

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES
JANUARY 22, 2020**

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, Mike Wallen, and Scott Zettervall. Also present: City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Police Chief Joel Scharf, and Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. Financial Software and Window/Door Replacement Needs Discussion

Deb Wegeleben reviewed the current software the City uses for financial reporting as well as payroll, timecard and utility billing. Banyon, which runs on Access is outdated and the City has out-grown the software's capabilities, and the City has experienced reliability issues and data storage capability issues. Staff is in the beginning stages of reviewing various software programs available that would allow the City to combine all software programs we currently use into one cloud based platform. Wegeleben reviewed potential costs to implementing a new system and the benefits a more modern software package would provide. Wegeleben discussed software demonstrations scheduled in early February indicating that members from the Finance Committee will be sitting in on these demonstrations and will provide feedback to the full Council at an upcoming Workshop. Staff asked for Council feedback on the quotes received and for direction on moving forward with implementing new financial software for the City.

Council discussed the need to be prepared to retrieve City data during possible emergency situations, and the negative impact on City operations we could experience if we continue to use outdated financial software. Discussion was held on the costs of this type of upgrade, differences in the quotes obtained, and the need to have strict guidelines to protect our data. Discussion was also held on the possibility of reducing our costs by getting a group rate from a vendor that potentially could provide service to multiple cities.

Staff discussed the preliminary quotes received noting that upon Council direction, an official Request for Proposal (RFP) will be sent out to prospective software vendors. Discussion was also held on issues Staff has been dealing with at off-site City facilities in accessing Banyon data and programs. Wegeleben noted that she has communicated with several vendors and talked to various cities to determine viable vendors for the RFP. Wegeleben also noted that the projected timeline for installation of the software program could take approximately eight months.

Council directed to proceed with scheduling preliminary demonstrations with the three identified vendors.

Wegeleben also discussed the need to replace all windows and exterior doors in the City Hall building. Due to the age of the building and the lack of maintenance done on the infrastructure, we have experienced a rapid decline in the integrity of our windows and doors. Wegeleben noted that these areas are well beyond their expected lifespan and reviewed areas of concern relating to draft issues, security concerns with doors not shutting properly, electrical concerns, the need to increase energy efficiency in the building, and structural concerns of the current windows/doors in the building. Wegeleben has secured three quotes for replacement of these areas, noting only one provider could offer replacement of the exterior doors. Staff asked for Council feedback on the quotes received and for direction on moving forward with the replacement project.

Council discussed the differences in window and door products offered in the quotes. Council directed staff to obtain a firm quote from Ken Geroux Construction and to bring it back to the next meeting for Council consideration.

4B. City Commissioner Appointment Discussion

Clay Wilfahrt discussed the current process the City follows when appointing commissioners to various City boards. Staff has been discussing ways to improve the current process for appointing members to the Planning Commission, Economic Development Authority, and the Parks Advisory Committee. Current practice requires advertising for open positions, interviewing candidates at public meetings, and then deliberating and making a decision at that same meeting. Once the Board makes a recommendation, the selections are brought forward to the Council's Consent Agenda for approval. Several issues have been raised about the current process that has caused Staff to develop other methods to consider. Wilfahrt reviewed pros and cons of continuing with the current process, having the full Council conduct interviews, having both the Commission and the City Council conduct interviews separately, and the option to designate a selection committee with final recommendation going to the Council for action. Wilfahrt also reviewed past practice of offering reappointment to sitting commissioners who wished to retain their seat. This practice was changed due to the practice not being a very inclusive way of governing.

Council discussed past appointments to the Planning Commission and Economic Development Authority Board. Staff noted that the number of appointments per year has been on average one to two per Board.

Council Member Hansen stated that in his experience in the years he served on the Planning Commission, he doesn't feel our current process is necessarily broken. Hansen questioned why we are looking at changing the appointment process at this time. Clay Wilfahrt responded that we have fielded some concerns from candidates who have applied for positions on some of the commissions, noting that comments have been made that the perception is, that there is a strong bias towards reappointment of incumbents. Hansen stated that he prefers the current interview process with a recommendation coming from the commission members and Council making the final appointment. Hansen discussed his concern that sitting Council Members will only appoint their supporters, and discussed that there is a value to keeping long-serving commission members committed to our Boards.

Council Member Zetervall stated that he feels the whole Council should have direct oversight over the interview process.

Council Member Johnson suggested continuing with the current process and include the full Council in the interviews. Johnson stated that she feels strongly that we need involvement of the sitting commissioners as well as Council, noting that she wants to avoid the perception that we don't trust our commissions.

Council Member Knier stated that the commissions are advisory groups to the Council, stressing that the Council should make the decision who serves on citizen advisory groups. Knier noted his concern that there could be a bias in favor of incumbents, and feels that having the Council conduct interviews would be a more fair process. Knier also stated that qualification of candidates should be taken into consideration when making appointments to commissions.

Mayor Wallen stated that he prefers interviews be conducted by a selection committee, as that process would offer a mix of voices in conducting interviews. Wallen stated that he feels there will be future problems to deal with if we change our process to only the Council conducting interviews for commission appointments.

Mayor Wallen discussed that there is not an immediate need to make a decision, and with the differing views on this topic, he feels it would be best to table the item for now and continue discussions at a future workshop.

The general consensus of the Council was to table the item until a future workshop for further discussion.

4C. New Ideas Discussion

No other discussion.

5. OTHER

Clay Wilfahrt reviewed the results of the recent Staff engagement survey. Twenty-Nine employees responded to the survey that rated our organization's greatest strengths and weaknesses. Wilfahrt also reviewed 2020 goals on addressing results from the survey. Council asked Staff to continue providing updates on Staff engagement.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Johnson motioned to adjourn at 5:50 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Knier unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

02/12/2020
Date Approved By Council