

**City of Gem Lake
City Council Meeting – June 15, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Artig-Swomley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Councilmembers Amlee, Cacioppo, Lindner and Johnson were present. Also present: Planning and Zoning Tom Riedesel, City Engineer Justin Gese, City Attorney Patrick Kelly, Planning Commission member Joshua Patrick, Summit Farm Villas HOA Board President Sharon Roland, White Bear Lake Police Chief Julie Swanson, Residents Jim Wilson, Paul Emeott, Dan Meysembourg and Kim Anderson-Uzpen.

June 15, 2021 Agenda

A motion was made by Councilmember Lindner to accept the agenda with the addition of Pest control discussion, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, agenda approved.

Minutes

A motion was made by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to approve the May 18, 2021, City Council Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, minutes approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to approve the June 1, 2021, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, minutes approved.

Committee Reports – Planning Commission

Commission member Patrick gave an overview of the Planning Commission Meeting on June 1, 2021. There were three (3) public hearings discussed at the meeting pertaining to urban gardening, fence height, and setback and zoning, all of which relate directly to the Gem Lake Ordinance No. 131 Consolidated Land Use. The Planning Commission worked with staff recommendation and concluded that all the concerns could be met using a Conditional Use Permit to deal with an applicant who applied for a permit for an 8 foot fence. Also discussed was the task of fixing some of the language in the Consolidated Land Use Ordinance in the future to bring it up to date as it regards truck farming.

Old Business – Newsletter Ideas

Mayor Artig-Swomley presented ideas for the next Newsletter to include pieces on the White Bear Lake Police Chief Swanson’s reports, story on Resident Mr. Meysembourg and his farm, Resident Mrs. Anderson-Uzpen starting a committee to maintain the public land and trail, donations for the food shelf, City Clerk Notary, requesting residents to supply Heritage Hall with their emails, graduate shout outs and crime in the area.

New Business

White Bear Area Police Department Presentation – Trends/Department Report – Chief Swanson

The White Bear Lake Police Department is who we have contracted for our Police Services. Over the last year, June 1, 2021 through June 1, 2021 Gem Lake had approximately 642 calls for service. Those calls consisted of 237 police proactive, 125 traffic stops, 53 medicals, 10 theft and 10 motor vehicle thefts. The Police Department has 31 Officers with the newest starting June 15th, one (1) Police Chief, two (2) Captains, four (4) Sergeants, three (3) investigators one (1) Violent Crime Enforcement Taskforce and two (2) School Resource Officers), six (6) Community Service Officers and four (4) Support Staff/Evidence/Media Specialist. The department provides Use of Force Training to their officers on a monthly basis, and department wide twice a year. Beginning July 1, 2021 they must start providing the additional in-service training as follows:

- Crisis intervention and mental illness crises
- Conflict management and mediation
- Recognizing and valuing community diversity and cultural differences to include implicit bias

This spring the Police Department received grant funding to provide staffing for several events:

- Distracted Driving Enforcement March 9-30, two (2) officers made 48 stops along on Tuesday March 23, 2021
- DWI Enforcement for the month of April every Thursday-Sunday 4:00 p.m. – midnight
- Crosswalk Enforcement

The vandalism that happened at the Gem Lake Hills Golf Course ended up going nowhere, they were not able to identify any of the vandals and no one came in and turned anyone in.

Gem Lake Infrastructure Issues

Gem Lake Villas Water System Billing Update

A thorough look was done of all the information available on the past year’s billing. Audits were completed and Mayor Artig-Swomley, City Clerk Melissa Lawrence and Bill Short met with the City of Vadnais Heights to reduce the main meter charge. It was found that the meter charge was high and that the Gem Lake Villas are being treated like one big house. There was also concern that the City of Gem Lake was paying sewer on irrigation.

Hoffman Road Update – Justin Gese

Mr. Gese reported that there is now a tentative start date of July 12, 2021. Flyers will be sent out to properties nearby to inform them of the date. Once the project begins, they will have 30 days to complete it.

Gem Lake Villas Update – Justin Gese

Mr. Gese reported that some areas have been reseeded and that the developer needs to be reached out to regarding the warranty on some of the trees. City Clerk is still in the process of getting a hold of the White Bear Townships Public Works Department to get a “No Outlet” sign for the Villas to be put up.

Scheuneman Road Update – Justin Gese

Mr. Gese reported that Emily Jennings has been working on the report and it should be ready to present at the July City Council Meeting.

