

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES
FEBRUARY 12, 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 Engineer Layne Otteson, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, and Assistant Liquor Store Manager Lisa Miller.

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. Street Pavement Update

Layne Otteson reviewed past Workshop discussion relating to existing pavement condition, life cycle, rehabilitation options and preliminary costs of street pavement projects. Otteson discussed the need to look at short-term and long-term improvements and how those improvements can affect the City's debt. Otteson noted that the City intern completed a street rating 3-years ago, Otteson recommended the City utilize a third party consultant to provide detailed insight into pavement preservation and costs. Otteson stressed the need to have our streets last longer, noting that maintenance is vital. Otteson also discussed that the risk exposure is on Hiawatha Avenue, Lakeshore Drive, and Highline Drive. Otteson informed Council that he will bring back quotes from consulting firms who offer this type of service. Clay Wilfahrt discussed that we can utilize the data that we have, take steps to refine what we have, and determine the most cost efficient way to maintain our streets for the next 20 years. Otteson expressed that smart choices now, will pay off in the future.

Council Member Knier questioned the street rating work done by the intern, and whether there is a need to spend more money on further review of the data. Otteson explained that some of it has to do with experience, and that different transportation professionals might recognize other items than what Staff picked up on, and noted that another set of eyes would be beneficial. Otteson estimated that hiring a consultant would cost less than \$5,000. Wilfahrt expressed that

the intern has some training but not necessarily adequate experience, and noted that right now we just have raw data that needs to be refined.

Council Member Zettervall asked if Staff has any concern that the data we have is 3 years old. Otteson noted that he does have some concern, noting that we could consider re-doing the rating study in 2021.

4B. Freedom Rock Discussion

Clay Wilfahrt provided an update on the status of the Freedom Rock project. Wilfahrt reviewed that the project was initially approved to be placed at the Veteran's Memorial site. Since that time, Staff and Council have fielded concerns that the Veteran's Memorial site may not be the most appropriate location. Staff has been in discussions with various entities including the Freedom Rock group, Council Member Knier, Staff, and the Big Lake American Legion Post 147. Based on feedback received from these entities, they were in favor of locating the rock at Lakeside Park, and there appears to be agreement amongst all the groups. Staff will be meeting with the Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Organization in the next couple weeks to get feedback from that group. Wilfahrt noted that the Freedom Rock organizers have indicated that the placement of the rock is projected for some time this spring or summer so we will have some site prep work to do that will require some Staff hours. Otteson discussed the identified site at Lakeside Park which is near the well house and Lakeshore Drive, and could potentially include a mural on the wellhouse. Discussion was also held that parking will also be more accessible for people visiting the site.

4C. City Commissioner Appointment Discussion

Mayor Wallen reviewed discussions from the last Council Workshop relating to the appointment of commissioners to various City boards. Wallen noted that Council tabled the item for further discussion at a future Workshop and reopened the item for further Council discussion.

Council Member Hansen stated he is in favor of leaving the appointment process as is, noting that Council does receive all application materials submitted by interested persons. Hansen also stated that he would like to see the Council committee representatives give background information on candidates when the appointment item is brought to Council for consideration. Hansen discussed that it would be beneficial to have discussions at Workshop before the item is brought to Council for final consideration.

Council Member Zettervall clarified that appointments are made for all City commissions, not just the Planning Commission. Zettervall reviewed the last appointment process done for the Planning Commission and stated that he feels the best applicant was recommended for appointment. He doesn't see a problem with the current process, and also understands that Council needs to have a say in the appointments of their commissioners. Zettervall stated that he feels Council does have the ultimate say in the current process, and suggested that the Council liaison come back to the Council and provide more information about the applicants using set criteria as to why a particular person is recommended for appointment. Zettervall also

indicated that Council Members do have the option to attend those meetings as well, noting that Council Members should also be reviewing application materials that are provided in meeting packets. Zettervall stated that he supports staying with the status quo process, noting that he thinks Council is involved and makes the ultimate decision, but if we want to make it a Council only decision, he would be open to that as well.

Council Member Johnson stated that she feels status quo has worked well and doesn't feel we need to change the process. Johnson stressed that Council does already make the final appointment decision, and if people are unhappy with the decision, they can take appropriate steps at the next election. Johnson was in favor of having the Council committee representative provide information on applicants, especially when there is competition for a seat, which she stressed is rare. Johnson stated her concern that if we just have Council make the decision alone, we will lose the diversity that exists on our commissions, which currently represents the community as a whole. The more opinions and thought we have in the process, the better the result. Johnson stated that she likes staying with status quo but could live with the hybrid option if that is the consensus of the Council.

Council Member Knier stated the only problem he has is this idea that we can't go against our commissions. Knier stated that while he respects our commissioners, he is concerned that this Council has stated previously that they would be loath to go against our commissioners. Council Member Johnson stressed that Council Members should be applying their own judgement, but also recognized that when a committee unanimously votes on an issue, it can be dangerous for this body to disregard their vote. Council Member Knier stressed that the citizens of Big Lake should have a stronger voice in who is appointed to commissions, and questioned what happens if a resident isn't happy with operations of the Planning Commission. Discussion was held that the City Council would review complaints regarding the Planning Commission operations, and that all Commissioners serve at the direction of the Council.

Mayor Wallen stated that he feels commissioners don't feel obligated to vote unanimously with their counterparts. Wallen stated that he likes the hybrid option, but is open to tightening up the current process to include an update from the committee representative, and to discuss during Workshop prior to Council appointment.

Clay will work with staff to communicate better about applicants and how a commission decided who to recommend. Mayor Wallen recommended that applicants be clearly notified that appointment will be considered by the Council and that the appointment isn't final until the Council officially approves the appointment. Discussion was held to possibly put appointments on regular agenda instead of the consent agenda.

4D. New Ideas Discussion

Council Member Johnson questioned why the City charges a single-family rental registration fee but doesn't actually conduct an inspection. Mayor Wallen reviewed what a typical inspection would include which generally are considered "life, safety, and health inspections". Discussion was held that the cost of inspections would need to be covered by the property owner. Council

Member Hansen discussed concerns with our ISO rating going up due to the lack of inspections being done on rental properties and commercial businesses. Deb Wegeleben discussed business licensing as an avenue to conduct inspections for businesses. Clay Wilfahrt reviewed that the rental registration program was enacted due to law enforcement's concerns about a high number of criminal activities at rental units and the City needed to have a method of recourse for these properties. Council directed staff to look at options available for requiring inspections for all rental properties.

5. **OTHER**

6. **ADJOURN**

Council Member Zetervall motioned to adjourn at 5:47 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Knier unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

02/26/2020
Date Approved By Council