

**City of Gem Lake
City Council Meeting – August 20, 2024
Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Gretchen Artig-Swomley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers Len Cacioppo and Jim Lindner were present. Councilmembers Ben Johnson and Laurel Amlee were not present. Also present: City Attorney Kevin Beck, City Treasurer Tom Kelly, Planning Commission Chair Joshua Patrick, and Commission Member Don Cummings, Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence and residents Jim Wilson and Nick Cress.

August 20, 2024, Agenda

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Linder to accept the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

Minutes

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to approve the July 16, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to accept the August 14, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

Special Presentations/Public Hearings

None

Consent Agenda

Resolution #2024-015 August 2024 Donation to White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf

Resolution #2024-016 August 2024 Donation to Willow Lane Elementary

Monthly Financial Report(s)

Quarterly Financial Report(s)

Claims

All items on the consent agenda were reviewed by the Council. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve all the items listed on the consent agenda as is, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

Committee Reports

Commission Chair Joshua Patrick shared with the Council that the Public Hearing for Barnett Kia was being tabled to wait for more feedback from outside agencies and will be picked up again at the September Planning Commission meeting. Commission Chair Patrick also shared with the Council that he let the Planning Commission know that he has thrown his hat in the ring for a spot on the City Council beginning 2025.

Old Business

Newsletter

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that she would like to get a newsletter ready to be sent out after the September meeting for October. Mayor Artig-Swomley presented ideas for the next edition of the City Newsletter to include pieces on the school supply donation, preliminary budget public hearing, election info, option for online payment option, the approved deer hunts and dead trees being removed.

Funding Update on Municipal Water System

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that on July 1, 2024, she had received a letter from Congresswoman Betty McCollum that the funding for this project has been included to advance to the next step in the process. Inclusion of the City's request in the House bill is not a guarantee of funding. Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that by August 13, 2024, she had received two emails from Senator Amy Klobuchar's team and Senator Tina Smith's team that the City's funding requested was not selected to move forward by the committee.

City Council Pay Discussion

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council table the discussion on Council pay until all City Council members are in attendance. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to table to discussion on Council pay until the September meeting, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

New Business

Ordinance No. 91 Administration Discussion

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence has submitted a draft version of the ordinance for review by the Council. The ordinance has not been updated since 2008. Language was added regarding Planning Commission meetings and attendance and suggested removal of Section 5 regarding Parks and Recreation Committee because the city does not have that type of committee. Mayor Artig-Swomley asked City Attorney Kevin Beck if Section 5 needed to be in the ordinance or if it would be ok to remove it. Mr. Beck stated that it is not mandated to be in the ordinance and can be removed if the city does not have such a committee.

The Council was satisfied with the suggested changes. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the suggested changes to Ordinance No. 91 as presented, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

BS&A Accounts Receivable Quote

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared with the Council that City Treasurer Tom Kelly is recommending approval of the full version of the accounting module as the Township is finding it difficult to complete accounts receivable and payable tasks using the current LITE version. The upgrade will give the Township the ability to balance accounts and have access to reports that are currently unavailable because of the LITE version currently being used. The quote is in the total of \$3,590.00 with an annual fee of \$2,340.00. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the quote for the upgraded module, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

Electronic Payment Processing Service Quotes

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence obtained quotes from two (2) companies that would give the city the ability to collect payments online for permits and utility bills. Quote were received from Invoice Cloud and BS&A Integrated Payments. Both companies offer similar services. Invoice Cloud is the more expensive of the two (2), but it used more commonly in neighboring cities and towns. White Bear Township utilizes Invoice Cloud for their online payment portal and to keep systems consistent the Mayor suggested that the city approve the quote from Invoice Cloud. After review of the services and some discussion on what the city would like to cover versus put on the applicant to be responsible for in terms of fees, Councilmember Cacioppo introduced a motion to accept the quote from Invoice Cloud, seconded by Councilmember Lindner. Motion carried 3-0.

Villas Entrance Tree Removal Quotes

There are several dead trees located at the entrance of the Villas development. Several trees have fallen during past storms that have taken place. The quote received from Precision Landscape & Tree is for the removal off eleven (11) dead trees that include 10 pine and 1 spruce. The quote includes the cost of labor & dumping fees in the amount of \$2,950.00. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the tree removal quote, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

Archery Deer Hunting Applications

7 & 11 Daniels Farm Road

A permit request for a hunt on private property located at 7 & 11 Daniels Farm Road was received. The requested dates of the hunt will be September 14-16, November 1-3, and November 15-17. The hunting party consists of 13 hunters, all of which have obtained their Bow Hunters Certification and a MN DNR Hunting License. Deer stand locations were given and consent of neighbors has been received.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the Archery Deer Hunting application at 7 & 11 Daniels Farm Road, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

Future Charitable Gambling Donations

White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council donate in September in the amount of \$1,500.00 to the White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to request a donation in the amount of \$1,500.00 for the White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 3-0.

Community Outreach to Other Cities and Government Bodies

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked City Attorney Kevin Beck if he has any update on the request with Vadnais Heights. Mr. Beck responded that there is no update. Mayor Artig-Swomley asked if Mr. Beck could reach out to Vadnais Heights and see if they would be willing to act on the request without continuing to wait for the case with the DNR to come to a resolution.

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared with the Council that herself and City Attorney Kevin Beck met with The City of White Bear Lake and their attorney to discuss the additional principal and interest Gem Lake is being charged to make up for the fact that White Bear Lake went over budget on their construction budget for the new police and fire bay. City Attorney Kevin Beck shared that in the fire contract it does have language regarding charges for principal, but it does not say anything about interest. In his professional opinion, Gem Lake has no contractual obligation to pay the interest on the White Bear Lake bonds. While in this meeting a decision was made that Gem Lake would pay the principal amount that is past due but will hold off on paying the interest. The amounts being requested from White Bear Lake for payment are being set aside by City Treasurer Tom Kelly in the case that the city does end up being required to pay.

Presentation from the Public, 2 Minutes Maximum

Commission Member Don Cummings wanted to share that he thought the meeting with Barnett went very well. He shared some of his thoughts on the process that the Commission is making with the request.

Open Items for Council Members to Bring Up

Mayor Artig-Swomley wanted to get the opinion of those on the council regarding the selection of holiday lighting for Heritage Hall. All those on the council agreed that red and green together should be avoided. Mayor Artig-Swomley assigned Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence to make the final decision for the holiday lights colors.

Future Council Meetings

City Council, Tuesday, September 17, 2024. City Council Workshop, Monday, September 9, 2024, is CANCELED.

Attendance Inquiry

At this time all in attendance will be at the September meeting.

Adjournment

Being there no further business, following a motion from Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence