

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

AUGUST 9, 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, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Police Chief John Kaczmarek, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, and Big Lake Student Liaison Allie Cross.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. Residential Service Line Insurance Options

Dan Childs discussed Council direction at the June 14, 2023 Council Meeting for staff to reach out to HomeServe who partners with cities to offer residents insurance for water service lines and sewer clean-outs. Dennis Lyon from HomeServe reviewed the National League of Cities (NLC) Service Line Warranty Program by HomeServe. The NLC partners with HomeServe to provide over 1,200 municipal and utility entities to over 4.8M customers. Lyon reviewed the common homeowner misconception that the City is responsible for maintenance of the water and sewer lines on their property, or that repairs are covered by their homeowner's insurance, noting homeowners are often unprepared for emergencies and expect solutions from the City and/or the utility company. Lyon reviewed program benefits, products available to homeowners, and communication/marketing methods. Lyon reviewed that the NLC Service Line Program helps residents understand their lateral line responsibilities before they have an unexpected issue and allows them to choose how they wish to prepare for these potentially expensive incidents. Their program would increase the quality of life within our community by helping residents when they need it the most, while also reducing the number of distress calls made to the City. Lyon stated HomeServe will be a trusted steward of the City's brand and reputation.

Council discussed offering this type of insurance option to residents will provide an education on who is

responsible for water and sewer service lines, and will give citizens the opportunity to choose if they want to participate in the coverage. The overall consensus of the Council was they were not in favor of implementing the revenue sharing insurance option, but would be in favor of the reduced rate option. Council also discussed that staff will have the opportunity to review and approve all marketing materials that will be mailed out to citizens.

Council directed Staff to bring back the Marketing Agreement with Utility Service Partners Private Label, Inc. d/b/a Service Line Warranties of America for the Non-Royalty 3 rate option, to a future Council Meeting for consideration.

4B. Asphalt Grinder Discussion

Norm Michels reviewed the quotes received for the purchase of a skid steer mounted asphalt grinder for Public Works. Council previously directed staff to check into having Public Works do small asphalt patching project in-house. The Department currently has a skid steer, a tar patch trailer, a skid steer mounted pickup broom, a double drum roller, and trucks to transport the equipment, with the exception of an asphalt grinder. Staff reached out to state bid vendors for quotes and options. Quotes were submitted on an 18-inch and a 24-inch grinder, which is what our current equipment is capable of operating. Michels noted with the purchase of a skid steer mounted asphalt grinder, staff would have the ability to make a more permanent small asphalt repair, which is work we are currently hiring out.

Mayor Knier asked how we are doing this type of maintenance currently. Michels responded the City is doing smaller patching projects in-house, and hiring out larger types of projects. This new equipment would allow Public Works to not just do spot patching, but would allow us to set up a schedule to stay on top of the necessary maintenance. Knier asked where the new equipment would be funded from. Michels responded the funds are allocated in the Streets CIP fund. Michels also noted the equipment will give us the ease of doing patching at our will, instead of bringing in a company to do smaller patch jobs. Kier asked if we would be getting a better product because we can address maintenance issues right away, and noted he doesn't want this purchase to turn into the need for more staff. Hanna Klimmek discussed it is hard to know what the staffing needs will be in the future.

Council Member Halverson discussed he feels the quality of the work will be better by using this equipment. Michels clarified this won't replace pot-holing for the small stuff, noting we would be able to attack a portion of a road so it doesn't fall apart. Layne Otteson discussed this equipment would be able to free up man power because the purchase of a hot-mix asphalt is easier to get in a season other than in the spring.

Council directed Staff to bring back the quote from RTL Equipment, Inc. for the purchase of a 24-inch Bobcat Asphalt Grinder to a future Council Meeting for consideration.

5. OTHER

Dan Childs reviewed the MN DNR has contacted municipalities statewide about drought warnings to cut back to 50% of our January usage. Childs reviewed Public Works has already cut back on irrigation usage at

City parks, and our next step will be 25% of January use. Council Member Halverson asked what the consequence is if don't meet their requirement. Childs responded we would most likely have higher rates. Mayor Knier asked how much water we will save by cutting back our usage. Childs responded cutting back parks will decrease water usage by about 200,000 gallons per day. Norm Michels reviewed that over the past couple of years we have lost some grass areas due to substantial irrigation cut backs, noting we don't want to do that again if we can help it. Michels also indicated that ideally, we should water heavier in the fall, and noted our City parks are in good shape right now with the maintenance that has been done so far. Childs discussed we would be looking to save approximately 700,000 gallons per day, but noted we are coming to the end of the irrigation season. Michels discussed the new Mega Storage project has been using water for dust control at their construction site. Knier discussed he has always been taught water is recycled and asked how cutting back will help with the drought. Childs responded that an increase in population will affect water availability in an area. Hanson asked if there is an incentive on encouraging sand point wells. Childs commented staff has reached out to well drillers who will be meeting with staff to review these types of options. Halverson stated we spent \$80,000 at a City park to irrigate, noting he would like further discussion on getting quotes for installing sand point wells. Childs stated the City will be putting out messaging to the public providing water conservation tips.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Hanson motioned to adjourn at 5:35 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

08.23.23
Date Approved by Council