

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 24, 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, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, City Planner Lucinda Meyers, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Acting Police Chief Matt Hayen, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, City Attorney Soren Mattick from Campbell Knutson, P.A., and Big Lake Student Liaison Ella Dotzler.

4. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Knier opened the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m. Mayor Knier discussed that he had someone call to ask if they could speak at Open Forum about an item on the agenda. Knier reviewed that initially he said no, but then thought, we should let the people speak if they want to speak, noting that we are all about freedom. Knier also stated that he had always had a problem with that rule and stated what's the point of being Mayor if you can't bend the rules now and again. Knier welcomed members of the public to speak at Open Forum if the topic is about the agenda tonight, or not.

Bettina Potter, 120 Edgewater Place - talked about transparency and data accuracy. On occasions in the last 3 to 4 weeks, there have been a number of comments made about the cost of items within this City. Potter respectfully requested that accuracy and transparency be of prime importance. The sidewalks that were part of the 2021 street project at one time, were estimated to cost \$275,000 not \$375,000 and requested the record reflect the accurate number. Potter noted that she appreciates the fact that people

make mistakes, that information can be confusing, and that we might not read the fine print all the time, but feels it is really important that when you run on transparency, that you get data accuracy right for our residents.

Ketti Green, 4722 Blanding Court - thanked the residents of Big Lake who have been vocal and reaching out to Council on subjects we have been discussing. It has been very refreshing to hear different points of view, and different ways the City can run more effectively. Green stated that she feels the City's Complete Streets Policy should be looked at and tweaked when necessary, noting that we need to be able to be flexible on sidewalk installation. Green again thanked residents for stepping up and voicing their opinions.

Brandon Backes, 1371 Powell Street North – discussed that this Council ran for office stating that they would make decisions based on what residents of Big Lake want. Backes reviewed results from two polls, the first poll was on the Big Lake Forum social media page to see the overall City's feel for investing in sidewalks, street parking, or neither to save money. Backes identified that 90% of survey participants want the City to invest in sidewalks, specifically on Powell Street North. The second poll was conducted with individual residents on Powell Street who would be funding the street project and will be left with the end result, and again 84% of the responses were in favor of sidewalks. Backes thanked Ken for valuing sidewalks where it makes sense. Sam needed 75% of residents on Powell Street to change from widening the roads to installing sidewalks. Backes reviewed a conversation he had with Paul Seefeld who told him that he understands both views and wants to make the right decision, but wasn't sure what that was. Backes stated that residents on Powell Street and in Big Lake have spoken, stressing that he has the right answer he just needs to make it. Backes reiterated that the Council was voted in to represent citizens, and both polls overwhelmingly told Council what they want, and what was right, for the residents on Powell Street. Backes asked Council to honor their promise and commitment by listening to the residents on Powell Street and Big Lake, and vote to install sidewalk rather than widening Powell Street.

Kamren Gaddes, 20092 166th Street – noted that he lives on the corner near the proposed high density project. Stated that is not in favor of the project as it will demolish his property value and resale value. When he bought the house, he was o.k. with the commercial district next to it. He has now started a family here, but this will make him move if it goes through.

Cory Gardner, 1340 Powell Street North - stated that he was part of the Powell Street petition, noting that he has always been in favor of parking and sidewalks and would like to do both on Powell Street. Thanked Brandon for doing the work on the petition, but stated his concern that petitions can be one sided and we shouldn't base our decisions solely on the results. The information on the petition was all about why I would want sidewalks over widening the road. Gardner noted that we left here two weeks ago with a decision, and now

we are looking at something else. Strongly urged that we use caution with basing decisions on a petition, stressing that the City should do something that isn't biased. Gardner stated that he would love to have parking and sidewalks on Powell Street and urged the City to crunch numbers.

Kathy Poslusny, 1320 Powell Street North – stated that she agrees with what Mr. Gardner said about concerns with a poll taken on a public forum as anyone could answer that. Poslusny also stated that she is glad that Mr. Backes took the initiative to ask the questions, but she is concerned that at the last minute, changes are coming forward as all residents in the area have received notices and letters for some time that this is in the works.

Rev. Donna Pouliot, 409 Polk Street – noted that several residents have reached out to her in regards to the proposed ordinance draft of targeted picketing in residential areas. Pouliot indicated that she was asked if the draft language used could be clearer because of the way it reads in the last part that discusses jurisdictional charges.

Raeanne Danielowski, 981 Nicollet Avenue - encouraged Council to remember that Powell Street is part of the Safe Routes to School area and is in the 2-mile radius that students are required to walk to school and are not provided free bus transportation unless their parents pay for it at a substantial cost. Danielowski encouraged the Mayor and Council to make decisions erring on the side of safety. If there is a child that gets hurt and the Council has decided not to acknowledge the Safe Routes to School plan and we get sued, they are going to wish we had paid \$275,000 on sidewalks. As a resident, she doesn't want to get sued and waste tax payer dollars. As a resident who lives on Nicollet Avenue, she is willing to help pay for a sidewalk system in our community, and she agrees that it doesn't have to be on every street, but we need to make sure that we make a robust opportunity for people to walk as Senator Kiffmeyer stated on a recent public forum post. We have people that walk and don't own a car, but they deserve a right to a safe way to get around their community. Danielowski also stated that our sidewalks are used year-round on a regular basis whether it is winter or summer. Danielowski encouraged Council to do sidewalks on Powell Street and work with the parking issue.

Mayor Knier closed the Open Forum at 6:13 p.m.

5. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of item no. 6C for separate consideration. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, Consent Agenda approved. The Consent Agenda consisted of: 6A. Approve List of Claims, 6B. Approve Council Workshop Minutes of March 10, 2021, ~~6C. Approve Council Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2021,~~ 6D. Approve Public Works Restructure Plan, 6E. Approve Employment Status Change for City Planner Lucinda Meyers from Probationary to Permanent Status, 6F. Approve 2021 SCORE Grant Agreement for the City Compost Site, 6G. Accept Resignation from Part-time Liquor Clerk Jakob Osowski, 6H. Approve Annual Outside Employment Request Form for City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt, 6I. Approve Resolution No. 2021-20 approving the Big Lake Car Condo's Second Addition Final Plat Application, 6J. Approve Hire of Public Works Fleet Maintenance Worker John Koller, and 6K. Accept 2019 Street Improvements (Overlay and McDowall Trail) and Approve Final Payment for ST2019-1.

6C. Council Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2021

Mayor Knier asked for an amendment to page 10 of the March 10, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes to show a clearer picture of the discussion. Knier asked that Council remove "Mayor Knier stated that we cannot know today what costs will be in the future", and replace with "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". Knier expressed that he wanted that pulled because public record is forever and his intent with what he said was more to the idea of using numbers like \$100 today and \$200 in 4 years could be an exaggeration, and that was how he said it and would like it shown in public record.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve the March 10, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes with an amendment to page 10 remove "Mayor Knier stated that we cannot know today what costs will be in the future", and replace with "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". Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7. BUSINESS

7A. Ordinance Rezoning Parcels to be Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

Lucinda Meyers reviewed the planners report for the rezone of 18 parcels to be consistent

with the City's Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City in 2018 and the Land Use Plan Map is intended to serve as a guide to the zoning map and to identify sufficient areas for future land development in order to accommodate at least 20 years of forecasted growth. Meyers also noted that the Land Use Plan Map provides sufficient land both within the current City limits and nearby to meet the growth needs of the community through 2040 and beyond. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map establishes the highest and best use of property within and surrounding the City limits, and guides land for development of a certain category. The City's Zoning Map is the official land use control and the goal is to achieve consistency between the two maps over time. Meyers discussed that Staff is proposing a phased approach to implementing the land use changes identified in the Land Use Plan Map. The map identifies a total of 125 parcels for rezoning, and Staff has selected 18 parcels for rezoning in Phase 1. The Phase 1 properties were selected based on four categories: 1. Property is vacant/undeveloped (12 parcels), 2. Status is non-conforming; rezoning achieves conformance (2 parcels), 3. Status is non-conforming; rezoning maintains non-conformity (1 parcel), and 4. Status is conforming; rezoning maintains conformity (3 parcels). Meyers explained that the "status is conforming; rezoning makes it non-conforming" category is absent from this list, as under current zoning the majority of the remaining 105 properties are within this category. Implementation of future phases will require revisions to the Zoning Ordinance in order to minimize issues that are inherent in the creation of non-conforming property. Meyers noted that since publication of the public hearing notice, Staff has spoken with a number of affected property owners and have made a few revisions as a result of those conversations. The Planning Commission held the public hearing on March 3, 2021 and one citizen spoke, three citizens emailed their comments which were read aloud at the hearing. Meyers noted that several persons in attendance made frequent interruptions throughout the meeting and those interruptions centered on three vacant/undeveloped parcels located east of 172nd Street and north of Hwy 10 and Marketplace Drive. Meyers indicated that with the exception of Commissioner Seefeld, whom expressed that there was too much high density residential land, the Planning Commission voted 6 to 1 in support of the initiative as presented with the removal of Betty Wold's property as she indicated that she intends to combine the parcel with her adjacent Big Lake Township residence. Meyers explained that this parcel has already been removed from the Ordinance and is not included in tonight's approval. Meyers also indicated that there has been discussion on possibly changing parcel no. 65-543-0030 from the proposed R-3 to R-2 to match the parcel to the east of the lot and to create a buffer between the single-family residential area and the R-3 district parcels.

Council Member Halverson asked if we decide to change parcel 65-543-0030 to Medium Density, does the change have to go back to the Planning Commission for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment and a Rezone so they would be consistent. Meyers explained that the Comprehensive Plan currently has built-in flexibility and would allow us to rezone to R-2 or R-3. If someone wants to come back in the future and ask for low-

density housing, they would be required to submit a request for an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan as well as a rezone at that time. If they come in with a high-density residential project and want to change the zoning, they would be required to apply for an R-3 Zoning amendment, but not a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Council Member Seefeld asked for confirmation on which parcels would be medium density and high density. Meyers reviewed current zoning designations and clarified that the motion as presented would change parcel no. 65-543-0010 from Agricultural (AG) to Medium Density Residential (R-2) and parcel no. 65-543-0030 from General Business (B-3) to Medium Density Residential (R-2).

Council Member Hanson motioned to approve Ordinance No. 2021-03 amending the Zoning Map to rezone eighteen (18) parcels consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan Map as recommended by Staff, with a change in proposed zoning district from R-3 to R-2 for parcel no. 65-543-0030 owned by Riverwood Bank, and approve Summary Publication Resolution No. 2021-21. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Mayor Knier stated that he likes the blended approach idea where from Highway 10 north it is commercial to R-3 to R-2 to R-1, and feels it is a smart way to do it.

7B. Concept Plan Review – Marketplace Crossing

Lucinda Meyers reviewed the planners report for the Concept Plan development application submitted by Riverwood Bank for the parcel identified as parcel no. 65-543-0040. The development concept features a 60-unit multifamily residential building on approximately 4.5 acres north of Highway 10 and east of CR 43. The concept includes a surface parking lot, playground, stormwater pond and landscaping. The project scope includes a three-story building with a mixture of 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units with density estimated around 13 units per acre. Access is provided from the north side of Marketplace Drive, which features a sidewalk. The parking lot includes a total of 124 stalls, or 2.06 stalls per unit, which provides one stall per bedroom. The stormwater pond is located in the northwest corner of the parcel within proximity to the adjacent wetland. The 900 square foot playground is enclosed by a 6-foot privacy fence and includes 3 benches for seating and an ADA seating area. Access to the playground is provided by the sidewalk bordering the southern edge of the parking lot. Meyers noted that the development concept appears to satisfy zoning and land use requirements, with the exception to the number of parking stalls, the loading area, outdoor living spaces, and side yard setback. Meyers informed Council that the City Council is asked to consider the concept plan in relation to the City's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, and provide feedback to the Applicant.

Council Member Halverson stated that he doesn't understand that if all of our apartments are putting in one covered and one uncovered parking unit, why switch for this project. We have a 1% rental vacancy rate in Big Lake which proves a high rental demand. Halverson stated that he doesn't see why we wouldn't require the same from this apartment project as we do every other apartment in town. Halverson also stated that he doesn't like apartments, and when you drive by them they look like a car dealership. Halverson stated that he will have a real problem approving the project without the one covered parking requirement being met. Halverson also discussed the Applicant's concern that balcony areas turn into junk collectors, noting that he feels the balconies only look bad if the apartment doesn't have covered garage parking. It appears to him that they are trying to build as cheap as possible just to get it in. Future renters deserve the same amenities and quality of life as other apartment dwellers. Halverson stated that he feels it would be an abnormal and out of place exception for this project compared to everybody else that is held to the higher standard, and we need to continue to build our community up, don't build residential car dealerships. Halverson discussed that Council Member Hanson had a great comment that if a handicapped tenant can't get out of the building, they will go out onto their balcony for rescue. Halverson also discussed that his biggest concern with the project is that this Highway 10 intersection is a very dangerous intersection, and he has a hard time putting that many more vehicles onto an uncontrolled intersection. The Fire Department has responded to numerous incidents at this intersection, and feels it is a life safety concern to access onto Highway 10.

Council Member Hanson discussed that yesterday, he had a Zoom meeting with two representatives from CommonBond. He shared his concern about not including balcony areas in the project, and the lack of covered parking stalls. They discussed the possibility of doing an unattached, outdoor garage structure on the property which could offer 20 enclosed stalls in a separate structure and asked for Staff feedback on whether this type of structure would work for the project. Meyers noted that the City Code doesn't preclude that, but we are trying to attain at least one enclosed stall per unit. This type of plan would only provide covered parking for 20 of the 60 units but it would be a compromise. Hanson also discussed that he is fine with the proposed loading area and setbacks.

Council Member Seefeld discussed that parking was a concern at the Planning Commission Meeting. Another builder recently told him that you usually build infrastructure under the building so maybe we can raise it up and have parking under there. Seefeld also reviewed Planning Commission discussion on trash enclosures which need to be out of sight and could be accommodated with underground parking. Meyer's indicated that the developer intends to put the trash enclosures indoors, most likely on the ground floor.

Mayor Knier inquired if it is normal procedure for a developer not to dedicate parkland. Meyers reviewed that the subdivision ordinance requires some type of park dedication for all development in the City whether it is commercial, industrial or residential. Ordinarily you

would see land dedication in a single-family residential development, but alternatively for commercial and industrial developments the developer will opt for the cash-in-lieu option, which would be 10% of the market value of the parcel that goes to the Park Dedication Fund. Knier stated that he agrees with other Council Members' comments about the balconies, and recognized that there is opposition to this project from many people. Knier discussed that he drove to CommonBond's Section 8, multi-family development in Delano, noting that the project proposed in Big Lake is a Section 42 project. Knier noted that comments he received included that the project is going to be an eye sore within four years so he had wanted to see what a project run by CommonBond was like. Knier noted that the Delano development is a very nice project and found no problems with it whatsoever. Knier also stated that there are Section 42 projects in Big Lake already and most people don't know that, and reviewed the rents that will be associated with this project which will be a substantial amount for each unit. Knier stressed that for the people that have concerns, he assured them that he has done his research and he feels good about them as a stakeholder here in town.

Halverson discussed that when he talked to someone at CommonBond, they indicated that they have done covered parking in other areas so they should be able to do it here.

Council Member Seefeld asked if they did underground parking, how many units would they be able to construct if they raised the building up. Andy Babula representing CommonBond Communities, explained that it wouldn't typically be the full 60 units, more often it is half the number of units. Babula stressed that underground parking can be extremely expensive, estimating the cost at approximately \$30,000 per stall so it can add millions of dollars to the cost of the project. Typically, projects constructed in larger cities that require underground parking provide TIF or some other sort of funding to compensate them for building the underground parking. They take a lot of pride in building quality housing for the members of the community, and thanked Mayor Knier for visiting their site in Delano, it was nice to hear the positive comments. Babula reviewed that their developments are high quality, but they also have to make them affordable so there are some compromises they have to make to keep them affordable. Eliminating the underground parking requirement helps make the rents more affordable for the tenants.

7C. 2021 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2021-1 – Approve Final Plans and Advertise for Bid

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, and most recently voted to move

forward with the preparation of final plans and specifications for 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 nine open houses as well as one Facebook Live event. Otteson discussed that comments from residents will continue to be taken during design and construction, and property owners have expressed interest in driveway replacement to be included with the project. To minimize costs, the engineering design team worked to reduce street width and utilize existing storm sewer as much as possible. Otteson also reviewed that at the March 10, 2021 Council Meeting, the City Council directed Staff to complete the design of the 2021 Street and Utility Improvement project. Council also directed Staff to revise the City Engineer's design recommendation as follows: 1) remove sidewalks on Sherburne Avenue and Powell Street; 2) widen Powell Street to 32' to allow parking on one side thereby meeting State Aid rules; and 3) meet with Highland Avenue residents to discuss and determine if there is a consensus regarding street width of 22' or 26'. Otteson discussed that recently, the State Aid Engineer shared that he is seeing push back from the Variance Committee regarding our request for a design variance. Several Engineers on the Variance Committee suggested they are not agreeable to a variance and inquired why it was allowed to be a State Aid route with the deficiencies. After several discussions with the State Aid Engineer, we determined it would be best to withdraw the variance request and he would be okay with a slightly narrower street and parking. However, the project would not be eligible to use any State Aid funding. Staff determined that under these circumstances we move forward with reducing the width from 32' to 30' and continue parking as is. This will reduce costs and provide for parking. Furthermore, the State Aid Engineer will allow it to stay a State Aid route thereby continuing to generate funding for use city-wide as it has in the past. The higher volume roads generate more funding annually so it is advantageous for the City to keep Powell Street designated as a State Aid route and build up our State Aid account. We can use the account funds on future projects that are eligible such as the County 43/Glenwood intersection or other State Aid routes in the City.

Council Member Seefeld asked how much are we saving by reducing Powell Street from 32 feet to 30 feet. Otteson indicated that the savings would be approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000. Seefeld also asked how much the sidewalk on Will Street would cost. Otteson explained the Will Street sidewalk reduction would be approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000 as the site area requires more grading which increases the construction costs, whereas the other parts of Powell Street are relatively flat. Seefeld reviewed Council direction on March 10th directing that sidewalks be removed from Sherburne Avenue and Powell Street and widen the width of Powell Street to 32 feet thereby meeting MN State Aid requirements. Seefeld reviewed cost savings for removing sidewalk areas from Powell Street and Will

Street which could save us \$80,000 to \$100,000 and asked if we want to do sidewalks on Powell Street.

Council Member Hanson stated that he is in complete agreement that we should be removing sidewalks from Will Street and putting them on Powell Street, and reducing Powell Street to 30 feet. Hanson reviewed the results of the survey conducted by Powell Street residents, noting that the people have spoken, and he feels we should do sidewalks on Powell Street.

Council Member Halverson stated that a \$40,000 sidewalk in a Safe Routes to School zone where students don't receive transportation services makes sense. We would be spending \$40,000 on sidewalks on Powell Street and Will Street. Mayor Knier interjected that he feels Halverson is misunderstanding that a little bit. Halverson clarified that if the road narrows two feet, we save \$40,000. That savings can be used on a sidewalk on Will Street and continue the whole sidewalk to Powell Street and Will Street. You would be saving on the road and reinvesting it so the price of the project doesn't change. Knier stressed that is different than what Council Member Seefeld was saying in that we would save the \$40,000 to \$50,000 in the narrowing of the road, and save another \$40,000 to \$50,000 by not constructing a sidewalk on Will Street which wasn't as big of a deal to the residents on Will to have a sidewalk. Council Member Seefeld reviewed the expected travel pattern of pedestrian traffic in the project area and the limited traffic that is expected on a sidewalk on Will Street. Otteson reviewed the potential cost savings estimated to be approximately \$80,000 and the additional cost for a sidewalk on Powell Street would be a net increase of approximately \$70,000. Halverson asked for confirmation that the sidewalk system will completely connect, and Otteson concurred that it will connect. Mayor Knier discussed a comment made during Open Forum about liability of pedestrian traffic. Soren Mattick reviewed that the City has a right to construct a project they see fit, noting that while anyone can sue for any reason, the City would only be liable for design of a project if we are clearly negligent, and if there was a clear issue that we have been made aware of and put on notice of liability. Council Member Halverson discussed that it was brought to his attention that in the Safe Routes to School area, there was a kid that was hit and the school was sued. Halverson asked if the City was also sued at the time. If we don't do our due diligence in a Safe Routes to School zone to make the route safe, would the City be liable. Mattick reviewed that generally, Safe Route to School zone areas are designated by the School District, not by the City. Mattick discussed factors that go into determining liability, but clarified that liability based on road design would be highly unlikely that we would be held liable. Halverson asked what the curb design on Powell Street would be if we design the road at 30 feet wide, and questioned if we are proposing the sidewalk be adjacent to the curb. Otteson stated that if it is Council's wish to include a sidewalk on Powell Street, he would recommend it be put at the back of the curb with the reason being that when Powell Street south of Glenwood Avenue was built, there was a significant loss of trees and the City fielded many complaints. This type of sidewalk would be easier to construct, would create a narrower corridor, would have less of an impact on yards, and it

would be easier to control the green space that you generally see between the curb and sidewalk so maintenance would be easier for adjacent property owners. Otteson also noted that Public Works will plow the sidewalk if it is along the curb. Otteson reviewed that Staff would recommend the same sidewalk/curb design as what was constructed on Manitou and Tarrytown Road, which is a 6-inch vertical barrier curb style abutting the sidewalk which would provide added pedestrian safety, with the other side of the street curbing being surmountable where there is no sidewalk.

Mayor Knier stressed that it's important to remember that we are still spending \$150,000. He has always said he loves a good sidewalk as much as Raeanne loves a good sidewalk. We are still spending the funds and there is a concomitant amount of tax that needs to be raised to do that. Halverson reminded Knier that 84% of the people signed the petition. Knier stated that he appreciates Brandon's work on conducting a petition noting that he is a man of action. Knier stressed that how you frame things matters and if he went out and talked to those same people and his goal was to get no sidewalk, he could probably get 84% of the people to say that as well. It doesn't detract from the work he did, but it isn't necessarily scientific. Knier discussed that he is o.k. with it if Council as a body is o.k. with a sidewalk on Powell Street, but just know that it has to be paid for and sometimes we have to say no to good things. Halverson stated that he's o.k. with not saying no to this one. Knier stated that the taxes have to be raised, and Halverson returned that he is willing to pay his portion for their sidewalk. Knier explained that the money has to be raised in the sense that an investor raises money, it has to be paid for.

Council Member Seefeld stated his final thoughts on the project identifying he is o.k. with removing the sidewalk from Will Street, adding a sidewalk to Powell Street, and reducing the width of Powell Street to 30 feet.

Mayor Knier reviewed the proposed street width of 22 feet on Highland Avenue and asked for legal feedback on discussions held at a past Workshop relating to plowing liability on Highland Avenue. If the street is narrow and the plow is hanging over the center line by 3 feet, and a car coming from the other way gets hit by the plow, he asked if the City would be liable. Mattick stressed that the City could potentially be liable. Knier also discussed that if a development goes in, we are going to have huge heavy equipment driving on Highland Avenue and ruining the street so why would we fix the street now. We should wait 4 years and add Highland Avenue to the proposed street project at that time and construct it at 26 feet at that point. Halverson asked for information on how a 429 process would work. Otteson reviewed ways the City would work with a future developer on a Chapter 429 process if a larger development occurs before Highland Avenue would be reconstructed in 4 years.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve Resolution No. 2021-22 approving the Final Plans and Specifications and authorizing the Advertisement of Bids for the 2021 Street and

Utility Project No. ST2021-1 with amendments to the project to include removing the sidewalk from Will Street, adding a sidewalk to Powell Street, reducing the width of Powell Street to 30 feet, and removing Highland Avenue from the project. Seconded by Council Member Hanson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7D. Donation – Towards the Big Lake Police Department from the Eddy Family Foundation

Matt Hayen reviewed the \$4,000 cash donation submitted by the Eddy Family Foundation to the Big Lake Police Department towards the purchase of unbudgeted law enforcement needs. Council thanked the Eddy Family Foundation for the generous donation.

Council Member Halverson motioned to approve Resolution No. 2021-23 accepting a \$4,000 cash donation to the Big Lake Police Department from the Eddy Family Foundation towards unbudgeted purchases within the Department. Seconded by Council Member Hanson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7E. Monthly Department Reports

Deb Wegeleben informed Council that the 2020 City Audit is done and the final 2020 financial statements will be presented to Council on April 28, 2021. Wegeleben also provided a year-to-date financial update.

Greg Zurbey provided an update on the Municipal Liquor Store operations for February 2021, and provided a yearly comparison for the month of February 2021 compared to February 2020. Zurbey also informed Council that the All Night Grad Party organization sold candy bars for two weeks at the store to earn funds for their event, the Big Lake Girl Scouts have been selling cookies for their organization, noted that the beer cooler reset is scheduled for March 29th, and noted that the Spring Wine Sale started on March 21st and will run through March 27th.

Hanna Klimmek provided an update on activities in the Community Development Department for the month of February. Klimmek reviewed housing, commercial and redevelopment projects, and provided a year to date 2020/2021 permit activity comparison. Klimmek reviewed upcoming activities of the Planning Commission, and reviewed activities of the BLEDA including an update on the Community Brand & Identity Design Project and the Revolving Loan Fund. Klimmek also discussed recreation/communications activities including expansion of the Community Garden space, the Farmer's Market Program, Music in the Park events, and the upcoming May 21st Movie in the Park which will be held drive-in style. Klimmek provided an update of activities in the Streets/Parks/Fleet Department noting that Staff has been working on the Community Gardens project, spring clean-up of parks, playground inspections, pothole repair, lighting maintenance at City Hall, post

removal at the Police Department, and noted that the Public Works crew will start crack filling next week.

8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Clay Wilfahrt discussed the stimulus package that was recently passed by the Federal Government, noting that funds will be coming to local jurisdictions and it is looking like the City will be receiving just over a million dollars. Staff will be analyzing how we can use those funds, but there hasn't been much information shared yet on how the funds can be allocated other than there will be certain categories they have outlined on what we can spend that money on, but we don't know specifics yet other than we will have until the end of 2024 to spend it. Wilfahrt reviewed Facebook Live events held and upcoming events that will be scheduled. Wilfahrt also reviewed the upcoming Special City Election that will be held on Tuesday, April 13. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and all City Precincts will be open for voting on Election Day. Mayor Knier asked when the new Council Member will be seated. Gina Wolbeck indicated that it is expected that the winning candidate will be able to take their seat at the 2nd meeting in April.

9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mayor Knier: Discussed the first Coffee with the Mayor event held in March, noting that the next gathering will be held on May 8th prior to the Chamber of Commerce Community Fair. Knier also discussed the recent Finance Committee Meeting he attended.

Council Member Halverson: Reviewed the March Parks Advisory Committee Meeting, and the Code Revision Taskforce Committee Meeting.

Council Member Hanson: Discussed the March Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Meeting.

10. OTHER

Mayor Knier thanked everyone for their participation in the process and thanked fellow Council Members who have spent a lot of time on the street project and other items. They have spent a lot of time pondering it and sweating over it. People have asked him how much time it takes to be Mayor. With meetings it may be 5 hours a week, but it's the mental energy about thinking about the happenings of the City. It's been fun and an honor to do it and to serve the people. Knier wanted everyone to know that they will always be heard, even though not always agreed with, we all have disagreements among each other and so on, but they will always be listened to. Knier also thanked his fellow Council Members for their good work as well, and again for the participation. Let the people speak, and the people were heard.

11. ADJOURN

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 7:42 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Hanson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
Clerk

Date Approved By Council _____ 04/14/21