

**City of Gem Lake
City Council Meeting – May 16, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Gretchen Artig-Swomley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jim Lindner, Laurel Amlee and Ben Johnson were present. Councilmember Len Cacioppo was remote from his home on Labore Road. Also present: City Attorney Kevin Beck, City Treasurer Tom Kelly, City Building Official Mike Johnson, Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence, Commissioner Cummings, and residents Kim Anderson-Uzpen, Sharon Roland, Nick Cress, Jim Wilson, Jeremy Charles and Jeff Tschetter.

May 16, 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 April 18, 2023, City Council Meeting Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, agenda accepted.

A motion was introduced by Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Amlee to accept the May 9, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, agenda accepted.

Special Presentation

None

Consent Agenda

Resolution #2023-008 May 2023 Donation to White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf

Resolution #2023-009 May 2023 Kristina Pratt Scholarship

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

Committee Reports – Planning Commission

Commissioner Cummings shared with the Council that progress is being made with the expansion and improvement of the existing Nuisance Ordinance. City Planner Evan Monson created a draft Ordinance with suggested language changes and suggested additional language to be added and some to be removed. Input was also gathered from those in attendance from the public. City Planner Evan Monson is going to continue with his current draft and use the feedback from the last meeting to tighten up the Ordinance even more. The Commission is hoping to have something to recommend for approval in the near future.

Old Business

Newsletter

The next copy of the Newsletter will include topics such as the new signs that were approved for along the trail, the joint clean-up event, scholarship award, the nuisance ordinance, audit, barking dogs and possibly a piece on the many sirens happening along County Road E in Vadnais Heights.

Joint City Clean-Up Day

The Mayor shared with those in attendance and the Council a reminder that the joint clean-up day with White Bear Township is happening Saturday, May 20 at Otter Lake Elementary School (1401 County Road H2) from 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. with paper shredding from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. The items accepted at the clean-up are Appliances, tires, mattresses, furniture, carpeting, household fixtures, TVs, electronics, lawn mowers (all fluid must be drained), building materials, scrap metal, tree limbs & brush.

Gem Lake Trail and Sign Discussion

Resident Kim Anderson-Uzpen has been working on gathering information for trail signs to be put along the Gem Lake Trail. The two current entry signs the City has would be replaced with newer wood look posts and along the trail there would be five (5) interpretive signs, two (2) large and three (3) medium sized. The large sized signs will have information on the native grasses and wildflowers and share how they are important and different. The medium sized signs will have information on milkweed/butterfly, the pollinators and butterfly identification.

Quotes were received from two (2) companies, Vacker Sign and Bright Idea Shops. Bright Idea shops quoted the city \$6,774.00 with additional costs for artwork and graphics which are estimated per hour. Vacker Sign quoted the city \$4,850.00 with no additional costs.

Councilmember Lindner introduced a motion to accept the Vacker sign quote in the amount of \$4,850.00, seconded by Mayor Artig-Swomley. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, Vacker Sign has been approved for the Gem Lake Trail Signs project.

3930 Scheuneman Road Follow Up Discussion

City Building Official Mike Johnson shared with the Council that he met with the tenant Jeremy Charles and did a walkthrough of the property. All trailers and vehicles on the property were licensed and the lumber is neatly stacked and covered. Mike Johnson discussed with Mr. Charles that any auto repair is going to be limited to personal vehicles and must be conducted in the garage with the door closed. No business auto repair or rental car storage is to be kept on site. At this time Mike Johnson is satisfied with the progress.

Mayor Artig-Swomley asked Mike Johnson if he has any suggestions for the city's nuisance ordinance that is currently being revamped. Some suggestions he had were to possibly include a square footage requirement for storage of recreational vehicles on the property. Setting a limit on the amount of vehicles one person can own is difficult to enforce. He also feels that portions of the ordinance could be broken down into their own ordinance.

New Business

Tessier Road Condition Discussion

Tessier Road was not included in the sealcoating quote that was approved at the April 18 City Council meeting due to the condition of the road. The road would not benefit from a sealcoat and instead needs to either have a mill and overlay or be completely reconstructed. Public Works Director Dale Reed suggested that the road be patched as a temporary fix and has reached out to City Engineer Justin Gese to discuss the long term fix and get quotes for a long term solution.

Future Charitable Gambling Donations

White Bear Lake Emergency Food Shelf

Mayor Artig-Swomley suggested that the Council make a donation in June 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 Johnson. Voice vote taken, all voted yes, motion passes, Acting City Clerk will request a donation to be approved at the June City Council meeting.

Community Outreach to Other Cities and Government Bodies

Mayor Artig-Swomley shared that the City still has not gotten a response from Vadnais Heights regarding the letter that was sent to them accepting their proposal regarding water billing procedures. City Attorney Kevin Beck has sent Vadnais the same letter on different letter head and labeled it as a letter of understanding. Kevin Beck has still not received anything back. At this time Vadnais Heights is installing a piece on the current meter that will enable Vadnais to read the meter via a radio. Although it is being installed, the agreement has not been fully approved.

Presentations from the Public, 2 minutes maximum

None

Open Items for Council Members to Bring Up

Councilmember Lindner shared that he is the Chair of VLAWMO again. Mayor Artig-Swomley let the Council know that the Acting City Clerk Melissa Lawrence will be taking vacation Memorial Day week and returning Monday, June 5. She also shared that there have been complaints from residents regarding the property on Labore Road that is storing vehicles and equipment. In order for the property to do this they will need to apply for a Conditional Use Permit to store this equipment and vehicles. The Mayor would like this added to the next Planning Commission agenda and asks that City Building Official Mike Johnson check out the property.

Future Council Meetings

City Council, Tuesday, June 20, 2023, Workshop, Monday, June 12, 2023 is CANCELED.

Attendance Inquiry

At this time all in attendance will be at the June meeting. Councilmember Amlee will not be here for the August meeting.

Adjournment

Being there no further business, following a motion from Councilmember Lindner, seconded by Councilmember Amlee, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Lawrence