

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 10, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Paul Knier called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. 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, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Deputy Police Chief Matt Hayen, City Planner Lucinda Meyers, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, Fire Chief Seth Hansen, and Big Lake Student Liaison Ella Dotzler.

**4. OPEN FORUM**

Mayor Knier opened the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m.

Scott Zettervall, 1695 Grace Drive – reviewed discussions at tonight’s workshop where the idea was brought up to have dual public hearings at both the Planning Commission and the Council Meeting. Zettervall pointed out that the City Committees offer an important role of off-loading a lot of the work load from the Council. Committees also offer recommendations that come from a vast amount of years of experience that the Council most likely will never have, and provide an experienced opinion. Holding dual hearings would diminish the value of these Committees, and reminded Council that citizens can send in written comments to the Planning Commission which are read into the record, which offers a good way for people to be heard if they can’t attend a hearing in-person.

Rev. Donna Pouliot, 409 Polk Street – Asked the City to post a clarification on the special election to be posted on the City website. Pouliot noted that she has seen a couple candidate signs promoting election of Paul Knier. Pouliot also suggested that it would be appropriate for Council to acknowledge long-time residents who have passed during the Council Meetings.

Bettina Potter, 120 Edgewater Place – Reviewed discussion at tonight’s workshop regarding a request to hold dual public hearings. Potter stated that she herself has not been able to attend certain meetings at times, but emailed in comments to Staff and 100% of the time her comments have been included in the record for the Commission meeting. For those people that can’t attend Commission meetings, this serves as a great way to get your information to the Commissions and to your staff members. Potter also stressed her concern about the sustainability of workload in some of our departments. Staff are stretched in many areas, and wants to be sure we are focused on public safety and quality of life in Big Lake. If we need to add positions or restructure duties, we should take those steps so we don’t lose good staff members, or over work them.

Mayor Knier closed the Open Forum at 6:06 p.m.

## **5. PROPOSED AGENDA**

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

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Halverson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, Consent Agenda approved. The Consent Agenda consisted of: 6A. Approve List of Claims, 6B. Approve Council Workshop Minutes of February 24, 2021, 6C. Approve Council Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2021, 6D. Approve 2021 Recycle Day Event SCORE Grant Agreement and Participation Agreement, 6E. Approve Election Judge Appointment Resolution No. 2021-16 for the April 13, 2021 Special City Election, 6F. Approve Annual Liquor License Renewal Resolution No. 2021-17, 6G. Approve Appointment of Kristi DeCamillis to the Big Lake Parks Advisory Committee, 6H. Approve Purchase of Police Vehicles, 6I. Approve Appointment of Matthew Hayen as Acting Police Chief, and 6J. Approve Resolution No. 2021-18 requesting a Street Curve Design Variance from MNDOT State Aid Operation Design Standards for Powell Street North.

**7. BUSINESS**

**7A. PUBLIC HEARING – Order Final Plans and Specifications for the 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2021-1**

Layne Otteson reviewed the proposed 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2021-1 noting that the identified improvements are programmed in the Capital Improvement Plan and are being proposed due to the deterioration of the pavement on various streets. Otteson reviewed that in 2020, the project was designed and bid, but was not awarded and Council directed Staff to bring it back for consideration in 2021. Earlier this year, Council directed Staff to resume the project. Otteson also noted that the scope of this project focuses on street rehabilitation and storm sewer improvements. There are 22 street segments that have been found to be in need of resurfacing or reconstruction. Proposed ancillary work includes water service insulation, sidewalk, water main looping, street lighting and storm water quality improvements. Otteson noted that Staff has been communicating with affected property owners since 2019 and have held eight open houses as well as one Facebook Live event. Comments from residents will continue to be taken during design and construction, and the most common concerns have been related to access concerns, sidewalks, drainage and alley erosion control for the protection of the lakes, high speed traffic safety concerns, and driveway replacement. Otteson also reviewed a proposed “bump-out” parking design for Powell Street North and Will Street, and identified preliminary locations proposed for each bump-out. Otteson also discussed how street width impacts snow plowing efforts and reviewed that plow trucks require a 13 foot lane and that we generally use a loader for most of the 20 foot stub streets which is a less efficient way to remove snow, and can pose safety concerns for snow removal.

A Preliminary Engineering Report was prepared for the project and has been revised since the last meeting. Otteson stressed that streets will be designed to minimize costs, and that sidewalks are recommended in specific areas but may be removed as directed by the City Council. Otteson reviewed specific street areas that are proposed in the project, noting that the projected costs are estimated to be \$3.65M which will be funded through bonding, which in turn is supported with \$1.7M in special assessments, \$50,000 from enterprise funds, and \$1.95M through the use of Municipal State Aid dollars and the City’s levy. Otteson reviewed the City’s Assessment Policy explaining how assessments will be calculated on a 15-year assessment term, provided a tentative project schedule, and noted that staff will provide communication to residents throughout the project.

Council Member Halverson asked if we will try to keep viable curb sections when possible. Otteson noted that some areas will be repaired when possible, and others will be replaced if needed.

Council Member Seefeld discussed the Powell Street bump-out parking option and asked when that concept was discussed. Otteson discussed that the option was part of the plan last March as an option for parking and was part of our approved plans. Some Powell Street residents have stated that the elimination of parking on Powell Street was not addressed previously. Otteson acknowledged that while the plans included the bump-out parking concept, communication could have been better on this topic.

Mayor Knier asked for clarification on the proposed term of the assessments noting that his recollection is that we were looking at a 10-year plan. Wegeleben confirmed that Council opted to do a 10-year assessment term for this project. Knier discussed the road design for Highland Avenue and asked if it would be possible to keep the street the same size. Norm Michels discussed plowing equipment needed for this width of street, noting that the primary benefits of using a loader to plow the stub streets is increased visibility and the turnaround rate. If the street becomes a through-street later on, we would need to do a lot of backtracking. If the street is expected to become a through-street later on, a wider street would be beneficial for snow plowing purposes. Knier asked if the plow truck has to go out after every snowfall. Michels noted that the current loader does have a small sander attached to it, and the other loaders don't have this sanding equipment and it would be a substantial cost to add when we replace the loader. Michels also discussed that there is no means to refill sand on-site so they lose time each time they have to go back to Public Works for reloading. Council Member Halverson asked if it has been a problem on Manitou Street with cars parked on the street during a snow event. Michels discussed safety concerns with plowing on the 20 foot Manitou Street. On Manitou, they overhang the center line and for safety purposes, they pull over for any vehicle passing so they are constantly stopping. Halverson also asked if Highland Avenue would qualify as a State Aid Road. Otteson noted that in the future, a through-street that is a collector would likely be designated as a State Aid Route and would have to meet State Aid requirements. Right now the narrowest we can go down to, according to the rules, would be 22 feet wide which would require approval of a special variance from the State Aid Engineer.

Mayor Knier opened the public hearing at 6:54 p.m.

Scott Zettervall, 1695 Grace Drive – Stressed that sidewalks bring a tremendous value to the City and he feels they should be required on Sherburne Avenue and Powell Street, and noted that residents have spoken out strongly in the past in favor of sidewalks in these areas. Zettervall discussed the City's Complete Streets Plan and the 2018 Comprehensive Plan that both call for sidewalks where they make sense based on location and traffic volume. Zettervall stated that it is very seldom that we get an opportunity to so strongly improve public safety and quality of life. If sidewalks on Powell Street and Sherburne Avenue do not get built now, they most likely won't get a sidewalk for the next 40 years and noted that the most cost effective time to construct a sidewalk is during a street project. If you aren't supporting public safety and quality of life now, he doesn't know if you ever will.

Zettervall feels we should leave it up to the residents on Powell Street to figure out what the best solution for parking is, but feels it is the wrong message to send to residents that street parking and sidewalks are too expensive.

Kathy Poslusny, 1320 Powell Street North – Informed Council that she has lived in her house since 1994 and has seen a lot of changes in her neighborhood. She has attended at least two open houses and doesn't recall hearing that Powell Street would be designated as a no-parking zone. If residents would have known the plan, they would have asked a lot of questions on the matter. Poslusny asked what makes Powell Street so different than other streets in the City where parking doesn't seem to be an issue. Poslusny noted that the no parking designation means more restrictions for residents who live on Powell Street and their guests, and discussed the negative impact this designation will have on future house sales.

Duane Langsdorf, 421 Highland Avenue – Thanked Council for entertaining discussion on the widening of Highland Avenue, but stated that he feels Highland Avenue will not serve as a through-street for future development, and that it isn't feasible to dump all that future traffic onto Lakeshore Drive and then route it to the uncontrolled Highway 10 intersection. Langsdorf stated that he doesn't want to see Highland Avenue increased to a 26 foot wide street.

