

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 25, 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 via teleconference, 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, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, and Consultant City Planner Sara Roman from Landform.

4. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Wallen opened the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m.

Marty Rainer, 1491 Hiawatha Avenue – discussed the rainwater erosion that has been occurring at his property near Chippewa Street dating back to when he moved there in 2003. The Public Works department diverted water temporarily and those improvements are now not working anymore, and there was snowplow damage that occurred this past year. Rainer requested that something more permanent be installed to control water runoff. Council directed Staff to meet with Rainer to discuss erosion issues at his property.

Gloria VandeBrake with the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce congratulated the Big Lake Police Department for being designated the 14% overall safest City in MN, and encouraged citizens to keep shopping local.

Mayor Wallen closed the Open Forum at 6:06 p.m.

5. PROPOSED AGENDA

Council Member Knier motioned to adopt the proposed Agenda with the addition of item no. 7C. Liquor Store Staff Temporary Wage Increase Request. Seconded by Council Member Zettervall, unanimous ayes, Agenda adopted.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Hansen motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Zettervall, unanimous ayes, Consent Agenda approved. The Consent Agenda consists of: 6A. Approve List of Claims, 6B. Approve Joint City/Township/Fire Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2020, 6C. Approve Council Workshop Minutes of March 11, 2020, 6D. Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2020, 6E. Approve Emergency Council Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2020, 6F. Approve 2020 SHIP Mini Grant Agreement, 6G. Approve 2020 Summer Farmer's Market Agreements, 6H. Approve Changing Planning Commission Meeting Start Time to 6:00 p.m., 6I. Approve Housekeeping Ordinance No. 2020-05, and Summary Publication Resolution No. 2020-27, 6J. Accept Resignation of Part-time Liquor Clerk Sue Weizel, 6K. Approve AEON Development Resolution of Support No. 2020-28, 6L. Accept Resignation of Part-time Public Works Employee Dan Thiele, and 6M. Approve Resolution No. 2020-29 approving the Consumption and Display Permit Renewal for the Carousell Works.

7. BUSINESS

7A. Style Catering Conditional Use Permit Application – 321 County Road 43

Sara Roman reviewed the planners report for the development application submitted by Gerrath Properties requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for catering and liquor on-sale at the commercial property located at 321 County Road 43. Roman indicated that both uses are allowed in the B-3 General Business zoning district but do require approval of a CUP. Roman also noted that there will be no sales or serving of liquor at the business location, and that the Applicant is not proposing any modifications to the site or exterior of the existing building where the catering service will be located. Roman reviewed the history of the building which was built in 1980, and remodeled in 2014. The building now houses a Tae Kwon Do business which comprises approximately 1,300 square feet of space, has a common area and two shared ADA bathrooms. The catering business is proposed to take up another 1,360 square feet of the building. Roman reviewed parking requirements, and pedestrian circulation noting the possibility of the Applicant dedicating a portion of the northern property line to the City for a future sidewalk.

Mayor Wallen discussed the need to correct the code to allow catering in districts that already allow restaurants, as a catering use would be less intrusive. Wallen stated that he feels it is overly burdensome to the public. Roman reviewed discussions with the Applicant,

noting that Staff did recommend the Applicant move forward with a Conditional Use Permit Application versus a code amendment as they would have needed this type of approval for the on-sale liquor use regardless. Roman also indicated that Staff will look at cleaning up inconsistencies within the city code, and that the new City Planner will be setting up a taskforce to address these types of issues.

Council Member Zettervall motioned to approve Resolution No. 2020-30 approving a Conditional Use Permit to allow catering and liquor on-sale uses at 321 County Road 43, and authorized the City Engineer and City Attorney to draft and finalize a Sidewalk Easement Agreement for 321 County Road 43 prior to signature. Seconded by Council Member Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7B. Monthly Department Reports

Deb Wegeleben informed Council that the final Audit report will be presented to Council on April 22, and recapped the 2019 cost per day to provide City services. Wegeleben also provided a year-to-date financial report, and reviewed the benefits of the City budgeting for Local Government Aid (LGA) in our Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Fund. With the current pandemic situation, if the State of MN delays distribution of LGA to municipalities, the City will not have to alter or change the services it provides. Mayor Wallen thanked Finance Director Wegeleben for recommending the City budget LGA dollars in the CIP fund.

Greg Zurbey provided an update on the municipal liquor store operations for February. Zurbey discussed in-store tastings and community events, discussed the annual beverage and alcohol training staff attended, reviewed the recent regional MMBA meeting as well as the March 3rd Legislative Day event at the Capitol, reviewed recent building maintenance completed at the store, the February 1st change to the Lake Liquors Loyalty Club, and noted that the store will still be holding its wine sale even though the Food Shelf fundraiser has been cancelled. Zurbey also reviewed the significant increase in liquor store sales since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, thanking Staff for their extra efforts. Zurbey discussed the added stress Liquor Store Staff is experiencing, and noted the store hours have been changed to address the increased demand. Zurbey also noted that Staff will be looking into curbside pick-up options, but needs to work with the credit card vendor to see if this will be possible. Barriers will also be installed to protect Staff during transactions, and customers will be asked to use credit/debit cards instead of cash.

Hanna Klimmek provided an update on activities in the Community Development Department. Klimmek reviewed housing/commercial development statistics/projects, and redevelopment projects. Klimmek also discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting area businesses and the City's efforts to get out information on resources available to the Big Lake business community. Klimmek also informed Council that Sara Roman has accepted a position with the City of Minneapolis and wished her well in her new job.

Council Member Knier asked what the response has been from the Big Lake business community. Klimmek reviewed the overall positive feedback from information the City is providing.

7C. Liquor Store Staff Temporary Wage Increase Request

Greg Zurbey discussed the significant impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the operations and staff of Lake Liquors. Due to the increase in sales volume and customer counts, along with reduced available staff to work during the pandemic, leadership is requesting Council consider a \$2.00 per hour wage increase for all Non-Exempt Liquor Store Staff for hours worked from March 15, 2020 through April 8, 2020. During this pandemic, wage increases have been the trend in a number of municipal liquor stores as well as private businesses.

Council Member Zettervall recommended we do better and recommended we double the increase to \$4.00 per hour. Council Member Knier questioned the need for that much of an increase and stated that he would like to think it through. Zettervall stated that the increased revenue and risk should be taken into consideration.

Council Member Zettervall motioned to approve a temporary hourly increase of \$4.00 per hour for all Non-Exempt Liquor Store Staff retroactive to March 15, 2020, to be in effect through April 8, 2020. Seconded by Council Member Johnson. Discussion followed.

Council Member Knier asked for clarification on what the average wage is at the store. Zurbey noted that wages of non-exempt employees range from \$12.61 to \$15.32. Knier also stated that while he doesn't disagree with Zettervall, he offered a reminder that we are spending other people's money. A 15% increase is substantial and he would be in agreement on Staff's original recommendation of a \$2.00 increase. Zurbey clarified that our gross profit is up \$38,000 from last year. Council Member Hansen discussed whether or not the federal grant will off-set the wage increase. Council Member Knier questioned what happens on April 8. Administrator Wilfahrt clarified what the process will be on April 8th noting that the raise will fall off without affirmative action from Council to extend it. Mayor Wallen stated that he agrees with Council Member Zettervall, noting that we should share the profits with the people that are generating the work and taking on the risk.

Vote passed with a unanimous vote of ayes. Motion carried.

8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Clay Wilfahrt discussed Staff's efforts to figure out remote work and meeting solutions. Wilfahrt also reviewed the constant flood of issues Staff has been addressing on the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Chief Scharf reviewed today's declaration from Governor Walz designating the Statewide Stay At Home Order. Scharf reviewed how the Police Department will be addressing the Order, noting that a clear message will be pushed out on Facebook addressing how the department will be enforcing the Order.

Council Member Johnson: Reviewed the recent Fire Board Meeting.

10. OTHER

Mayor Wallen discussed the City's efforts and communications during the COVID-19 pandemic. Wallen reviewed efforts from various departments to minimize the impacts of the pandemic, and strongly encouraged citizens and businesses in the City to obtain the most current and up-to-date information from the City's official Website and Facebook page.

11. ADJOURN

Council Member Knier motioned to adjourn at 7:02 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Hansen, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
Clerk

Date Approved By Council _____ 04/08/2020