

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

APRIL 26, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Council Members present: Ken Halverson, Sam Hanson, Paul Knier, Kim Noding, and Paul Seefeld. Also present: City Administrator Hanna Klimmek, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, Community Development Director Therese Haffner, City Planner Lucinda Spanier, Police Chief John Kaczmarek, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, and Big Lake Student Liaison Allie Cross.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. Parkway Planning Discussion

Lucinda Spanier reviewed the 2022 Roadway Classification Map which is intended to help with future growth and development of the City. The City's consultant planning company, Landform, has developed illustrations for street sections, including parkway street design, collector, and local streets. The Comprehensive Plan further calls for creating a system of landscaped collector streets called parkways. Spanier discussed parkway planning has been included in the Council approved City 2023 Priorities, noting the next action step identified within the Comprehensive Plan was to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of the proposed parkway system and identify specific elements within the planned parkways within Big Lake. Based on the 2023 Priorities approved by Council, Landform has prepared a Scope of Services/Contact for Transportation Planning to complete parkway planning. The \$6,300 expense for this service would be funded out of the General Fund – Planning Department Consultant Fees. If Council wishes to move forward with the project, staff will obtain more quotes as is required by the City's Financial Policy.

Mayor Knier asked if the plan will provide a big picture idea as well as the cost of maintaining those streets, and how that will affect our budget. Spanier responded the cost will be broken down on a per foot basis. Knier asked if we know the difference in cost between a parkway versus a standard street, and Spanier responded the plan would identify that information.

Council Member Halverson reviewed that Code Revision Taskforce Member Scott Marotz previously commented that parkway roads are very expensive to maintain, and Halverson noted that a lot of communities remove the landscaping due to the maintenance costs, questioning if the City will get a bang for our buck. As these types of street designs tend to be in retail/commercial areas versus residential areas, he asked how future assessment costs would be allocated. This street design would also be taxing on our Public Works Department, noting this is a major project and questioned if we would get a bang for our buck putting this through a residential area. Knier stated he doesn't disagree with Halverson, noting he is having a hard time with the project, but also recognizes this design is in the comprehensive plan so it is good we are addressing it. Knier discussed he was on the comprehensive plan taskforce as were many of us in the room, noting he is struggling with the parkway plan as it is a major project and is going to be very expensive, and he doesn't know that we would get a bang for the buck, asking if it is worth doing the study at a cost of \$6,300. Halverson asked if the study will identify acquisition costs. Spanier reviewed this would be development driven, explaining a parkway would be constructed as development occurs, and in those instances the developer would be required to dedicate the specified right of way to the City. The developers are required to pay for, and construct any and all roadways that are planned to go through the property they are developing. With a parkway, the City would pay for anything above and beyond what a typical collector road would be. Spanier also noted there are areas that show the parkway going through developed areas so the study will take a look at when those areas will be constructed realistically so we can start budgeting for them, noting it would correspond with our road reconstruction projects. Halverson discussed our road plan could be affected by County projects.

Council Member Noding discussed the places that are already developed like Minnesota Avenue from Eagle Lake Road to County Road 43, and asked how the extension would look on the other side of County Road 43. Spanier responded the other side of County Road 43 would be development driven. The section by the school campus would be a road reconstruction project.

Mayor Knier reviewed that previously we had an issue with a developer who didn't want to pay for the parkway and that was a major sticking point for the Council. Spanier responded the developer didn't want to pay for a collector roadway, not a parkway collector. The City contributing above and beyond to make it a parkway would be a real benefit to that particular developer or any land they are trying to sell as it would be a huge amenity and would greatly increase their property value, which is the main driver why the comprehensive plan contemplates this design.

Halverson agreed with the concern of moving forward with the study. If we commit to a parkway on Minnesota Avenue and someone buys the property, we would be on the hook to cover the above and beyond costs. It wouldn't be a negotiable thing, and would put us on the hook. Spanier responded the scope of work on the study will take a look at areas we expect to be developed in the future and would be utilized during budgeting.