Bettina Potter, 120 Edgewater Place – Discussed public safety, quality of life, and noted that the improvements will have a 30-year life span. Sherburne Avenue and Powell Street should have sidewalks, noting that we need to be able to walk safely on sidewalks and shouldn't need to be educated on how to safely walk on a public street. Potter also stated that it's the right decision to limit the amount of runoff into the lakes, reminding Council that we need to make sure that when we are reconstructing these roads we are being smart about the environment and protection of our lakes. We have one chance to get it right, and Council needs to do the most good for all its residents, not just the ones living on those streets.

Diane Warner, 170 Edgewater Place – Stated that she submitted questionnaires on the project two times, noting that she lives on Edgewater Place which is the cul-de-sac that serves six properties and is located on the point of the west side of the lake. This street has very little traffic and is very glad the project doesn't include putting sidewalk on their street as hardly anyone would use it. Warner also discussed the sand and grass boulevard area that acts as a rain garden before water goes into the storm sewer catch basin on the corner of Lakeshore Drive, stressing that curb and gutter would hinder this.

Scott Creighton, 601 Lakeshore Drive – Discussed that he is a 22-year resident, and that he has seen four different times that this street project has failed and has not come true. Creighton reviewed the benefits of installing sidewalks, and noted that storm sewer drain

upgrades would help. Creighton also discussed that the safety of individuals is the most important thing, and noted that Highland Avenue shouldn't be a through-street and sidewalks should be part of the project.

Chris Rauch, 106 Euclid Avenue – In 1776 our great founding fathers declared our independence from the tyranny of the King of England had imposed on them. They created a government by the people, for the people. They created a government with checks and balances, but most importantly, they created a government that represents the people by having elections where we vote for our fellow neighbors and country men and women, to be our voice. Rauch also stated that he is proud of current members of our elected Council that they have started to listen to him and his neighbors on the sidewalk issue in their neighborhood. He stated that he feels the sidewalk is wasteful spending on these two streets. He has the largest curbed property in the project and there will be great cost to him financially, and Rauch stated that anything that can be done to lower the City's cost will lower his cost. Rauch also discussed how hard it is to walk on sidewalks in the winter months, and asked if it is worth spending dollars on sidewalks that can only be used for a few months a year that create a low ROI.

Janice Halvorson, 560 Westwood Drive – Discussed the curb design being proposed on Westwood Drive indicating that she agrees with construction of the surmountable curb design. Halvorson also discussed her concerns with the proposed improvements to Highland Avenue. There is already a dilemma on the amount of traffic on Lakeshore Drive and we shouldn't increase the amount of traffic feeding onto Lakeshore Drive.

Gary L. Snyder, 130 Euclid Court – Asked what Council is going to cut in the budget to lower the taxes, stated that Special Assessments should be a tax, and stated that the City should have provided a firm cost of what this project is going to cost for each property that is affected.

Rob Olson, 1330 Powell Street North – Stated his concern about the no-parking plans for Powell Street North. Olson stated that he feels the proposed bump-out parking areas won't provide enough parking on Powell Street if placed every 300 to 400 feet.

Dawn Perry, 101 Powell Circle North – Informed Council that she lives closest to Powell Park and asked if enough bump-out parking will be provided by the park area so park users aren't parking on her private property. Otteson reviewed proposed placement of the bump-out areas, and Perry stated that she feels that the three identified parking spots won't provide adequate parking near the park area.

John Audette, 210 Leighton Drive – Asked if viable curbs will be left in-tact. Otteson reviewed proposed curb plans near Leighton Drive and Euclid Avenue.

Rev. Donna Pouliot, 409 Polk Street – Discussed quality of life in regards to the lakes. Pouliot also asked what other products can be used for snow melting, and suggested the City look at the feasibility of using beet juice which is better environmentally. Pouliot also inquired if residents are compensated for installing rain gardens.

Lynn Butenhoff, 471 Highland Avenue – Stated that she doesn't understand why plowing would be a concern when we have to plow the other stub streets also. Butenhoff discussed that there is no way we can build a huge development behind them and expect to safely feed that traffic onto Lakeshore Drive and route it onto Highway 10. Butenhoff also informed Council that the property has just been resold. Butenhoff discussed her frustration that we are talking about widening and installing curb on the street, and residents already can't park on the street as it is. Curbing and gutters will restrict residents from parking on their lawns, and she would prefer to keep the curb cuts of the flat variety. Butenhoff also offered her lot for a rain garden.

Otteson read aloud a comment letter submitted by Amy Finstad, 460 Highland Avenue – Referred to the City's Comp Plan that states that the city can plan and zone for townhouses and apartments, but ensure that the value and livability of single-family detached homes are not harmed in the process. Finstad also referenced that the Comp Plan also states that it will ensure to protect single-family housing when accommodating the need for other housing types and asked Council to leave Highland Avenue as-is noting that residents on the street have signed a petition asking to delay any improvements at this time and revisit when another projected street project happens in four years. Finstad also expressed that the street is wide enough as-is for the 10 homes on this dead-end street, and any widening of the street would only be catering to a "future neighborhood" putting non-existent residents above the wants of its current, existing residents. The residents on Highland Avenue feel they are not being protected as the Comp Plan ensures they should be. Finstad's letter also identified that there is not a buyer or a development plan for the property located at the end of Highland Avenue and it could sit vacant for years. Finstad also noted that DNR restrictions are going to make this property difficult to develop.

No one else came forward to speak at the Public Hearing. Mayor Knier closed the public hearing at 7:21 p.m. and thanked attendees for speaking their concerns, and expressed that even with differing opinions, all comments have been heard.

Council Member Halverson stated that he feels sidewalks are needed for safety reasons. If we wait to do improvements on Highland Avenue in anticipation for future development, it is going to cost the City ten times more than if we do the widening now. We need to build for today in anticipation for tomorrow. Halverson also discussed that he feels traffic will eventually route to CR 81 but not until adjacent property owners allow it. It eventually will go through. Halverson stated his concern that we will lose State Aid dollars if we don't widen Highland Avenue now. The widening as currently proposed will only widen the street

three feet on each side, and reiterated that we need to build for the future, and stop building for today. Otteson clarified that incorporating curb on Highland Avenue will add another foot on each side so the total extension is projected to be four feet on each side. Mayor Knier asked for clarification on if we won't get State Aid funds on Highland Avenue until the road goes through and connects to another street. Otteson replied that once the street goes through and connects to another street, the street can be added to our State Aid system and it becomes part of our mileage and we can start drawing on our needs.

Council asked Staff to address various resident concerns brought forward at the public hearing. Otteson reviewed that parking on Powell Street North is different because it is a MN State Aid Street and is considered a network as it ties into Glenwood and connects to a County Road which has a higher volume. Otteson also noted that width of a street helps determine if parking would be allowed on a State Aid street. In order to allow parking on this street, the street would need to be widened. Discussion was also held on curbing style on Edgewater Place which is proposed to be a surmountable curb, and Otteson noted that he isn't sure if there is a depression at the corner lot, but it could be carrying sediment. Otteson will look at the area and will confer with Sherburne Soil and Water to get their feedback. Otteson reviewed how assessment amounts are identified as mandated by MN Statute 429, noting that estimated assessment amounts are identified in the Preliminary Assessment Roll and are generally projected at the high end and firmed up during the project design phase. Otteson discussed the use of beet juice as an alternative to using salt for snow and ice control noting that some cities do use it, but there are some known issues with using this type of product. Otteson reviewed that there is a Sherburne Soil and Water Grant Program that can help fund rain gardens. Otteson also reviewed curb styles that are planned for this project.

Council Member Seefeld discussed the references made by Amy Finstad regarding language in the Comprehensive Plan, and stated that while he does see the need for future development, he has concerns with Highland Avenue being the only street access to a future development. Seefeld stated that he feels we should only move forward with this development when they can secure an access onto CR 81. Council Member Halverson questioned how we can regulate it so that they have to do the CR 81 side first. Seefeld discussed parking on Powell Street North and the amount of State Aid funds the City would get. Seefeld noted that it seems like the majority of comments received from Powell Street residents is that they aren't happy about the bump-out parking concept. Otteson indicated that costs will increase \$200,000 if we allow one full side of parking. Seefeld expressed that he campaigned on lowering debt and bonding leads to interest and interest adds to more cost, and he would like to eliminate as much as he can. Otteson noted that we have had the discussion about ways to reduce parking costs on Powell Street, and finding a way to accommodate parking when residents need it, noting that Staff has looked at the possibility of bagging no-parking signage and allow parking on one side of the street for event gathering permits when requested. Council Member Halverson stated his concern

that people won't be able to sell their houses with a no-parking designation on Powell Street and how the saleability of properties will be affected.

Council Member Hanson stated that in order to get the State Aid, he would like to see Highland Avenue go to the minimum required 22 feet, and find a way to still get the state funding. Hanson also discussed that he reached out to four different cities in the area to see what their Complete Streets Policies are, and would like to look at revising our Complete Streets Policy noting that three of the four communities do not add sidewalks to their construction projects, but do it on an as-needed basis. Hanson stated that he doesn't want to spend the City's money frivolously just because a street is long. Hanson also discussed the design of Powell Street North and prefers to go to 32 feet wide, allow parking on one side and not construct a sidewalk. With the increased assessments, our final increase would be \$100,000. Council Member Seefeld stated that he agrees with Council Member Hanson's wishes for construction on Highland Avenue and Powell Street North and asked for feedback from Staff on how plowing is handled on through streets on Isanti Street and Golf Street. Norm Michels discussed that Isanti Street and Golf Street are extremely difficult to plow and would like to see the width increased on Highland Avenue due to safety concerns. Council Member Seefeld discussed that plows could move over with the surmountable curb design. Michels noted that we field a lot of calls about tearing up the grass and would not want to recommend we allow plow drivers move past the surmountable curb area. Mayor Knier asked why we can't just continue to use the rig we use now on Highland Avenue. Norm Michels explained that it will be more efficient to use a different truck if the road does eventually go through. Council Member Halverson discussed construction on Powell Street noting that allowing parking would create a wider street which is going to cost more, but noted that the residents on Powell Street will be much happier if they can have parking. Halverson also indicated that he prefers to make Highland Avenue 26 feet wide in an effort to plan for future development. Hanson expressed that only this small section of Highland Avenue would be 22 feet, but the street sections in the future development would be required to be a wider collector street. Otteson clarified if we build the 655 foot section of Highland Avenue now as a 22 foot wide street, the future development would push through to the west and the street would taper out to our standard collector width. Otteson discussed that it is an operational decision of the Public Works Department to make as far as equipment that should be used for snow plowing.

Mayor Knier stated that he can get on board with increasing the size of Powell Street North and eliminating the sidewalk, and expressed that we need to save money from somewhere and it's this body's job to guard the check book for the City and protect the taxpayer. He has mentioned on his Facebook page that he loves a good sidewalk as much as the next person but we do have scarce resources, and we have to make tough decisions and sometimes say no to good things. Knier stated that we don't have sidewalks on these streets right now and he trusts that the good people of Big Lake will teach their children to

be responsible on the street and there could be an argument for making Powell street wider and provide more room to walk. Knier reviewed that when he walks on the road he walks against traffic, and discussed that surmountable curb styles are more of a concern with walking on a sidewalk with your back to traffic and he would argue if it is really safer to walk on the sidewalk. Knier also reviewed that residents on Highland Avenue have signed a petition to opt-out of the project and reconsider in four years. He is told that the land to the west is going to be hard to develop, and we could put the Highland Avenue improvements off for four years, but stressed that we would need to do something at that time. Knier recognized plowing concerns of the Public Works Department, noting that we don't want something dangerous there either so that is something to consider. Otteson noted that building Highland Avenue as a 22 foot wide street is an option Council can consider, and recognized that the reality of the parcel to the west is that the owner wants to sell it and has been vocal at the open houses that they want that parcel to be developed. Highland Avenue at 22 feet is liveable, but explained that once it becomes a collector street and goes through, the 22 foot section could be problematic with the projected amount of traffic. Otteson discussed that Staff will be working on the final design and can meet with Highland Avenue residents before the plan comes back to Council for approval at the next meeting. He would like to see the proposed petition to better gauge resident wishes. We can build Highland Avenue as a 22 foot wide road now and require a future developer to cover the costs for any upgrades to make the street a collector street, or we wait four years to do any work on Highland Avenue. Council Member Halverson discussed that history proves that construction costs will only increase if we wait four years to improve Highland Avenue. Mayor Knier stated that Ken was exaggerating the increase in costs when he used numbers like \$100 today and \$200 in four years, and that we don't know it would increase to that extent.

Council Member Hanson discussed the Powell Street petition we received last year that included 76 residents. We had 24 residents who were in favor of getting the project done, and only 12 wanted sidewalks which equates to only 15% of the residents wanting sidewalk. This calculation leads him to go with the 32 foot wide street with removal of the plans to install a sidewalk.