Formation of Gem Lake Public Trail Committee

Current Maintenance

As of right now there has been no one maintaining the public land, with the exception of SEH recommended reseeded where needed, and removing dead trees.

Future Growth

Dr. Kim Anderson-Uzpen has received training to become a master gardener and is forming a committee to help with the upkeep of the public land. There is currently some money in the park fund, but it cannot be used for maintenance, it can only be used for improvements. City Clerk will send out a letter to all residents asking for volunteers to join the committee.

Signage/Other

Ramsey County had “garden teaching signs” available at no cost, Dr. Anderson-Uzpen is going to check with the county to see if they still have any available. If they do not, the City can decide if it would like to purchase any signs for the public land. The U of M extension has knowledge on prairie planting, and the City can consider reaching out to VLAWMO to inquire about a rain garden. SEH will need to be contacted to check on watering and what to do if things die.

Heritage Hall

Electrical Repair Part Two/Proposed Part Three-Emergency Lights

Electrical Repair Part two (2) consisted of getting the rest of the lights in the building up to code and retrofitted. This work was completed May 27, 2021. The City is now moving on to part three (3) of the electrical work for the building for a total base bid of \$1,750.00 which includes the furnishing and installing of (11) new Emergency Lights in the already existing locations and (6) new Red Exit Signs in the already existing locations. This will be a shared expense with White Bear Township. Councilmember Cacioppo made a motion to approve the bid from NEI Electric, seconded by Councilmember Lindner. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, total base bid for NEI Electric for \$1,750.00 approved.

Additional Items Requested by White Bear Township – Audio Visual

The work has been completed.

Proposed Plumbing Change

This is being tabled until the July City Council Meeting because the quote has not been received yet. Once the quote is received we would like to use the COVID-19 funds that may be available for this project.

Possibility of Security Cameras

Heritage Hall currently has an ancient system and the City is looking to update it to something more modern. Councilmember Cacioppo has reached out to Roseville IT and is awaiting a response from them, and is also looking at the option of DVR. City Attorney Mr. Kelly suggested that the City reach out to the White Bear Lake Police Department to see if they have any funding available for this and we may get a better deal.

Pest Control

A proposal from Plunkett’s Pest Control was sent over for the General Pest Control Program for June 2021 - May 2022 in the total of \$601.33. If the City pays the whole year before the end of June 2021 it will receive a 5% discount which would bring the total to \$571.26. With the total cost more than the \$500.00 limit for Mayor Artig-Swomley to authorize it will be sent to the City Treasurer to approve. Councilmember Cacioppo made a motion to approve the bid from Plunkett’s Pest Control, seconded by Councilmember Lindner. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, total bid of \$571.26 will be sent to the City Treasurer to approve payment.

Internal Management Update

Three Month Review

The City Clerks three (3) month review is due by July 1, 2021. At this time the City Clerk has been attending City Council and Planning Commission Meetings taking minutes, creating forms that should have existed, that might, but can't be found and learning Ordinances. The City Clerk is also still in the process of becoming a Notary, the state is currently backed up with earlier applications, and has also joined the MCFOA.

Longer Term Priorities

The City Clerk is going to be going through and making sure that all the needed forms exist and are available on the website, and will be making all Ordinances available on the website and in the same searchable format.

Training

The City Clerk has been receiving training from Mayor Artig-Swomley as well as from multiple people from White Bear Township. An employee manual was created and handout out at the last City Council Meeting. The City Clerk will be putting together a training guide to have available for when vacation time is requested.

CUP for 8 foot Garden Fence and setback/Truck Farming Discussion

A CUP is being proposed for resident Daniel Meysembourg at 4144 Scheuneman Road to install an 8 foot fence to keep out deer and other wildlife from his veganic farm. The 25 foot fence setback is also being waived due to prohibition on tractors. The conditions that Mr. Meysembourg must follow are:

- Fence must be kept in good order
- Fence must be see through
- Fence must be completely on his property
- No tractors or mechanical equipment

There will be a Public Hearing in July to discuss revisions of the Consolidated Land Use Ordinance No. 131 as it regards Truck Farming. Councilmember Lindner made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit with the above conditions noted, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, the Conditional Use Permit for Resident Dan Meysembourg is approved.

Future Public Hearings for Truck Farming, Home Occupations, Archery Deer Hunting

- July – Truck Farming at the Planning Commission level
- August – Archery Deer Hunting at the City Council level
- September – Home Occupation at the Planning Commission level

Heritage Hall Room Rental Policy, Form and Fees

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council remove the sentence on the application that gives Gem Lake and White Bear Township residents a discount. They are already receiving a better rate than non-residents and if they use the room during normal business hours they can rent it for free. Mayor Artig-Swomley also suggested that language be added to the policy of the building hours, and if they go 15 minutes over they will be charged for an additional hour of room rental time. Councilmember Lindner made a motion to approve the changes and the application, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, the Heritage Hall Rental policy will be updated with the suggested changes.

Peddlers, Solicitors and Transient Merchant License, Form and Fees

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council add the daily fee to the application as the Ordinance states that the City offers such a fee. Councilmember Linder made a motion to approve the form, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, application approved.

Dog License and Dog Ordinance Issues

Mayor Artig-Swomley discussed that our Ordinance was apparently amended to state that dog licenses are valid for two (2) years and the change shows that it took place in 2014. However, the City Clerk looked back at the minutes for that time frame and there was no mention of why they were being changed or that they had been changed at all. Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the City change the Ordinance back to yearly registration as the application has stated. It was also discussed that there was a need to revise the ordinance regarding the service animal language, which will be discussed during the July City Council Meeting. Mayor Artig-Swomley discussed that the Ordinance does not have any language regarding the cleaning up of dog feces. The City Clerk took language from White Bear Townships ordinance to incorporate into Gem Lakes Ordinance. Councilmember Linder made a motion to approve the changes to the application and to incorporate the cleaning of dog feces into the Ordinance, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, changes to application have been approved and language added to the City Ordinance.

Resolution No. 2021-006 Regarding Overnight Camping on Public Land

An Ordinance prohibiting unlawful camping and providing for abatement and penalties for violation thereof was produced for the City of Gem Lake from the City Attorney's office. The Ordinance is to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of the people of the City. Resolution No. 2021-006 was drafted to adopt the new Ordinance. Councilmember Lindner made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-006, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes. Adoption of Resolution No. 2021-006 authorizing the City of Gem Lake to approve the suggested Ordinance on Overnight Camping on Public Land.

Discussion Regarding Zoning Administrator Retirement

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that Planning & Zoning Tom Riedesel is going to be retiring next month, July 2021. Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that Tom contract himself out to help the City of Gem Lake when needed. City Attorney Patrick Kelly stated that there is a waiting period of 30-days that Mr. Riedesel would need to go through before being employed through the City again.

Business Cards and Email Address for Council Members

Mayor Artig-Swomley felt the Council should get Gem Lake emails for all City Council members as well as business cards. The City Clerk got the prices and to get email for all five (5) members, the estimate was \$1,460.00 per year. Business cards were priced out depending on the quantity and it was suggested that the City Council go with the 250 card quantity. Discussion was had concerning the use of personal cell phone numbers listed on the card and how they would prefer to just have the office number on the card and forward calls to them. Councilmember Cacioppo stated that he can look at getting voicemail numbers for all members through his business. City Attorney Patrick Kelly said that could be a conflict of interest in that and Councilmember Cacioppo is in that business. Councilmember Cacioppo made a motion to approve the purchase of Gem Lake emails and business cards, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes. City Clerk will request emails to be created and then request business cards.

Community Outreach to Other Cities and Government Bodies

Mayor Artig-Swomley stated that the City is still in the process of building bridges with our surrounding cities and government agencies. City Clerk has been assigned to work with the Ramsey County Election

Board, Councilmember Amlee has been assigned to work with Rush Line, Councilmember Lindner has been assigned to work with the City of Vadnais Heights, Councilmember Cacioppo has been assigned to work with the Ramsey County Sheriff Department and Mayor Artig-Swomley has been assigned to work with White Bear Township and team up with Councilmember Cacioppo working with the Ramsey County Sheriff Department. Councilmember Johnson has been assigned to the City of White Bear Lake, including the Police and Fire Departments.

Claims

Councilmember Lindner made a motion to pay the bills, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, bills will be paid.

Monthly Financial Reports

No monthly financials were submitted this month due to the City Treasurer being on vacation. The monthly financials will be tabled until July's City Council Meeting.

Presentations from the public, 2 minutes maximum

The public had no comment.

Open Items for Council Members to Bring Up

Mayor Artig-Swomley brought up some things that will be listed on the July agenda. Councilmember Lindner said that VLAWMO presentation will happen in August. Councilmember Johnson brought up the plan with Met Council and it was discussed that there wasn't one at this time.

Future Council Meetings

City Council, Tuesday July 20, 2021, Workshop, Monday July 12, 2021 canceled.

Adjournment

Being there no further business, following a motion from Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence