

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13, 2023**

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, Kim Noding, and Paul Seefeld. Also present: City Administrator Hanna Klimmek, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Community Development Director Therese Haffner, City Planner Lucinda Spanier, Police Captain Sam Olson, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, and Big Lake Student Liaison Allie Cross.

4. OPEN FORUM

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

George Quinn, 810 Lake Street North – Asked the City to monitor private signage being put up at the Veteran’s Memorial site, noting he feels it is disrespectful when people place private advertising at a site dedicated as a veteran’s memorial. Quinn also discussed military records and awards of a veteran found in a wall of a building in Big Lake, and asked to use the City’s social media platforms to help locate Sgt. Michael E. Vickery so these documents can be returned to him. Council Member Halverson indicated he was able to find information on Vickery and will get contact information to Quinn.

Mayor Knier closed the Open Forum at 6:04 p.m.

5. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Noding 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 August 23, 2023, 6C. Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2023, 6D. Approve Special Budget Workshop Minutes of August 24, 2023, 6E. Approve 341 Karen Lane Variance Resolution No. 2023-61, 6F. Approve 2023 Year-End Meeting Date Changes, 6G. Authorize the Police Department to Pre-order/Purchase a 2024 Police Ford Explorer Vehicle, 6H. Approve Stipulation of Settlement, Assessment and Right of Entry Agreement for 421 Eagle Lake Road North, 6I. Approve Spark1Inc Pyrotechnics Display Permit for the 2023 Homecoming Game on September 22, 2023, 6J. Approve Resignation from Part-Time Liquor Store Clerk Aimee Sellner, 6K. Rescind the Employment offer of Part-Time Liquor Clerk Thomas Haugen, and 6L. Approve Contract with Braun Intertec for material testing on the County Road 43 Project.

7. BUSINESS

7A. PUBLIC HEARING – 310 Lake Street South Right of Way Vacation

Lucinda Spanier discussed the second petition submitted by 310 Lake LLC to vacate an additional portion of the Ormsbee Street right of way east of parcel no. 65-406-0165. Spanier noted the applicant was granted a right of way vacation on July 12, 2023 and due to a surveyor error, the steps leading to the building's east entrance are encroaching into the right of way. Furthermore, compliance with ADA regulations necessitates construction of a ramp to provide access to the east entrance. Spanier noted, similar to the July 12 vacation, there are not public utilities present and the petition was reviewed by the City Engineer and Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent, neither of whom expressed reservations about the additional vacation request.

Mayor Knier opened the public hearing at 6:10 p.m. No one came forward. Mayor Knier closed the public hearing at 6:10 p.m.

Council Member Noding motioned to approve Resolution No. 2023-62 vacating a portion of the Ormsbee Street right of way adjacent to 310 Lake Street South. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7B. Preliminary 2024 Tax Levy and Economic Development Authority Levy

Deb Wegeleben reviewed the 2024 Preliminary Property Tax Levy for the City and the Economic Development Authority. The 2024 City of Big Lake Preliminary Property Tax Levy of \$5,477,316 includes the General Levy of \$4,542,990, Abatement Property Tax Levy of \$57,050, and the Debt

Levy of \$877,276 which is an increase of \$260,831 over the 2023 Final Tax Levy. The 2024 Big Lake Economic Development Authority Preliminary Property Tax Levy of \$130,000 is the same amount that was levied in 2023. Wegeleben reviewed the combined preliminary tax levies for 2024 will be \$5,607,316, which is an increase of 4.88%; however, the City Tax Rate will decrease by 2.25% to 37.23%. The 2024 Preliminary General Fund Balanced Budget is set at \$6,778,875, which is an increase of 7.68% or \$483,224.

Wegeleben also noted the City will need to hold a meeting to allow for public input on the 2024 Budget and Levy. Council has already set this meeting at 6:00 pm on Monday, November 27, 2023 with a continuation meeting date of Wednesday, November 29, which will only be held if needed. This will allow Council time to reflect on comments received during the Public Input Hearing and make necessary changes prior to setting the final payable 2024 Property Tax Levy, which will occur on December 13, 2023.

Motion by Council Member Hanson to approve Resolution No. 2023-63 adopting the 2024 Preliminary Property Tax Levy for the City of Big Lake. Seconded by Council Member Noding, motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Council Members Hanson, Knier, Noding, and Seefeld voting aye, and Council Member Halverson voting nay. Motion carried.

Motion by Council Member Hanson to approve Resolution No. 2023-64 adopting the 2024 Preliminary Property Tax Levy for the Big Lake Economic Development Authority. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7C. Department Reports

Engineering Department – City Engineer Layne Otteson provided an update on engineering projects underway in the City. Otteson reviewed the ST2022-1 street project, provided an update on the County Road 43 project, discussed completion of the 2023 Sealcoat project, and provided information on AIS lake treatments and watercraft inspections conducted in 2023 as well as damage along the channel area due to wave action and ice conditions.

Council Member Halverson asked if we have control of both points on the channel. Otteson responded through the legislative process, we now own land on both sides of the channel, but the DNR does retain control. Halverson also discussed the CR 43 Improvement Project that is currently underway, noting this project is in the County's jurisdiction and they have control over the entire project. Otteson discussed there is a spirit of working together with the County; however, they are in control and they have transportation experts on the project.

Student Liaison Allie Cross provided an update on Big Lake Schools. Cross provided an update on enrollment statistics, activities of the Student Council, reviewed the homecoming week schedule, and provided an update on the new Collaborative Center at the High School.

Mayor Knier discussed the Big Lake Ambassadors participation in the MN State Fair royalty float, noting how nice it was to see Big Lake represented at the Fair. Cross indicated there is different royalty participating in the parade each day of the Fair.

8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

City Administrator Hanna Klimmek reviewed Police Chief Kaczmarek started a leadership and management education program this week through the Northwestern School of Police Staff & Command. This 10-week course focuses on critical command-level content such as planning, policies, media relations, organizational behavior, budgeting, resource allocation, and human resources. Klimmek noted we are excited for Chief Kaczmarek and recognized the City will benefit from his work on professional development. Klimmek also discussed she, along with Captain Sam Olson, will be attending a meeting tomorrow morning to discuss Cannabis law with Sherburne County. The City's and Townships throughout Sherburne County have been invited to this meeting, and we are hoping to gain some insight on how to move forward with writing Policy around public spaces as well as how we intend to facilitate registration/compliance for retail.

9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mayor Knier: reviewed the September Fire Board Meeting, Finance Committee Meeting and BLEDA Meeting. Knier noted he met with the Big Lake Senior Group and encouraged area seniors to get involved in these gatherings. Knier also thanked citizens for coming to Saturday's Coffee with the Mayor at Ember Coffee, noting the next one is the second Saturday in November.

Council Member Halverson: discussed the recent Finance Committee Meeting. Halverson also thanked Captain Sam Olson for stepping in for Chief Kaczmarek while he is at training.

Council Member Hanson: discussed the recent BLBYR Meeting and BLCLA Meeting. Council Member Hanson also recognized the Police Department and Fire Department for assisting in locating a lost child, and recognized an employee from the Municipal Liquor Store for providing a positive identification which was vital in locating the child.

Council Member Noding: discussed the recent Fire Board Meeting and September BLEDA Meeting.

10. OTHER

Council Member Hanson reviewed donations he has secured for walleye stocking at Big Lake and Lake Mitchell, thanking the Big Lake American Legion Post 147, Big Lake Spud Fest, the Big Lake Lions Club, and the Graniteman Triathlon for their generous donations.

11. ADJOURN

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 6:41 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
Clerk

Date Approved by Council 09.27.23