Council Member Hanson motioned to approve Resolution No. 2021-19 Ordering the Final Plans and Specifications for the 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2021-1. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

## **7B. PRESENTATION – Big Lake Food Shelf Annual Report and “MN Food Share” Proclamation**

Big Lake Food Shelf Executive Director Sandy McClurg provided statistical information relating to the Food Shelf and the March Food Drive Campaign. Mayor Knier thanked all the volunteers for their commitment to the Food Shelf, and read a Proclamation proclaiming the month of March to be “Minnesota Food Share Month”.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve a Proclamation proclaiming the month of March to be “Minnesota Food Share Month”. Seconded by Council Member Hanson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

### **7C. PRESENTATION – Big Lake Public Library Annual Update**

Great River Regional Library Services Coordinator Jeannette Burkhardt presented an annual report on services provided by the Big Lake Public Library. Burkhardt provided information on how COVID restrictions have impacted operations within the library system, reviewed the summer reading program that included take and make crafts, Story Stroll programs, participated in the ECFE in the Park Program, and played Back to School Bingo. Fall 2020 focused on finding ways to entice people back to the Library and noted that circulation gained ground every month. November and December circulation not only beat the previous month, but beat circulation for the same months in 2019. Burkhardt reviewed circulation statistics for January through December 2020 and noted that library users are maintaining an average of six items per checkout session. Burkhardt also provided information on the Library’s March fundraising drive and noted they hope to raise \$500 to help fund needs of the Big Lake Library Summer Reading Program, purchase supplies for the take and make projects, and paint a mural on the wall of the kid’s reading area.

Mayor Knier asked how the Library’s Facebook presence is working since last year. Burkhardt noted that a Library Facebook page was set up after Council suggested the Library do that last year, and they currently have 300 followers. Council thanked Burkhardt for her update on the Big Lake Library.

### **7D. Monthly Department Reports**

Fire Department – Fire Chief Seth Hansen provided statistical information on calls for service for the month of February. Hansen also reviewed online training that included search and rescue, and forcible entry, discussed I.T. improvements at the station, and reviewed grass and wildland fire season. Hansen offered condolences to the family of former Fire Chief Ron Skoog who passed away on February 22, 2021. Hansen also informed Council that the Fire Department recently received a \$4,000 cash donation from the Eddy Family.

Police Department – Acting Police Chief Matt Hayen updated Council on police statistics, calls for service, significant arrests, and self-initiated policing activities for the month of February. Hayen also reviewed a recent narcotics find by Officer Chaffee and K9 Bruno, discussed self-defense instruction the Department provided to the Big Lake Ambassador Program, presented the new Lakeside Park parking pass design created by Janette Rust, discussed the Department’s involvement in the Stinger Station News program at Big Lake

Schools, and provided information on car seat inspections being offered by new Officer Tim Mikelson who is a certified car seat technician.

Engineering/Public Works Department – Layne Otteson provided an update on engineering projects underway in the City and activities in the Utilities Department. Otteson reviewed the status of projects currently underway including the 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project, meetings with developers and property owners, the recent Big Lake Community Lakes Association Meeting, and reviewed the Sherburne County CR 43 project that is projected for 2022.

Student Liaison – Ella Dotzler provided an update on Big Lake Schools. Dotzler discussed start time changes for 2021-2022, reviewed the increased focus on mental health within the school, noted that Middle and High School students will be returning to full in-person learning on March 18, 2021, and reviewed the widened course variety being implemented in the Big Lake Online Program. Dotzler also announced that plans are currently underway for Prom and Graduation events.

Mayor Knier inquired what the reasoning was for the change in start times. Dotzler responded that according to studies, the school felt a later start time for older students was valid.

## **8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Clay Wilfahrt provided an update on the second and final round of the CMRP engagement survey project, and noted that they are planning a goal setting retreat at their meeting in March. Wilfahrt also informed Council that Staff continues to meet with the Meadow View Estates developer to discuss options for his proposed development.

## **9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Mayor Knier: Reviewed the March BLEDA Meeting and the March Fire Board Meeting. Knier also announced that the Coffee with the Mayor event will be held this Saturday at Coborn's.

Council Member Halverson: Discussed the March BLEDA Meeting.

Council Member Seefeld: Discussed the March Fire Board and Planning Commission Meetings.

10. **OTHER** - No other.

11. **ADJOURN**

Council Member Hanson motioned to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld unanimous ayes, motion carried.

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Gina Wolbeck  
Clerk

Date Approved By Council \_\_\_\_\_ 03/24/21 \_\_\_\_\_