Council Member Hanson discussed this study could be used years down the road and we wouldn't need to build our parkways right now. It would set the framework for future development, and then as we see fit, adding these amenities into our currently developed neighborhoods. Hanson asked how long we think the study will be valid information. Spanier responded the plan would be to utilize that study to

inform future leaders so they can make a determination on if we want to adopt a parkway system, and if so, what that would look like. Discussion was held on what the City's responsibility would be to pay the additional costs to upgrade a collector road to a parkway design. Noding asked if these types of street designs would attract developers. Spanier responded a big draw for a community to implement parkways is to increase property values, and to provide additional amenities for the community. Noding discussed she has driven a parkway recently in St. Michael, which goes through both business and residential areas, noting how nice it looks.

Council Member Seefeld discussed it is the above and beyond that concerns him. If the City was in a position that we had a lot of money in the bank and we didn't have debt, he would like the parkway concept, but he would rather give tax breaks to the residents. Knier stated he feels the same, but out of respect for the comprehensive plan, asked if we should get a price tag on what the study would cost, or put it off until another time, noting he can go either way. Knier noted the comprehensive plan was citizen led, and he sat on the taskforce. He reviewed how these kinds of things get put into plans that are so far out into the future, and years down the road get legs and then there is this huge price tag to put it in as well as to maintain it. Council discussed the potential benefits of seeing the price tag because it would be nice to know where we stand, the plan could be utilized as a feasibility report, and more information is better than having no information.

Council directed Staff to move forward with seeking two more quotes for services. Deb Wegeleben reviewed quoting requirements per our City Financial Policy.

4B. Discuss Purchase of New Camera System at Lakeside Park

Deb Wegeleben reviewed staff researched and received a quote to upgrade the cameras at Lakeside Park from the Arlo and Ring cameras that are currently installed there, noting concerns with charging and connection issues with the current camera equipment which has created issues with the police department being able to view activity at Lakeside Park. Staff reached out to WH Security for a quote to install cameras at the park, which would be the same system that is at City Hall, Veterans Memorial Park (new) and the Police Department. These systems are not cloud based and do not have the same advance features as the Liquor Store, but would allow the police to monitor activity, not only at Lakeside Park, but at the Veterans Memorial and City Hall through a smart phone app or through a secure website log in. The system offered by WH Security is the Avycon 32 Channel with a NVR recorder, with the recorder being in lieu of cloud storage which is what is used at the Liquor Store and the Water Treatment Plant. A positive feature of WH Security is the technician is local and WH Security also maintains the alarm system for City Hall. Wegeleben noted one drawback of this type of system is the video is stored on the recorder and not the cloud so staff would have to save any videos needed to an external drive. Wegeleben reviewed the \$37,989.95 proposal submitted by WH Security which includes equipment and install with a monthly recurring charge of \$40.45 for alarm system monthly monitoring. The prior quote for the cloud based system was \$36,527.20 for a 5-year term. Wegeleben discussed staff members from the Police and Public Works departments reviewed with WH Security representatives where the cameras would need to be placed. One area that would be beneficial for a camera to be placed would be at the entrance of the park. This would allow staff to monitor vehicles entering and leaving the parking lot, especially during the busy summer months when at times there have been issues between the seasonal staff and

individuals who park in the parking lot. Wegeleben noted if Council wishes to move forward with the project, the camera system would be funded from the Parks CIP Fund with the recurring monthly charge budgeted out of the Parks General Operating Fund.

Mayor Knier stated he wants to save some money on this. Wegeleben responded staff has looked into reducing costs, and we could scale back the style of camera to reduce costs. Knier discussed that obviously we need a camera at the gate, and Norm Michels reviewed the other numerous areas of the park we have had issues at, and situations we haven't been able to identify perpetrators.

Council Member Halverson discussed the liquor store camera project that took a year and a half to implement correctly which increased our costs and took up staff time. Halverson stated he doesn't have a problem with putting cameras in, but stressed we need to buy the right cameras, not purchase a low grade camera system. Halverson also discussed once it becomes known that we have good cameras at the park, the incidents should substantially decrease. Wegeleben clarified the liquor store camera purchase and acknowledged we didn't order the right cameras to begin with, and the camera company uses third party technicians which has been an ongoing issue. Wegeleben noted WH Security is locally owned and has their own technician service, so this vendor should work better. Halverson asked, if because the video footage will involve minors, do we need a policy to view footage. John Kaczmarek responded that as the footage is from a public space there shouldn't be concerns, but noted we shouldn't be sharing the footage. Greg Zurbey discussed the liquor store used WH Security with our previous system and they were very good to work with.

Mayor Knier reviewed we are going to have reserve officers at the beach on weekends so that should help going forward and should deter some issues we have been seeing. Kaczmarek reviewed the re-implementation of the Police Reserve Program, which should provide some coverage at the park, but also noted he cannot guarantee coverage at all times as the reserves will be utilized in many other areas as well. Knier also asked for staff feedback on what quality of camera we should consider purchasing. Kaczmarek recommended that the City should not scale back on the camera resolution, noting recorded footage isn't just on damage to property, it could be a critical incident that can help us with something that is drastically serious and not just a nuisance. Kaczmarek also discussed concerns with the distance the cameras will be shooting, noting the need for more clarity which is lost with distance. Discussion was also held on past threats directed to staff at the gate entrance, and altercations between park users.

Council Member Hanson stated he would rather purchase the highest resolution camera we can, and maybe scale back the number of cameras at the park by a 50% to 60% reduction. If we are getting high resolution cameras, we should be able to zoom further across the parking lot. Kaczmarek reviewed the substantial distance between each pole, which is significant, and was a factor in how many cameras staff felt were needed. Halverson discussed spots where there would be no camera footage, noting what we can't see, creates a problem. They need everything they can get to prosecute, and we would also have a better chance at getting restitution for vandalism. Wegeleben discussed the camera locations were a recommendation from Investigator Prigge for the benefit of City equipment, for park users, and for the work he does. Norm Michels reviewed discussions on placement of cameras and issues we have seen at the park. WH Security made the coverage recommendation to best provide coverage at the park.

Halverson discussed the City's substantial investment in Lakeside Park and the need to properly secure and monitor the area. Mayor Knier asked for further information on issues we are experiencing with our current camera system at the park. Wegeleben identified connectivity and power issues due to the current equipment being run by solar.

Council Member Seefeld suggested staff pick 10 top of the line cameras and choose the best locations for them. Knier discussed we can always add more cameras if the need arises, reiterating we are now going to have more police presence there with the Reserve Program. Hanna Klimmek discussed the Reserve Officer Program is volunteer based, and Kaczmarek stressed we can't promise to have Reserves on site at all times needed. Wegeleben suggested if Council wishes to lower the number of cameras, that Investigator Prigge be advised to see what will truly be the best. Michels commented if we reduce the number of cameras being purchased, the price increases per camera. Council Member Hanson stated he is not in favor of the full quote but would consider purchasing up to 15 cameras, reiterating he is not in favor of the \$38,000 quote. Council Member Noding stated the park needs adequate coverage, but if there is a way to do it cheaper, she is fine with that. Klimmek suggested Council direct staff to go back and discuss with Investigator Prigge, Public Works, and WH Security, a more cost beneficial way of doing this project, but still securing the entire area. Mayor Knier stated a police presence should help and suggested we go one more summer season to see how it goes.

Council directed staff to bring this item back to a future workshop for further discussion.

5. OTHER

Deb Wegeleben discussed the Juneteenth bill that is in the House and Senate for an effective date this June, noting if the legislation passes, staff will bring back a personnel policy amendment for Council consideration.

6. ADJOURN

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

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

05.10.23
Date Approved by Council