

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

JANUARY 25, 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, Police Captain Sam Olson, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, and Big Lake Student Liaisons Allie Cross.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. Review Grant Writing Services

Hanna Klimmek discussed that at the September 28, 2022 workshop, Council directed staff to research grant writing consultant options. The discussion at the workshop was focused on parks, trails, and arts, with some discussion on public safety grants. Klimmek noted that the research found that most cities take advantage of grant writing opportunities similar to Big Lake's efforts in this area. The City has always utilized consultants for larger projects with staff managing their time for opportunities that we can handle in-house. There are cities much larger than Big Lake that staff full-time grant writers. Klimmek noted that the City of Big Lake is not eligible for some grant opportunities due to community demographics. Staff was referred to Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA) whose specialties include community support programs, small business assistance, grant writing/management services, and community planning/development. Klimmek introduced Courtney Bergey and Kelly Wilkens from CEDA, who provided information on ways they could assist the City in making projects successful through grant opportunities.

Council Member Halverson asked if CEDA can assist with FEMA grants. Bergey and Wilkens responded that they have done Federal Grants in the past. Halverson asked what their success ratio is on grant writing projects. They responded that they are probably closer to a 75%+ success rate, noting that grant writing is a smaller portion of the services they provide. They also discussed that determining eligibility

looks at how competitive the City would be in obtaining grant awards. Halverson discussed whether the COVID pandemic could have affected their percentage of awards. Halverson also asked what the cost was for them to write the City of Coleraine grant. Bergey estimated that the Coleraine project took 30 hours to complete, which would have cost them \$3,000 or less.

Mayor Knier asked what makes a grant application competitive. Wilkens responded that it depends on the specific grant, but that community surveys help as well as a City being able to demonstrate a need.

Council Member Noding asked if their fees are project based, or would it be a long-term contract. The response was that their fees are project based, and that they wouldn't charge us until they are sure it would be an eligible project. It was also noted that there are instances when a project is a good project, but there just wasn't enough funds to go around. Generally, if that happens, they would offer a much reduced rate for a resubmittal. Discussion was held that it is more beneficial for the City to research grant opportunities first, noting that they like to see a community take initiative in researching grant opportunities. Noding discussed the need for more public art in Big Lake, and reviewed the possibility for the Community Arts Board to fund samples of local art. Bergey and Wilkens discussed that there is value in these applications, noting that community engaged projects would set us up for success.

Council Member Halverson asked if the City would have any costs if it is determined that we wouldn't be eligible for a grant. CEDA's response was that they would determine eligibility before a contract is signed.

4B. Review CIP Plan Purchase Procedures

Deb Wegeleben reviewed procedures the City follows for all CIP purchases. Wegeleben noted that the CIP is a plan for purchases, not an actual approval for purchases as situations could arise during the budget year that could lead Council to choose to hold off on specific purchases. Wegeleben also reviewed that since the CIP is funded by Local Government Aid (LGA) and the City only receives these funds in July and December, the City generally doesn't purchase items over \$50,000 until December after the City has received the full allotment of its LGA. Since the COVID pandemic, the City has experienced delays in delivery of ordered products, and noted that the State Bid has been opened only once per year. Wegeleben also reviewed that staff and/or departments have the ability to come to Council and ask to pre-order equipment/vehicles that are not scheduled on the CIP Plan until future years. A pre-order would need to be approved by Council, knowing that if the products do come in earlier than the scheduled year on the CIP Plan, an adjustment would need to be made accordingly.

4C. Lawful Gambling Trade Area Discussion

Hanna Klimmek reviewed a request from the City of Becker asking if the City would consider adding the City of Becker to its definition of Charitable Gambling Trade Area. Klimmek noted that we have two organizations that have dual membership in both cities; the Becker/Big Lake Knights of Columbus and the Becker/Big Lake Ice Association (BBLIA). The BBLIA was recently chosen by a new Becker business to lease space to conduct lawful gambling at their site. Both communities have established trade areas through City Code that defines where 75% of their expenditures must be made. Currently, neither city is in the other's trade areas, and the BBLIA asked if the City of Becker would include Big Lake in their trade

area as they are exclusively raising funds for a new ice arena that is expected to be built in Big Lake city limits. Becker City Administration was asked to see if the Big Lake City Council would consider adding the City of Becker to its definition of trade area, which would be done by amending Section 370.06, subd. 3. Klimmek note that this type of amendment would be for all lawful gambling, not just for the BBLIA or the Knights of Columbus. Other organizations licensed in the City include Big Lake Spud Fest and the Big Lake American Legion. If Council chooses to include Becker in the 75% trade area, those two organizations could allocate their lawful purpose expenditures (donations) in Becker as well as Big Lake and Big Lake Township.

Council directed Staff to work with the City Attorney to determine if the City can amend its ordinance to only affect lawful gambling organizations that have a combined membership with Becker, and directed that if we can't separate them out, that they are not interested in amending our ordinance to expand the trade area.

4D. Social Media Archive System Discussion

Gina Wolbeck discussed the City's multiple social media platforms that contain government data, which are subject to the MN Data Practices Act, MS 13. Staff recently met with ArchiveSocial, who provides archiving services for social media content and are a partner of the City's website host CivicPlus so there would be some cost savings from that. Wolbeck noted that the annual cost for this service was quoted at \$7,200, and requested Council feedback on if they wish to move forward with establishing a social media archiving system, or would rather look at restricting content that is posted to the City's social media platforms going forward.

Council directed Staff to move forward with obtaining another quote for these services and to report back at a future meeting.

5. **OTHER** – no other.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 5:49 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Hanson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

02.08.2023
Date Approved by Council