

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL  
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

**JANUARY 27, 2021**

**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, and Paul Seefeld. Also present: City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Deputy Police Chief Matt Hayden, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, and Big Lake Student Liaison Ella Dotzler.

**3. PROPOSED AGENDA**

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

**4. BUSINESS**

**4A. 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2021-1 Update**

Layne Otteson provided an update on the 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2021-1. The scope of the project focuses on street rehabilitation and drainage improvements for 22 street segments that have been found to be in need of resurfacing or reconstruction. At the last Council Meeting, Staff was directed to begin the preparation of the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), and the next step in the process is holding open houses in the next couple weeks. Otteson noted that all affected property owners have received an invitation to attend in-person or participate remotely. Property owners will have the opportunity to fill out a questionnaire, and the information meetings will include a PowerPoint presentation and an opportunity for questions. Staff will also be available to meet on-site with property owners upon their request. Otteson stated that input from affected property owners will be included in developing the PER which is expected to be presented to Council sometime in February.

Council Member Halverson inquired what the expected interest rate on the bonds will be. Wegeleben reviewed that preliminary estimates indicate a 1.05% interest rate, but the final rate will not be known until we sell the bond and what the bond purchaser offers.

Mayor Knier asked what the interest rate percentage will be that is charged to assessed parcels. Wegeleben indicated that the City's Assessment Policy guides that the percentage rate charged

to assessed properties will be 1.5% over the final bond interest rate that we get when the bond is sold. Wegeleben explained that this extra 1.5% covers the cost of administering the bond sale, interest, closing costs, and helps cover debt payments if there are potential delinquencies. Wegeleben informed Council that the City Council has the authority to lower the percentage rate, but can't go lower than what the rate of the bond is. Knier also asked if questionnaires submitted by residents from last year will be relevant. Otteson discussed that all information obtained from last year's street project will be included with the 2021 project.

#### **4B. Proposed Brom Park Discussion**

Layne Otteson discussed the potential for creating a neighborhood park on City owned property at the intersection of Brom Lane and Tarrytown Road. The land is generally low and a preliminary assessment indicates that much of the park would be classified as wetland. While this site could be seen as challenging, Staff is looking for cost effective opportunities which may improve the elevation or utilize the natural setting of the site. Otteson noted that an open house with neighborhood property owners could take place after a formal wetland review and viable options are explored. The Big Lake Parks Advisory Committee discussed this site for a future park where discussion was held on soil conditions, sidewalks, the possible use of Astroturf materials, ADA compliance requirements, irrigation connections, neighborhood demographics, potential infrastructure needed at the site and possible park equipment. The Parks Committee recommended the City produce a park survey for further review by the Parks Committee.

Council Member Halverson reviewed discussions at the Parks Advisory Committee, and reviewed the potential for the City to apply for grants if the park is handicap accessible.

Mayor Knier asked for an update on the Park Dedication Fund. Wegeleben reviewed that approximately \$400,000 is currently in the fund, noting that typical costs for a new park have been approximately \$180,000. Council discussed the proposed questionnaire and members suggested the questionnaire contain a response section specifically from youth. Discussion was also held that it would be fun to have a unique park in the City.

#### **4C. Music in the Park Event Discussion**

Corrie Scott reviewed changes to the Music in the Park events which was originally founded by the Big Lake Legacy Foundation. Scott informed Council that the Foundation has disbanded, and Staff has been asked to bring forward the opportunity for the City to coordinate Music in the Park starting with the 2021 season. Scott reviewed the Recreation and Communication Coordinator position created in 2019, which could be designated to take on coordination of this community event. Scott stressed that due to the busy summer season, Staff is recommending changes to the event to allow for it to transition from an organization-run event to a City-run event coordinated and hosted by one staff person. Scott reviewed suggestions staff is making in order to make the coordination of the series feasible with current resources including working with previous Legacy Foundation members during the transition to learn the basics on sponsorship, hiring of sound technicians, and finding affordable/popular music acts, reducing the number of events held throughout the year, using food trucks instead of using volunteers to work

a City run grill/concession stand, and implementing procedures due to COVID restrictions that could alter operations of the event. Scott also extended a thank you to the Legacy Foundation for creating this remarkable event series.

Council Member Halverson asked how donated funds will be stored. Wegeleben discussed that the City can create an assigned fund balance that would designate donated funds and could be carried over year to year. The fund could also be set up as a special revenue fund but it would have to support itself and not be fully funded through property taxes. Mayor Knier asked for further information on the \$5,000 contribution from the City and asked if that contribution would impact setting up a special revenue fund. Wegeleben indicated that the City can contribute a specified amount, but wouldn't be able to fully fund the event if it is set up as a special revenue fund.

Council Member Hanson asked where Staff would seek funding. Scott noted that she would work with past members of the Big Lake Legacy Foundation who have spear headed fundraising efforts for this event since its inception. Hanson also noted that he likes the food truck option and limiting the number of events, at least until we know how the program will work. Scott noted that priority will be given to Big Lake businesses and food trucks that have previously supported our community events.

Council Member Seefeld discussed the benefits of continuing to hold the Music in the Park event which has been a great asset to the community. Seefeld stated that he is in favor of Staff heading up the fundraising and organization of the event.

Mayor Knier asked if it would be feasible for the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce to partner with the City on these events. Scott stated she can reach out to Gloria from the Chamber to discuss setting up a Chamber subcommittee that could provide support to the City's efforts. Knier also stated that it would be nice if we can, at some point, get back to holding the event every Thursday during the summer months. Council thanked Corrie for being open to taking on administration of the event, and thanked members of the Big Lake Legacy Foundation for their years of dedication to Music in the Park.

**4D. New Ideas Discussion** – no new ideas were brought forward.

**5. OTHER** – No other discussion was held.

**6. ADJOURN**

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 5:27 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Hanson unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck  
City Clerk

02/10/21  
Date Approved By Council