

City of Gem Lake
Planning Commission Meeting – February 13, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission Chair Joshua Patrick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commission Members Art Pratt, Don Cummings, and Stephanie Farrell were present. Not present was Derek Wippich. Also present: City Planner Evan Monson, Apprentice City Planner CJ Sycks, City Attorney Kevin Beck, and Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence.

February 13, 2024

A motion was made by Commissioner Pratt to accept the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Farrell. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, agenda accepted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Pratt to approve the January 9, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting minutes with a slight amendment under Open Items for Commission Members to Bring Up by Commission Cummings, seconded by Commissioner Cummings. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, minutes are approved.

Public Hearings

None

Old Business

Ordinance No. 45 Garbage and Refuse Discussion

City Planner Evan Monson presented the Commission with a memo regarding the research he has been doing on the garbage and refuse ordinance. He suggested some minor changes and edits for the commission to review and discuss such as how early to set out containers for collection, hours for garbage pick-up, size limitations on containers and possibly including language for composting. Mr. Monson also shared that he discussed the possibility of Gem Lake joining White Bear Townships hauling agreement with the Town Board. The Town Board was open to the idea if the city was to adopt or update its ordinances to allow for licensed hauling. The commissioners may want to discuss whether to pursue the licensing idea further, and whether such service would be for residential only, or if non-residential establishments (multi-family, commercial, etc.) should be included as well. The commission should also review the draft of Ordinance No. 45. The Commission may recommend further changes or updates to the draft Ordinance, or may recommend it to the City Council for their review and approval.

Discussion took place on Mr. Monson's suggestions and a few minor edits were suggested. Mr. Monson will work on creating a final draft for the March 12, commission meeting for the commission to review and suggest for approval to the council.

Gem Lake Tree Policy Discussion

City Attorney Kevin Beck shared that he has begun to work on the FAQ page request, but wanted a bit more clarification on what the commission was looking for before he took a deep dive into it. The Commission is interested in creating an FAQ page for the website for private properties, and not so much changing the current tree policy that dictates what the city is responsible for. Mr. Beck will work on getting some FAQ topics for the commission to review at the March 12 commission meeting to review and suggest for approval to the council.

New Business

Beekeeping Discussion

Apprentice City Planner CJ Sycks presented the Commission with a memo regarding the research she has been doing on the beekeeping information request. Gem Lake's current ordinances have no mention of bees, which may imply beekeeping is permitted with no limit, unless considered a nuisance. It may also imply that beekeeping is prohibited, dependent on one's interpretation of the absence. Ms. Sycks gave a basic overview of how other communities regulate bees and beekeeping. Before evaluating the specific

regulations and restrictions of a beekeeping ordinance, there are some questions to begin considering how permitting beekeeping may look. If the City wishes to allow beekeeping, there are different options the city can adopt. If the city knows they want to permit beekeeping, and have an idea for the permit/licensing process, the standards and requirements for beekeeping uses would then need to be considered. There are a number of items to consider with beekeeping. Initially, the commissioners should determine if this is a use that should be permitted within the city. If yes, then the focus should lead into the permitting process and what standards or requirements would apply. If no, the commissioners should discuss next steps to prohibit them within the city.

After some discussion of the information presented and how the commission would like to pursue this topic, the commission is in favor of adding a section to the current agricultural animal ordinance No. 142 and requests the Ms. Sycks create a draft section for further discussion. Ms. Sycks will work on getting a draft section for the commission to review at the March 12 commission meeting to begin review and make additional suggestions.

Open Items for Commission Members to Bring Up

None

Future Meetings

City Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at Heritage Hall, and Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at Heritage Hall.

Attendance Inquiry

Commissioner Chair Patrick surveyed the Commission to see if any of the members would have any issues attending the March 12, 2024 meeting. At this time Commission Farrell is the only one with conflicts and will not be in attendance.

Adjournment

Being there no further business, following a motion from Commissioner Pratt, seconded by Commissioner Farrell, the meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence