1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Seth Hansen, Rose Johnson, Paul Knier, and Mike Wallen. Also present: City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, Police Chief Joel Scharf, Public Works Director Mike Goebel, City Planner Michael Healy, Code Enforcement Intern Lorrie McKee, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, and Consultant City Engineer Jared Voge from Bolton and Menk.

3. **PROPOSED AGENDA**

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

4. **BUSINESS**

4A. **Review Applications for the Vacant City Council Member Seat**

Clay Wilfahrt reviewed applicants who have submitted applications for the vacant City Council Member seat. Eight applications were submitted by the deadline date with one application being rescinded. Wilfahrt also noted that a late application came in after the deadline and asked for Council feedback on if they want to accept that application or not. Council was asked to identify how many, and which applicants to offer an interview to. Wilfahrt noted that interviews will be held on Tuesday, July 16 starting at 4:00 p.m.

Council Member Knier stated that he didn’t realize there was a late applicant, noting that part of his concern is that he is feeling rushed in this process. Knier stressed that he wants to be sensitive to all Big Lake residents, and with the holiday being in the middle of the application timeframe, some applicants might not have had time to submit an application. Knier stated that he would like to push the deadline off a couple of weeks. Knier also stated that he feels we should interview everyone that applied.

Council Member Johnson stated that while she is not averse to reopening the deadline for all, she isn’t willing to accept a late submittal for just one person. Johnson noted that she is willing to devote time to interview all seven applicants.
Council Member Hansen stated that he feels anyone that wants to be engaged in the process should have known what the deadline for submittal was and stressed that notifications were more than adequate. Hansen stated that he wants to keep the original deadline and interview all applicants that submitted by the deadline.

Mayor Wallen stated that he believes in holding to the hard deadline. Wallen also stated that we should offer interviews to all seven applicants who met the deadline, and discussed the possibility of limiting the interviews to 20 minutes, but would be fine with 30 minute interviews. Mayor Wallen also stressed that this topic has been controversial and divisive, and feels the Council would be doing a disservice to the City by prolonging the appointment.

Mayor Wallen asked for final confirmation from Council on whether they were in favor of keeping the original deadline, or extending the deadline. Mayor Wallen, and Council Members Hansen and Johnson were in favor of keeping the original deadline. Council Member Knier was in favor of extending the original deadline. With three in favor and one against keeping the original deadline, Council directed Staff to offer interviews to all seven applicants who met the original July 9, 2019 deadline requirements.

4B. Mitchell Boat Launch Discussion

Clay Wilfahrt reviewed discussions from the Mitchell Boat Launch Task Force meeting. The task force is recommending the City use a physical key system this year. The gate would have a chain with a padlock on it and City residents who desire to use the launch can come to City Hall and get a key for $20. The keys will not be able to be copied, and a fine will be established for sharing the key. Key holders will be required to place a sticker on their boats, and the landing will continue to be monitored by the I-LIDS system. Any boat without a sticker will be fined for unauthorized entry. Wilfahrt also noted that keys can be replaced for a fee. The group also determined that educational material about invasive species should be handed out with the keys. The task force acknowledged that this solution will need to be evaluated at the end of each of the first few years to ensure the process is working. In order to accomplish this process, stickers, padlocks, and chain will need to be purchased to secure the gate. Keys will need to be produced for the lock, and Staff at City Hall will need to be trained on how to sell them. A fee schedule amendment will also be needed to incorporate the new fees. Wilfahrt reviewed the proposed costs associated with the new program which is expected to cost the City approximately $500 annually in Staff hours.

Council Member Knier asked for input from the full Council regarding the $20 fee. Knier stated his concern that we don’t want to make it more attractive to use the Mitchell Launch over the main Big Lake Boat Launch.

Council Member Johnson noted that with the keyed access proposed changes, the Mitchell Boat Launch would now be available to use 7 days a week, instead of just during weekdays. Johnson clarified that the launch was originally closed on weekends due to overcrowding on the lakes and parking issues by the launch. Johnson also stressed that the fee shouldn’t be cheaper than the parking pass fee at Lakeside Park as that could create a reverse incentive to use the Mitchell
Launch over the launch at Lakeside Park. Johnson also stated that she feels a $20 fee is a rational amount.

Council Member Hansen asked if there is a way to have the key turned in for a reimbursement of their fee. Hansen also stated that he is o.k. with the fee being set at $20. Council Member Johnson stated that she would only support a reimbursement if all costs to the City are covered. Council Member Knier discussed his concern with incentivizing someone to lend their key to other people. Staff reviewed the monitoring equipment that is currently installed at the launch.

Mayor Wallen stated that he feels the $20 fee isn't an overly punitive amount, and that it puts a value on the key. Wallen thanked the taskforce members for their work on this issue and noted that he feels the end result fulfills the needs of the Lake Association and maintains resident rights. Council Member Johnson clarified that the Lake Association would prefer that the launch be closed.

Council discussed the need to re-evaluate the program at the end of the year, specifically to see if the new process results in a massive increase in launch numbers. Wilfahrt informed Council that he will facilitate a year-end meeting to evaluate the program.

The general consensus of the Council was to move forward with implementing the recommendations of the Lake Mitchell Boat Launch Task Force and prepare a fee schedule amendment to include the key/pass fees as discussed.

4C. Bee Keeping Ordinance Discussion

Lorrie McKee reviewed the City’s current ordinance relating to the keeping of bees. The code currently categorizes bees as farm animals that can only be kept in the Agricultural Zoning District, and only on property that is at least 10 acres in size provided there is no animal shelter located within 300 feet of an adjoining piece of property. McKee noted that the City Code does allow a resident to apply for an Interim Use Permit to keep animals that would otherwise be prohibited by the ordinance, and reviewed the process and fees associated with this type of permit. McKee noted that there is a growing interest in “urban agriculture”. Many municipalities now allow the keeping of bees and the practice is often legalized along with the keeping of chickens in urban agriculture ordinances. The City recently legalized backyard chickens and there has been some preliminary discussion regarding making it easier to keep bees on city lots as well. McKee presented various City Ordinances that would allow for the keeping of bees as well as allowing residents to turn their yards into pollinator-friendly habitats which would provide a food source for wild honeybee populations. Discussion was held on the pros and cons of allowing bee keeping in the City limits, and the potential means of regulating bee keeping. The Council was asked to give clear direction regarding what type of regulatory approach they would want to take with this topic. Different regulatory approaches will require different amounts of Staff oversight. McKee expressed that the City does not have an animal control officer or a dedicated code enforcement officer. A staff-intensive approach to bee keeping regulation would likely mean that a planning/zoning consultant would need to be brought in to process these types of permits, oversee regulation, and potentially perform inspections. The use of consultants will result in direct costs incurred by the City which would typically need to be covered by permit fees. McKee
asked Council to provide direction on 1) leaving the code as it currently sits, 2) allow Beekeeping with setback rules but no permit requirement, or 3) require a Special Use Permit in the form of an Interim Use Permit (IUP) and charging the IUP fee of $400 + $1,000 escrow. The Council was unanimous in moving forward with option no. 2.

Council Member Knier asked if the Bee Boulevard concept would be covered in a draft ordinance to allow native plantings. Michael Healy indicated that Staff does have an ordinance drafted from earlier discussion relating to native plantings. Mayor Wallen suggested we focus on allowing bee keeping and address the native planting language at a later time.

Council Member Johnson discussed potential issues with neighbor concerns about bee allergies. Staff noted that the Maplewood ordinance does include setback regulations that will help control the location of bee habitats.

Council directed Staff to move forward with drafting an ordinance modeled after the Maplewood Ordinance allowing bee keeping for further review at a Council Workshop.

4D. New Ideas Discussion

Council Member Johnson discussed the League of MN Cities Conference session she attended relating to social media use for elected officials. Council directed staff to review the City’s current social media policy to see if it includes language relating to use of social media by elected officials. Mayor Wallen also discussed the need to provide a Data Practice educational session to Council Members at an upcoming Workshop. Staff will coordinate this type of training with the City Attorney’s Office.

Council Member Knier discussed 5G technology and the potential dangers he feels it could pose to the public. Knier reviewed that the shortness of the wavelength penetrates the human body more than 4G technology does and suggested that Big Lake look into these concerns. Council Members questioned how the City can control 5G technology and that the State and Federal government generally regulate this type of technology. Council Member Knier stated that he just wants us to be aware of potential issues, and that if the State or Federal government forces us to allow this technology, we should at least have our eyes open on this topic. Council Member Hansen stated that he is not in favor of spending City funds to research 5G technology. Council Member Johnson indicated that it should be a State or Federal pre-emption and most likely will not be a matter for local regulation. Johnson also noted that the League of MN Cities (LMC) is most likely working on this topic on behalf of all their member cities. Discussion was held that concerns should be passed on to the State. Clay Wilfahrt indicated that he will communicate with LMC representatives and report back to Council.

5. OTHER – No other.
6. **ADJOURN**

Council Member Knier motioned to adjourn at 5:48 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Hansen unanimous ayes, motion carried.

__________ Gina Wolbeck ____________ 07/24/19  
City Clerk Date Approved By Council