

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

APRIL 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, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Police Chief Joel Scharf, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, City Planner Amy Barthel, Streets/Parks Superintendent Nick Abel, 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. Lakeside Park Parking Policy for 2020 Discussion

Layne Otteson discussed concerns that have been raised regarding a potential influx of Lakeside Park users due to park and boat launch closures in other communities relating to COVID-19. A significant increase by non-resident users would likely have an adverse impact to resident parking and access to Lakeside Park. In the event that these issues occur, Staff would like to be able to respond immediately if residents and seasonal pass holders are not being able to use the parking lot at Lakeside Park. Currently, there is no policy in place to guide Staff on this type of circumstance. Otteson clarified that a change in operations utilizing an approved option would only happen if needed. Otteson reviewed four options to address these concerns and presented pros and cons for each option; 1) Designate parking areas, 2) Seasonal pass access for residents and non-residents (no day pass), 3) Seasonal pass only for residents (no day pass), and 4) Adjust current price schedule. Each option is expected to result in a reduction of fees collected. The losses in revenue could likely range between 10% to 50% depending on use from residents and non-residents. Staffing reductions would correspond to tracked revenue loss. Otteson expressed that parking lot and boat launch use this summer is unknown and the COVID-19 situation is very fluid. City Staff will monitor parking lot use and capacity closely. Of the four options, Staff finds Option 1 to be the best response to address parking lot use increases due to non-residents. If the situation continues to escalate, Staff would return with an

amendment further restricting parking access. Clay Wilfahrt stressed that it is not the City's intention to start this right away, only on an as needed basis.

Council Member Knier stated that he hopes overcrowding at Lakeside Park doesn't become a problem, but if it does he likes option 1. Knier also stated that he doesn't want to inhibit people from coming to town as it benefits local businesses.

Council Member Johnson discussed that she is a big proponent to give residents some kind of benefit. Johnson noted that she likes option 1 for the near term, but wants to look at a broad scale way to address the access issues that we currently have. Johnson also stressed that we need to give preferential access to City of Big Lake residents.

Council Member Zettervall asked why we don't close the parking lot when the lot is full. Council Member Johnson stressed that she feels it will be a problem when local residents can't park at the City Park. Zettervall stated that he supports option 1, noting that we should give preference to City residents, possibly by only issuing season passes to City residents.

Council Member Hansen stated that he likes option 1.

Mayor Wallen stated that he likes option 1, and would like to see us get to the point that City residents don't have to pay to park.

Council directed Staff to move forward with drafting Option 1 to be implemented into a Lakeside Park Parking Policy and to bring back to Council for final consideration.

Wilfahrt also reviewed Staff's evaluation of potential cost saving measures to control the gate access at Lakeside Park. Wilfahrt noted that a Smart Parking Meter System Kiosk could be a possibility instead of issuing annual passes and staffing the gazebo. Staff is working on verifying that logistically the system will work, and how annual pass holders would have access.

Council Member Zettervall discussed that he would like an access card that would be compatible for numerous uses such as the Park as well as the compost site.

Council Member Knier stated that he is in favor of this type of meter system, and he likes the savings projections.

Council Member Hansen stated that we would need to figure out how annual pass holders will still be able to access.

Council Member Johnson stated that she likes the meter system idea, and would like to move forward with giving free access to residents and increasing the entry fee to non-residents. Johnson also discussed the concept of implementing dynamic pricing.

Mayor Wallen stated that he likes the meter system concept and thanked staff for coming up with new ideas to improve the Park.

4B. 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2020-1 Discussion

Layne Otteson provided an update on the 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project that was bid in early April. The bids ranged from \$3M to \$3.9M with 5 bidders submitting. Otteson reviewed proposed project costs totaling \$3,371,068.11. In December 2019, the project was estimated to cost \$3.73M including construction and engineering/testing. Otteson also reviewed project funding which would be funded in part through assessments amounting to \$1,446,728.80 and the City paying \$1,924,339.31. In December, the funding identified was projected to be approximately \$1.74M in special assessments and \$1.99M by the City. Otteson reviewed options available for the project which included 1) reject the bids, 2) accept the low bid, or 3) wait until the next Council Meeting. Otteson reviewed the pros and cons of each option, and laid out the financial impact of moving forward with the project. Otteson also discussed the option to redesign at a lower cost, noting that we do need to complete insulation services, ADA upgrades, and repair the County Road 81 water main break issue. Otteson reviewed the potential costs of a reduced project and a potential schedule for the improvements.

Council Member Knier discussed the uncertain times we are experiencing, noting that a redesign would still produce good solid roads in these areas. Knier also stated that he wouldn't be opposed to pushing the street project out to 2021. Knier also discussed whether it would be beneficial to rebid now that oil prices are so low.

Council Member Johnson stressed that if we decide to scale back the project, she doesn't want to jeopardize the quality of the lake. Johnson stressed that a redesign could cause long term harm if not done properly, so we need to continue to be considerate of lake quality.

Council Member Zetervall discussed the need to be ready to be aggressive, and to be prepared to jump on opportunities.

Mayor Wallen discussed the need to continue to be fiscally prudent and preserve our cash standings. Given some of the uncertainties that the State is experiencing, Wallen stated that he would like to scale the project back, and only do the required upgrades in 2020 and then revisit the larger road project portion in 2021. Deb Wegeleben discussed the state of the Bond market, noting that we could potentially have to wait to sell the Bonds depending on the market. If we wait to sell Bonds, the City would have to cash flow the project costs.

Council discussed that the City has up to 60 days to approve or deny the bid award which would allow us until the second meeting in May to make a decision on what capacity to move forward with the project. The Consensus of the Council was to wait until we have a clearer picture of how the economy will look and directed Staff to come back to the next meeting with an update. Otteson noted that he will start a new Preliminary Engineering report in preparation for the May 13th Council Meeting.

4C. New Ideas Discussion

Council Member Knier informed Council that the Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon and the Big Lake American Legion have jointly funded the purchase and installation of benches at the Veteran's Memorial site. Council directed the Organizations to work with the Parks Department Staff to coordinate the install of the benches.

5. **OTHER** – No other.

6. **ADJOURN**

Council Member Knier motioned to adjourn at 5:52 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Johnson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

05/13/2020
Date Approved By Council