

**WORKSHOP
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL
May 12, 2020**

ATTENDANCE

The City Council held a workshop on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 5 PM.

Present: Mayor Paul Reinke

Council Members: Jake Ingebrigtsen
Susan Olson
Colleen Swedberg
Kevin Zabel

Also Present: Jeff Anderson, Fire Chief
Brian Bachmeier, Public Works Director/City Engineer
Susan Barry, City Clerk
Craig Dawson, Interim City Administrator
Alyssa MacLeod, Communications Specialist
Chelsea Petersen, Administrative Services Director
Dallas Pierson, Planning Commission
Bob Streetar, Community Development Director
Bill Sullivan, Chief of Police
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent
Kevin Wold, Deputy Fire Chief

COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Interim City Administrator Dawson reviewed a report recommending extending no public access to City buildings, canceling programs and events, except where social distancing standards can be met, and not allowing non-City uses of meeting rooms through July 6 or later. He asked for direction on recreational facilities and whether to prepare fields for organized sports.

Mayor Reinke suggested that barriers be removed from playground equipment, basketball nets be reinstalled, keep picnic table levels at two per shelter, and keep advisory signage in place. He was uncertain whether to open the beach at Tanners Park or open up public restrooms.

Council Member Zabel agreed with opening up the playgrounds but asked that the basketball courts remained closed. He asked for staff input on opening the restrooms and maintenance.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier replied that the satellites are cleaned weekly and restrooms cleaned two times per week by the City's cleaning contractor.

Council Member Zabel commented on the benefit of having soap and running water available to park visitors.

Council Member Olson supported cleaning the restrooms more often.

Council Member Swedberg noted that the City of Mahtomedi has placed satellites near trails.

WORKSHOP
May 12, 2020
Page Two

Council Member Ingebrigtsen supported opening up basketball courts. He said that keeping things closed only delays the inevitable.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier offered opening the restrooms and having them closely monitored and cleaned more often, if needed. He added that the League of Minnesota Cities was offering a webinar on recreational facilities on May 14 that would address this area.

Council Member Zabel suggested holding off on opening restrooms until guidance is provided by the League's webinar.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen added that persons can choose to not utilize public restrooms.

Referencing picnic shelters, Council Member Swedberg asked that shelter size be taken into account to determine the total number of tables allowed rather than having just two at each shelter.

The City Council discussed whether public buildings (City Hall, Discovery Center, Fire Stations, and Public Works) should remain closed until the end of May and an opening date be re-evaluated on May 28.

In response to a question from Council Member Swedberg, Recreation Superintendent Williams noted that programs and events scheduled for May had been canceled.

In response to questions from Council Member Olson, Interim City Administrator Dawson explained that the July 6 date was suggested to would allow additional time to prepare for the reopening of buildings, if needed. He also spoke to the potential of Governor Walz's "stay at home" ending May 17 and transitioning staff back to work.

Mayor Reinke supported the July 6 date. He also stated that City staff has continued to be responsive and to provide services throughout the "stay at home" order.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel as to whether Public Works could resume accepting brush from residents and offer it at no charge, Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier expressed concern with the potential of free drop-off increasing traffic and the ability to properly social distance. He added that residents can utilize sites that are in close proximity.

The majority of the City Council supported not accepting brush at this time.

Mayor Reinke supported canceling events and programs through July 6.

Council Member Swedberg asked that the Recreation Department be allowed to hold select programs and events as early as June.

Recreation Superintendent Williams indicated that she would provide the City Council with the list of programs and events that could take place.

Council Member Zabel asked that no programs or events take place inside of the Discovery Center during the time that it remains closed to the public.

Mayor Reinke disagreed.

Council Member Zabel stated that all visitors should be allowed into the Discovery Center, not just those who have paid for a program.

Recreation Superintendent Williams commented on the steady flow of visitors that would come into the Discovery Center once it reopens.

Council Member Swedberg supported reopening the Discovery Center in mid-June.

Council Member Ingebrigtson asked that the reopening date for City buildings be brought back for discussion at the June 9 City Council meeting.

In discussing organized athletics, Mayor Reinke noted that the Oakdale Athletic Association was awaiting Governor Walz's decision and asked that the City Council defer taking action.

It was the consensus of the City Council to approve hiring of seasonal staff for the Public Works Department at the regular meeting, subject to action taken by Governor Walz.

ADVISORY BODY INTERVIEWS

The City Council interviewed the following persons interested in serving on an advisory body:

Connor Brown	Environmental Management Commission
Mark Landis	Economic Development Commission
Steve Meyer	Parks and Recreation Commission

Staff was directed to develop a policy relating to social media to board members and commissioners for the City Council to review.

BIERSTUBE – BUSINESS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mayor Reinke indicated that the owners of The Bierstube, 7121 – 10th Street, inquired about any financial assistance the City may offer to businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. He suggested that staff develop a comprehensive program, which would include funding sources, to be reviewed by the City Council on May 26. Mayor Reinke added that liquor license rebates could also be considered as well as other city-issued licenses.

Police Chief Sullivan commented on the appropriateness of government agencies lending money to businesses it regulates.

Council Member Zabel supported helping the businesses in the community but wanted to learn more about the affect it would have on the budget. He noted that bars and restaurants licensed for alcohol sales were recently granted approval to sell beer and wine as part of take-out and curbside food orders.

In response to a comment from Council Member Zabel to have all resources, federal, state, and local, available to businesses, Communications Specialist MacLeod stated that the City's web site offers a business resource page.

DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF WOLD

Deputy Fire Chief Wold provided an overview of the operations of the Oakdale Fire Department, asset ownership, transitioning from a combination to a career department, and the duties of the fire marshal.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Deputy Fire Chief noted that some of the more administrative duties, such as scheduling, would be going to the administrative assistant.

In response to a question from Council Member Ingebrigtsen, Deputy Fire Chief noted that when the department transitions to a career department, staffing levels will consist of fire chief, assistant fire chief, and nine firefighters.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Proposed Ordinances

In response to a question from Council Member Swedberg, Communications Specialist MacLeod confirmed that the City's annual water report was available on the web site.

Council Member Swedberg asked to be made aware when proposed ordinances are posted on the city's web site so is prepared to respond to inquiries.

Council Member Zabel noted that the City is now required to post proposed ordinances at least 10 days before being considered by the City Council.

Council Member Olson noted that the City's web site has an option to subscribe to notices relating to proposed ordinances.

Pickleball Courts

Council Member Zabel shared a concern from a resident relating to the lack of social distancing by players at the City's pickleball courts. He suggested removing two of the four nets, diagonally, and reminding the public about congregating and social distancing while in City parks.

Mayor Reinke noted that members of the public should call 911 for such instances and a police officer would go to the location and remind the group to social distance.

Fireworks

Council Member Olson asked that the City's annual fireworks celebration take place on July 4 and require social distancing.

WORKSHOP
May 12, 2020
Page Five

Council Member Zabel suggested having the fireworks be part of an event to celebrate when things reopen, or as part of smaller celebrations at City parks as suggested by Parks and Recreation Commissioner-Appointee Meyer earlier in the evening.

Mayor Reinke indicated that more discussion is needed on the topic.

Marcus Theater

Mayor Reinke noted that Marcus Theater is looking into an option for showing movies outdoors in their parking lot.

ADJOURNMENT

The workshop adjourned at 6:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Barry,
City Clerk