

**City of Gem Lake  
City Council Meeting – October 18, 2022  
Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Gretchen Artig-Swomley called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m. Councilmembers Laurel Amlee and Jim Lindner were present. Councilmember Len Cacioppo and Ben Johnson were not present. Also present: City Attorney Chad Lemmons (fill in for Patrick Kelly), City Treasurer Tom Kelly, Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence, Planning Commission Member Don Cummings and Planning Commission Chair Joshua Patrick.

**October 18, 2022 Agenda**

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Linder to accept the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, agenda accepted.

**Minutes**

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Amlee to approve the September 20, 2022, City Council Meeting Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, minutes approved.

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Amlee to accept the October 11, 2022, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, minutes accepted.

**Committee Reports – Planning Commission**

Planning Commission Member Don Cummings gave a report of the Planning Commission meeting on October 11, 2022. The Commission discussed the met Councils System Statement and will prepare a response within the next nine months. The report does not show the most current updates so it makes the document a little difficult to comprehend. At the meeting a change in leadership took place. Don Cummings has stepped down from chair and will be replaced by Joshua Patrick as Chair. Don will continue to serve on the Planning Commission as a Commission Member. Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested to Mr. Cumming and Mr. Patrick that they should reach out to the Met Council and request their presence at a future meeting to get more information on the System Statement.

**Newsletter**

The Newsletter for November is ready to be proofed. Copies have been sent out to the Council to review and make suggestions. Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence will format it and get it sent to the printers once all changes have been made. Mayor Artig-Swomley is then going to get a final Newsletter out for the year in December. Some ideas for the newsletter could include pieces on Election Day, Charitable Gambling donations made, Planning Commission change in leadership and pieces from Councilmembers.

**New Business**

**Resolution #2022-0021 Certify to Tax Rolls – Water and Sewer Bills**

The motion for adoption of the foregoing Resolution was introduced by Councilmember Lindner and seconded by Councilmember Amlee, and upon vote being taken thereon, the Resolution passed with a vote of 3 in favor and 0 against.

**Resolution #2022-0022 Certify to Tax Rolls – 2021 Annual Septic Maintenance Inspections**

The motion for adoption of the foregoing Resolution was introduced by Councilmember Lindner and seconded by Councilmember Amlee, and upon vote being taken thereon, the Resolution passed with a vote of 3 in favor and 0 against.

**Gem Lake Infrastructure Issues**

**Gem Lake Trail Update**

Reseeding initially took place three (3) years ago and the City would like to do some reseeded again in 2023. The Ramsey Washington Watershed is still holding on to Hanson Builders money in escrow and will continue to do so until agreed upon work is completed in the watershed area. New trees are being planted, replacing some dead ones and the City would like to do some more

planting again in 2023. The City Clerk has started researching signs that can be placed along the Gem Lake Trail. The Council will look at signs a little closer around the spring of 2023.

#### **BNSF Contract for Drainage Pipe Update**

Attorney Chad Lemmons reported that the Railroad Company will not grant an easement for the drainage pipe project, just a license. The price of the fee has been negotiated down from \$7,000 to \$2,000.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to accept the negotiated Railroad settlement and to pay the fee, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes. The City Clerk will submit the invoice for payment once it is received.

#### **Recycling Hauler Transition Update**

Republic Services recycling bins should have been delivered to all houses at this point. Waste Management is scheduled to remove all their bins on October 19. The first Republic Services recycling pickup is scheduled for Wednesday, October 26.

### **Internal Management**

#### **Facebook Page**

The Facebook page has been working out very well for the City. It has been used recently to communicate information regarding the Corridor Project and Republic Services hauler transition.

#### **2023 Fee Schedule Discussion**

##### **General Updating for Fee Schedule**

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence has begun to look at the fee schedule for 2023 and has suggested some changes to the Mayor that would help to streamline the fee schedule and to align better with White Bear Townships as their Building Official handles all of our City inspections. The full 2023 fee schedule will be voted on in December. Mayor Artig-Swomley asked that the Council read it and suggest any changes needed.

##### **Valuation and Flat Fee Permits**

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence suggested to the Mayor that the City begin charging flat fees for most of the permits and to instead change the permit fees to a per inspection visit fee. Currently most building permits are based on valuation and are very expensive, bringing them to a flat rate will ensure that the City is not making more money on permits than it should. Exceptions would be houses, garages, additions, etc. which would have a value based permit.

#### **Election Day After Hours Coverage**

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked for a volunteer for someone to come and lock up the building after the voting period is finished. Councilmember Linder volunteered to come to Heritage Hall after to lock up.

