

**City of Gem Lake
City Council Meeting – November 19, 2024
Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Gretchen Artig-Swomley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers Len Cacioppo, Jim Lindner, Laurel Amlee were present. Councilmember Ben Johnson arrived late at 7:07 p.m. Also present: City Attorney Kevin Beck, City Treasurer Tom Kelly, Planning Commission Chair Joshua Patrick, Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence, high school students Kiegan McCarty, Connor Holte, Alexa Duffy, Mia Grambow, and resident Jim Wilson.

November 19, 2024, Agenda

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Linder to accept the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 4-0.

Minutes

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to approve the October 15, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 4-0.

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to approve the November 13, 2024, Canvassing Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 4-0.

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo to accept the November 12, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 4-0.

Special Presentations/Public Hearings

None

Consent Agenda

**Resolution #2024-0026 November 2024 Donation to White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf
Monthly 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 4-0.

Committee Reports

Planning Commission Chair Joshua Patrick attended the City Council meeting but was not present at the November 12 Planning Commission meeting, so he had nothing to report. No other Commissioners were present at the City Council meeting.

Old Business

Newsletter Updates / Topics / Suggestions

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that there will be a Newsletter ready for the December meeting for review minus a couple stories that will be added after the meeting takes place. Some of the topics that will be included are the election results, budget meeting, corridor project, winter parking, food shelf community market, planning commission vacancy, profile on newly elected council member and vacating member, and the plastic free challenge with Ramsey County.

White Bear Lake Police Safety Contract Discussion

City Attorney Kevin Beck has sent a letter to White Bear Lake expressing the City of Gem Lake's interest to negotiate the interest payment on the bond. No response has been received yet. White Bear Township's attorney has sent an identical letter. City Attorney Kevin Beck stated that mediation would be a good solution.

Invoice Cloud Fee to Customers Discussion

Invoice Cloud has fees that they charge to their users for different aspects of paying utility bills online and paying for permits. Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the City eat all the costs on fees regarding online utility bill payments and permit payments for six (6) months and see how much the city is covering in fees. The Council will revisit the discussion in six (6) months to discuss whether the fees should be charged to the customers or if the City is ok to continue covering those fees. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to table the discussion until June 2025, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

Code Enforcement Issues Discussion

A hearing date for an administrative search warrant has been scheduled for Monday, November 25 for the property located along Scheuneman Road that the City has had many code enforcement concerns with over the past couple years. The warrant would mainly focus on the interior of the property to make sure it is up to code because it is licensed as a rental property. Chief Building Official Mike Johnson and City Attorney Kevin Beck are interested in being able to search the exterior of the property and the newly built accessory structure but may not have that option.

New Business

Approve Ordinance No. 67D Individual Septic Systems Updates

Changes to the ordinance have been made over the years and the latest version made in 2018 was never incorporated. City Planner Evan Monson summarized the updates in his memo to the City which included notes from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The updates were first presented to the Planning Commission which were then suggested to move forward to the Council for approval. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the updates, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

Approve Ordinance No. 111 Solicitors Updates

Suggested changes to the ordinance include definition updates. The definition updates are based on the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) model ordinance. The updates were first presented to the Planning Commission which were then suggested to move forward to the Council for approval. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the updates, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

Approve Ordinance No. 83 Housing Maintenance Code Updates

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence added the suggestions from the November City Council meeting to the ordinance. The suggestions were first presented to the Planning Commission which were then suggested to move forward to the Council for approval. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the updates, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

Approve Ordinance No. 91 Administration Updates

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence added some suggest updates to the ordinance to better explain what the Planning Commission is responsible for. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve the updates, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

Ramsey County Street Light Transfer

Ramsey County is requesting that the City of Gem Lake take over the power cost of wood pole streetlights on the City leg or intersection with a City leg. These poles are located on the cross streets of Otter Lake Road and Scheuneman Road and also County Road E and Scheuneman Road. Ramsey County will work with Xcel Energy in getting billing responsibility for these locations transferred to the City of Gem Lake. No vote is needed to process this transition, Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence will work with Ramsey County to ensure a smooth transition.

Ramsey County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Ramsey County recently sent over their draft plan for cities to review. The plan is very well thought out and all possibilities have been considered. Most cities use the plan put together by Ramsey County. Ramsey County assigns goals for each City to meet and the ones for Gem Lake include:

1. Advertise in the newsletter
2. Obtain a backup power source:

Each City is required to have a designated command center and Heritage Hall would be that designated command center. With that designation a backup power source is required. Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence has been asked to get that quote.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to authorize City Clerk Melissa Lawrence to request a bid for a backup emergency generator, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Promote use of NOAA weather radios:

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked City Treasurer Tom Kelly if using charitable gambling funds was allowed to purchase some radios to give out to the public on a first come first serve basis. Mr. Kelly shared that it was a possibility. Councilmember Amlee suggested that the City purchase a certain amount and then offer them to the public for 50% off. Councilmember Cacioppo suggested putting something in the newsletter to see if anyone was even interested. The newsletter would state a designated timeframe to reach out if interested and then the City would purchase them.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to authorize city funds to be used to purchase for Gem Lake residents interested in obtaining one, seconded by Councilmember Cacioppo. Motion carried 5-0.

Future Charitable Gambling Donations

White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council donate in December \$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 5-0.

Community Outreach to Other Cities and Government Bodies

City Attorney Kevin Beck shared that the lawsuit with the DNR is still going on. Although the lawsuit has not been finalized Mr. Beck would like to get the water issue finalized sooner than when the lawsuit is figured out.

Councilmember Johnson shared some of what has been going on with the County Road E Corridor Action Plan. Two (2) meetings have taken place seeking feedback on suggestion for those working on the branding. A proposal was put together for the three (3) options available for the branding of the corridor. Each is unique and got plenty of positive feedback. These details will be released to the public soon.

Open Items for Council Members to Bring Up

None

Future Council Meetings

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

Attendance Inquiry

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

Adjournment

Being there no further business, following a motion from Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence