Claims, 6B. Approve Council Workshop Minutes of December 11, 2019, ~~6C. Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2019~~, 6D. Approve Appointment of Parks Advisory Committee 2020 Chair, 6E. Approve Big Lake Economic Development Authority 2020 Officer Appointments, ~~6F. Approve Request for Proposal for the Community Brand and Identity Design Project~~, 6G. Accept Resignation of City Planner Michael Healy, 6H. Set a Council Gathering on March 21, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Big Lake High School located at 501 Minnesota Avenue for the 2020 Big Lake Chamber of Commerce and Industry Vendor Show, 6I. Approve City Financial Policy Amendments, 6J. Approve SAC Credit Subsidy for The Blackbird Group, LLC, 6K. Approve 2020 Sand Creek Employee Assistance Agreement, 6L. Approve Resolution No. 2020-01 approving a Therapeutic Massage License to Jianhua Shi at Lily's Massage, and 6M. Approve Appointment of Police Officer Tyler Hecht.

### 6C. Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2019

Council Member Knier requested that language pertaining to item no. 7A on the December 11th Meeting Minutes be amended to show a clearer picture of the discussion relating to pedestrian/vehicle crashes. The language requested by Council Member Knier was: Council Member Knier asked if there has been pedestrian safety issues in this area. Chief Scharf replied that in a general sense, the amount of pedestrian/vehicle crashes that we have are non-existent, noting that a lot of people that use the roadway are conscious about walking on a safe part of it.

Council Member Knier motioned to approve the December 11, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes with an amendment to item 7A to show a clearer picture of the discussion relating to pedestrian/vehicle crashes. Seconded by Council Member Johnson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

### 6F. Approve Request for Proposal for the Community Brand and Identity Design Project

Council Member Knier asked for a verbal update on the RFP for the Community Brand and Identity Project in an effort to provide information to the general public on what the expenses would go towards. Hanna Klimmek reviewed that on September 9, 2019, the Big Lake Economic Development Authority (BLEDA) formally approved an allocation of \$25,000 to a 2020 BLEDA led, city-wide branding project contingent upon the City Council approving an allocation of an additional \$25,000 of CIP funds to the project to support a total project budget of \$50,000. The purpose of the project is to generate community pride and sense of place, assist in marketing the City and selling land, the creation of a visual identity of the City for all

City Departments to manage, and to help us understand what people think of when they hear “Big Lake, MN”. Klimmek reviewed the planned phased approach recommended by the BLEDA, and reviewed the proposed project schedule which is expected to be completed by July 2020.

Knier stated that he likes the fact that this plan brings about a concerted effort between Staff, Council and the Chamber. Knier questioned why our logo is considered outdated. Klimmek responded that right now we don’t know if the logo is outdated, noting that we will have a clearer understanding of that from the citizen engagement process and feedback from the consultant. Klimmek also informed Council that we will be looking for volunteers from both members of the BLEDA and Council to sit on the interview panel. Clay Wilfahrt reviewed his past experience with branding projects noting that the logo is a very small part of this type of project. At the end of it, the City will have a document that will outline the logo, show citizen and business feedback to help find out “what” is Big Lake, and then that style guide becomes how we present what our strengths are outward, so the logo will reflect that. Wilfahrt also stated that others are telling our story, and would we rather have them telling our story, or would we rather present a concise direct path of how we are going to tell our own story. Knier stated that if this type of project brings one business to town because we had a concerted effort for it, then it would more than pay for the expense. Klimmek noted that she feels we will all learn a lot from the process as well. Mayor Wallen reviewed the full support of the BLEDA for this project, noting that it is the last piece as we have reviewed areas that we may have been weak in, and this last piece will help tie together the efforts of the City and the BLEDA.

Council Member Johnson motioned to approve the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Big Lake Community Brand and Identity Design Project be issued on January 10, 2020. Seconded by Council Member Zettervall, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

## **7. BUSINESS**

### **7A. Station Street Apartments Development Application – PUD, Preliminary Plat, Rezone, and Preliminary Site and Building Plan**

Sara Woolf presented the planner’s report for the Station Street Apartments Development Application submitted by Kuepers, Inc. The Applicant is requesting approval for Preliminary Plat, Development Stage Planned Unit Development, and Preliminary Site Plan and Architectural approval. Woolf noted that the Planning Commission and City Council reviewed the Concept plan for the apartment complex in October 2019 and received positive feedback from the Boards. Since Concept Plan review, there have been minor changes to parking, phasing, and landscaping design. The application is for a market-rate apartment complex that would include three 35-unit apartment structures on 7.8 acres of vacant land for a total of 105 units. Three of the four lots of the proposed Plat will be developed as part of the overall project, and the fourth lot to be known as Outlot A will

remain with the original owner and will remain undeveloped at this time. The project is proposed to be constructed in three phases with one structure to be completed in each phase. The Applicant will be required to provide additional phasing plans to show the phasing of construction, parking, landscaping and amenities. Woolf explained that the parcel is currently zoned A-Agriculture and is located in the T.O.D. District that surrounds the Northstar Train Station. The application includes a rezone to Planned Unit Development in order to receive flexibility on the project which is presented during Final Plat consideration. Woolf reviewed planning and zoning conditions that are listed in the resolution along with an amendment to condition no. 7 under the Planning and Zoning section of the resolution to show compliance with the zoning and subdivision ordinance. This amendment will require that the project provide pedestrian scale street lights along Station Street and Forest Road. Staff is asking Council to add this amendment to the resolution.

Mayor Wallen discussed his professional experience with Kuepers, noting that they are a very reputable developer. Wallen clarified that the application is meeting all Strategic Plan requirements, and stressed the need for additional multi-family housing in Big Lake. Klimmek stated that vacancies in Big Lake are less than 1%, and noted that the Applicant has not asked for any kind of City subsidy.

Council Member Knier motioned to approve Resolution No. 2020-02 approving the Station Street Apartments Preliminary Plat, Site and Building Plan, and Development Stage Planned Unit Development with an amendment to condition no. 7 under the Planning and Zoning section of the resolution to show compliance with the zoning and subdivision ordinance. Seconded by Council Member Zettervall, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

## **7B. 2020 Official City Appointments**

Clay Wilfahrt discussed the 2020 official City appointments resolution noting that a correction has been made to the City's designated newspaper and the Planning Commission Chair. Mayor Wallen discussed that he was provided an opportunity to review the previous year's appointments and felt that most Council Members were fairly new to their appointed boards and wanted to keep everyone in place for 2020 so he is not recommending any changes.

Council Member Zettervall motioned to approve Resolution 2020-03 Adopting the 2020 Official City Appointments. Seconded by Council Member Johnson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

## **7C. Donations – Big Lake Police Canine Program**

Joel Scharf reviewed donations received towards the Police Canine Program. Cash

donations totaling \$2,000 were submitted by the Big Lake American Legion Post 147/Legion Auxiliary, and a police vehicle sales commission valued at \$1,050 donated by Fanberg Auctions towards the canine program. Council thanked the American Legion, Legion Auxiliary and Fanberg Auctions for their generous donations.

Council Member Knier motioned to approve Resolution No. 2020-04 accepting donations as discussed towards the Big Lake Police Department Canine Program. Seconded by Council Member Zettervall, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

#### **7D. Monthly Department Reports**

Fire Department – Fire Captain Mark Hedstrom provided statistical information on calls for service for the month of December. Hedstrom also reviewed training activities, a live burn demonstration held in Monticello, upgrades to the department's SCBA equipment, reviewed community activities the department was involved in, discussed the upcoming Chili Cook-off fundraiser event scheduled on March 7, and encouraged citizens not to drive on area lakes yet and to clear snow from fire hydrants.

Police Department – Joel Scharf updated Council on police statistics, calls for service, and self-initiated policing activities for the month of December. Scharf reviewed year-end arrest stats, 2019 crime rates, and thanked anonymous donors for cash donations totaling \$3,323, noting that benefactors were presented funds from these donations totaling \$2,823 to date. Scharf also discussed the Federal Audit completed on items received through the Return to Duty Program noting the audit findings showed 100% compliance and recognized the department for implementation of items within the department. Scharf also reviewed the weekly police report listing in the Monticello Times, discussed staffing changes within the department, provided an update on the murder for hire case reported to the Big Lake Police Department in 2018 which has been turned over to the FBI and Homeland Security, and discussed the recent Big Lake arrest of a murder suspect in the Fresno California Mass shooting case. The Department extended thoughts and prayers to the Waseca Police Department and injured Police Officer Aric Matson, who was shot in the line of duty on January 7, 2020.

Engineering/Public Works Department – Layne Otteson provided an update on engineering projects underway in the City and activities in the various areas of the Public Works Department. Otteson reviewed efforts of the Public Works staff to provide snowplowing, salting/sanding, holiday decorations, ice rink flooding, and coordinating the reorganization of the department. Otteson also provided an update on the City ice rinks, the Sidewalk and Trail ADA Report, the upcoming 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project, and reviewed meetings with Public Works staff to do an equipment and facilities review and determine needs.

**8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Clay Wilfahrt discussed goal setting for the year and suggested that with the 2020 elections coming up, it would be beneficial to hold off on a formal strategic planning session until early 2021. Wilfahrt noted that we will be doing a more abbreviated version of strategic planning in 2020 and plans to meet with City Council Members and various commissions to see what they would view as pertinent goals for 2020, and then will be bringing those over-arching goals to Staff to discuss ways to achieve those goals. Staff will summarize the findings and report back to Council. Wilfahrt also provided an update on a recent Staff engagement survey that was sent out to help understand Staff's feelings on their overall working environment. Wilfahrt noted that overall he has been very pleased with the results, which was substantially positive with just a few things that Staff would like the City to work on. Wilfahrt reminded Council of the January 16<sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting scheduled with Sherburne County, Big Lake Township, Orrock Township, and the Big Lake School District. Wilfahrt also thanked City Planner Michael Healy for his years of service to the Big Lake community.

**9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Council Member Hansen: Reviewed the December CMRRPP Meeting.

Council Member Knier: Discussed the December Finance Committee Meeting, and the December Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Meeting.

Council Member Zettervall: Discussed the January Planning Commission Meeting.

**10. OTHER**

**11. ADJOURN**

Council Member Hansen motioned to adjourn at 7:21 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck  
Clerk

Date Approved By Council 01/22/2020