#### **Animal Ordinances**

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence took the existing Animal Control Ordinance No. 69 and divided it into three (3) separate Ordinances. Ordinance No. 140 Domestic Animals, Ordinance No. 141 Domestic Fowl and Pigeons, and Ordinance No. 142 Agricultural and Wild Animals. The only changes made to the Ordinances other than reformatting was an addition of a fine added to the Domestic Animal Ordinance. The fine would cover incidents where a dog owner does not pick up after their dog or does not obtain a dog license.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to repeal and replace Ordinance No. 69 with the three (3) new Ordinances No. 140, 141 and 142, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, the City Clerk will place the new Ordinances on the City website.

### **Tax Roll Certification and Late Fee Language in Municipal Water and Sewer Ordinance**

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence suggested some changes to Ordinance No. 129 to clean up the language on late fees and when delinquent reports are pulled to be certified to the County. Councilmember Linder introduced a motion to approve the new language, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken all voted yes, motion passes, late fee and delinquency language will be updated.

### **Corridor Project Update**

The County Road E Corridor has enormous potential for revitalization, placemaking and serves as a catalyst for future development in the area. The cities of White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, and Gem Lake have held several meetings on the project. The process will produce an action plan to include near, medium, and long-term goals and action steps, and serve as a tool to attract private investment through development and infrastructure improvements. The first Workshop took place on September 14 at Century College. The second workshop was broken down into three (3) separate ones with the first in Vadnais Heights on September 28, the second at White Bear Lake on September 29 and the third in Gem Lake on October 5. The third workshop took place at Vadnais Heights Fire Station on October 12 and the final workshop is set to take place at the Vadnais Heights Fire Station on October 26.

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked if anyone could volunteer to attend the final meeting on October 26 to represent Gem Lake. Planning Commission Chair Patrick volunteered along with Councilmember Amlee. The Mayor would also like to set up a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council to discuss some more ideas on what can be done to Hoffman Corner. Overall the meetings have been very informative and fun.

### **I-35E Corridor Management Committee**

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked for volunteers to be a part of the I-35E Corridor Management Committee that meets three (3) to four (4) times a year. Meeting dates scheduled for 2023 are Tuesday, February 7, Tuesday, June 6, and Tuesday, October 3. Councilmember Johnson and Councilmember Amlee have volunteered to be a part of this committee.

### **THC Ordinance Discussion**

The City is considering using the City of Willmar's Ordinance as a template for Gem Lake, but also doesn't want to move to quickly, as the state legislature may decide to take a second look at the law due to issues that have been raised about the lack of sale and enforcement details. Councilmember Lindner thinks that the City should adopt an Ordinance rather than wait, because it could take the state legislature a while to get things figured out.

### **Charitable Gambling Donations**

#### **Resolution #2022-0023 October 2022 Donation to White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf**

The motion for adoption of the foregoing Resolution was introduced by Councilmember Lindner and seconded by Councilmember Amlee, and upon vote being taken thereon, the Resolution passed with a vote of 3 in favor and 0 against. A donation in the amount of \$1000.00 will be sent to the White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf.

#### **Discussion of Proposed Newtrax Donation**

Councilmember Amlee talked with the White Bear Lake Food Shelf about the amount of work Newtrax does for them, and while they would prefer the donation be given to the Food Shelf, Newtrax does help them with delivery when necessary. The Council agreed that the City would make a small donation Newtrax in November in the amount of \$500.00

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve a donation in November to Newtrax in the amount of \$500 and a donation to the White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf in the amount of \$2,500.00, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, donations will be requested for November.

**Community Outreach to other Cities and Government Bodies**

The City continues to make progress with Vadnais Heights, but would still like to see things improve even more. The Purple Line has been reduced to three (3) end of the line locations, all of which failed the federal funding pretests at this point. The Purple Line is going to continue to tweak the numbers, but City by City the project is continuing to lose support.

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared some information regarding a meeting she attended on the homelessness initiative with Ramsey County. At this time there is a huge problem with homelessness due to mental illness, drug addiction and inflation. The Mayor would like the City to work with White Bear Lake on their policy to reach a happy medium between public safety and compassion.

**Claims**

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

**Monthly Financial Reports**

The financials for September were submitted and the Council had no comment.

**Presentations from the public, 2 minutes maximum**

Residents in attendance had no comments or questions.

**Open Items for Council Members to Bring Up**

Council had no comments or questions.

**Future Council Meetings**

City Council, Tuesday, December 20, 2022, Workshop, Monday, December 12, 2022 is CANCELED.

**Attendance Inquiry**

At this time all Councilmembers will be in attendance at the December 20 Council meeting.

**Adjournment**

Being there no further business, following a motion from Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence*