

**City of Gem Lake
City Council Meeting – March 21, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Gretchen Artig-Swomley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jim Lindner and Laurel Amlee were present. Councilmembers Len Cacioppo and Ben Johnson were not present. Also present: City Attorney stand-in Martin Norder, City Treasurer Tom Kelly, City Engineer Justin Gese, Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence, and residents Rick Bosak, Tom Bolfig, Nick Cress and Jim Wilson.

March 21, 2023 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 February 21, 2023, City Council Meeting Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, agenda accepted.

Special Presentation

None

Consent Agenda

Resolution #2023-003 March 2023 Donation to White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf

Resolution #2023-004 March 2023 Donation to Northern Fusion Synchronized Skating Program

Resolution #2023-005 C & C Enterprises LLC Tobacco License 2023

Monthly Financial Reports

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 Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, consent agenda is approved.

Committee Reports - Planning Commission

Due to scheduling conflicts no one from the Commission was able to attend the City Council meeting to give a report. The Mayor shared that the Commission has been working on the Nuisance Ordinance and things seem to be moving in the right direction.

Old Business

Newsletter

A newsletter is due to go out in the next day or so. The Mayor is working on another newsletter to get out in the next two (2) weeks so that the residents of Gem Lake can be informed of the MPCA coming to the April City Council Meeting. The next copy of the newsletter will include topics such as the city clean-up day, applications for municipal water funding and Ramsey County recycling.

Water System Funding Report

The City has submitted three (3) applications for partial water system funding. Nothing has been approved at this time, the City is applying right now because it could take up to a year for anything to be approved. Since the applications have been submitted the Mayor and City Engineer have been contacted multiple times to gather more information for the applications. One piece of information that the City needs to gather before the end of the week is a letter from the surrounding cities that can supply Gem Lake with water. The Mayor shared that she has talked with Tim Grape from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and without coming out and saying it, they seem positive that they know where the pollution is coming from, but they are still not able to share anything at this point. Mayor Artig-Swomley has invited Time Grape and Michael Ginsbach to the April Council meeting to be the guest speakers to discuss the topic further.

Next Steps Corridor Project

The Mayor would like to table this conversation until Councilmember Johnson can be in attendance. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to table the discussion until the April City Council meeting,

seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, discussion is tabled until the April meeting.

Gem Lake Clean-Up Day Discussion

The Mayor and City Clerk discussed the option of the City of Gem Lake and White Bear Township having a joint clean-up event on Saturday, May 20, 2023. The Township brought the idea to their Town Board and it was approved based on a couple conditions. The City Clerk would supply the Public Works Department a list of all households in Gem Lake and that the City of Gem Lake be charged to join the event. Mayor Artig-Swomley and Town Administrator Patrick Christopherson agreed that the City would be charged \$500.00 for up to 50 households and an additional \$5 per household after. Town Administrator asked the City to come up with a resolution for the event to be approved at the meeting.

Resolution #2023-006 Joint Recycling Event Agreement

Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence created a resolution to approve the joint recycling event between the City of Gem Lake and White Bear Township. The motion for adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly introduced by Councilmember Lindner and supported by Councilmember Amlee, and upon vote being taken thereon, the resolution passed with a vote of 3 in favor and 0 against.

New Business

VLAWMO Discussions

Councilmember Lindner had a couple items to discuss regarding VLAWMO. At this time the February Meeting was rescheduled due to weather and he expects to still be the chair of VLAWMO.

Budgeted Project 2024-2027

The City of Gem Lake has a couple grant & partnership dependent projects/activities on the VLAWMO list for 2024-2027.

- 2024 – Commercial area retrofit project feasibility study - \$25,000.00
- 2025 – Commercial area retrofit project implementation - \$25,000.00
- 2026 – Commercial area retrofit project implementation - \$125,000.00
- 2027 – Golf Course Water Reuse - \$75,00.00

The amount listed for each year are VLAWMO partnership dollars and the possible/proposed partners for these projects could be City, County or State grants. Councilmember Lindner stated that these are not scheduled projects, but wanted to know if the Mayor and Council would like to keep the City of Gem Lake on the list for these possible projects. Mayor Artig-Swomley said that the City should remain on the list for future possible projects.

Snow Melt Concerns

Councilmember Lindner expressed some concern about the snowmelt in certain areas of the City. At this time the Councilmember is concerned about one specific area in the City located on Hoffman Road. The City has gotten some complaints from the new Luther Dealership going in about the snow piling at White Bear Floral. The snow being piled, when it eventually melts, will begin to melt down towards the new dealership. This area is also concerning because it is located near where the City recently had a slope failure.

Councilmember Lindner reached out to Ramsey Washington Watershed to see if there were any ordinances or rules regarding the piling of snow, and was told there are none. City Engineer Justin Gese said that the City can notify the property owner that it is not proper use of the land and let them know that the City will not be responsible for any future slope failures or complaints from adjacent owners. The Mayor asked Mr. Gese if he could maybe come up with some language to add to our nuisance ordinance and to give a report at the April meeting regarding the issue.

Tobacco and Liquor Ordinance Discussion – Possible Background Check Language Expansion

At this time the City does not have any language in the Liquor Ordinance regarding background checks. This discussion came up because a new business will be opening on County Road E and it will be selling tobacco and tobacco products. A background check is required and the Acting City Clerk was curious if the language in the

tobacco ordinance should be expanded or left as is regarding the results of a background check. The Mayor suggested that similar language be added to the liquor ordinance regarding background checks.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to approve adding language to the liquor ordinance regarding background checks, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, language will be added to the current liquor ordinance(s).

Future Charitable Gambling Donations

Each month the City receives money from the Country Lounge for their pull-tab and bingo sales. Most cities in Minnesota are able to get up 10% of gross revenues from the charitable gambling that happens within city limits. They then have to contribute all of these funds to charitable organizations or use it for very specific public safety or educational purposes. The City decides who they would like to donate some of these funds to each month, a favorite of the City is the White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf.

White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council make a donation in April in the amount of \$1500.00 to the White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf. Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to request a donation in the amount of \$1500.00 for the White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf, seconded by Councilmember Amlee. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, Acting City Clerk will request a donation to be approved at the April City Council meeting.

Community Outreach to Other Cities and Government Bodies

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that the City has been working with White Bear Township on the clean-up event scheduled for May 20, 2023, and that the Public Works Department has been doing a great job with plowing this winter. The City of Vadnais Heights was sent a proposal regarding the Villas water a couple months ago and the City has still heard nothing. The Mayor will reach out to former City Attorney Patrick Kelly or Rachel at the attorney's office to follow up on this with another letter.

Presentation from the Public, 2 minutes maximum

None

Open Items for Council Members to Bring Up

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked if there were any volunteers for the League of MN Cities annual training event in Duluth June 21 – June 23. The Councilmembers would look at their calendars and get back to her. The Mayor also shared that it is time for the Acting City Clerks annual review and will send all Councilmembers a form to complete if they would like to.

Councilmember Lindner shared that Jack Hoeschler's wife Linda reached out to him to see if he could put together a little story on Jack's time in the Planning Commission.

Future Council Meetings

City Council, Tuesday, April 18, 2023, Workshop, Monday, April 10, 2023 is CANCELED.

Attendance Inquiry

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

Adjournment

Being there no further business, following a motion from Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Amlee, the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence