

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

OCTOBER 12, 2022

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, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, and Planning Technician Will Bucheger.

3. PROPOSED AGENDA

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

4. BUSINESS

4A. Review Draft Remote Work Policy

Deb Wegeleben reviewed the draft Remote Work Policy, noting that the City is committed to providing excellent customer services for our residents, as well as attracting and retaining critical employee talent. A Remote Work Policy would provide these benefits to the City, and would govern the practice of working remotely and ensure that any approved remote work would not have an adverse effect on operational needs of the City. Wegeleben discussed that the City's primary focus is serving the needs of its citizens, so remote work may not be possible for all positions, and noted that established remote work schedules may need to change to accommodate the needs of the City. Per the draft policy, all employees who meet the eligibility criteria would be considered for remote work on a case-by-case basis and would not be guaranteed for any employee. Wegeleben reviewed considerations the City will make when considering remote work requests. Wegeleben also discussed that the City's current telework policy is outdated and needs to be refined so that staff members that have been working from home would have an approved work schedule that best suits the department and City as a whole to assure that the City's goals and commitments to the residents are met. Wegeleben reviewed recommendations from the City's Personnel Committee that have been included in the draft policy.

Council Member Halverson asked if remote work would be on the same day of the week. Hanna Klimmek indicated that it would be on a case-by-case basis. Wegeleben reviewed that the Personnel Committee had asked for a set day of the week, but the identified day of the week could be different for various employees. Klimmek noted that communication will be key to having a successful Remote Work Policy. Halverson asked if control of the computer system is a concern with employees working remote. Klimmek responded that the City's Information Technology (IT) Department would need to be involved in setting up remote access. Wegeleben also discussed that there will need to be onsite coverage for staff working from home so that resident needs are met.

Council Member Noding discussed that we are most likely set up with a VPN which would protect our system. Wegeleben discussed that most workstations are moving toward being portable style equipment so we shouldn't need to double up on computer equipment. Klimmek reviewed that the draft policy was reviewed by IT and their only concern was maintaining control of security.

Halverson asked if the employee would be responsible if City equipment is lost or stolen. Wegeleben reviewed that we have security measures in place, especially for portable computer systems that will be leaving the building.

Mayor Knier asked how productivity will be monitored. Klimmek responded that productivity will be measured by response times, noting that the privilege can be immediately revoked if needed.

Council Member Hanson discussed that a new employee had asked about a remote work policy, and Hanson explained that times are changing especially after COVID. As an employer, it would give us a competitive edge in the hiring process.

Council directed Staff to move forward with finalizing a Remote Work Policy for future Council consideration.

5. OTHER

Council Member Seefeld reviewed discussion at the October Planning Commission Meeting, where the Commission discussed the need for the City to acknowledge receipt of complaints and follow up with the person who made the complaint, after an investigation is done.

Will Bucheger discussed that the City's current complaint form could be changed to include an area for the complainant to list contact information.

Council Member Halverson discussed that if a citizen submits their complaint from the City website, the website system requires them to set up an account, which can be a concern for those wishing to file an anonymous complaint. Bucheger reviewed the required process for filing complaints, which need to be in written format, either by web submittal, email, or on paper. Staff discussed that we can look at adding information to the complaint section of the website on how to file an anonymous complaint, as well as adding contact language to the complaint form.

Mayor Knier discussed that verbal complaints have been taken by Council Members in the past, and then verbally forwarded on to Staff for investigation. Klimmek responded that a Council Member can forward a complaint on to Staff on behalf of any person, and then code enforcement would be notified by Staff in writing, which would give documentation on when and how the complaint came in to the City. Knier asked what the purpose is of requiring written complaints. Klimmek reviewed that complaints are subject to the Data Practice Law, and written complaints provide proof that the City did receive an actual complaint. Mayor Knier also stressed that he feels it is important for the City to respond to persons filing a complaint to let them know we took care of their concerns.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 5:19 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Hanson unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
City Clerk

10.26.22
Date Approved by Council