

UNAPPROVED

CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Thursday, October 4, 2018

6:45 p.m.
Cloverleaf Farm Room
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmembers Andy Garvais, Wes Hovland, Julie Jeppson, Jason King, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: Councilmember Dave Clark.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clark Arneson; Planning and Community Development Director Bryan Schafer; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; Economic Development Coordinator Erik Thorvig; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Senior Engineering Technician Al Thorp; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Community Standards Director Bob Fiske; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Discuss Creation of a Small Business Loan Program.

Economic Development Coordinator Thorvig stated at a recent EDA meeting, staff was asked to research potential financing options for small businesses to complete remodeling or expansion projects. About 2-3 times per year staff is approached by a business that is struggling to obtain bank financing to complete a remodeling or expansion project. Typically, the situation occurs due to lack of equity and/or low value of existing assets (typically the real estate) resulting in a lower amount a bank is willing to lend towards a project. The difference between what a business is able to obtain in financing versus what the project costs is often called a “gap”. The City of Blaine currently does not have a formal program to assist in project financing. Typically, staff will direct the business to the Open to Business program that offers gap financing. The Open to Business program has provided a total of \$350,000 in loans to two Blaine businesses since the program began in 2015. Large to medium sized businesses have access to certain grants and loans from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. He provided further comment on how a small business loan program could work for the City and requested feedback from the Council.

Councilmember King commented the City would have to consider how to set interest rates. He explained he supported the loan program staying away from interior improvements and suggested non-profits be allowed to apply for this program.

Councilmember Jeppson agreed the City should pursue a loan program and not consider grants. She asked what the loan range would be. Mr. Thorvig stated the loans could be from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Councilmember Swanson supported the City pursuing a loan program. He commented he could support interior improvements if being made for handicap accessibility purposes.

Councilmember Hovland stated he also supported a loan program being pursued by the City. He believed this type of program could help small businesses in the community.

Councilmember Garvais indicated he also supported the proposed small business loan program.

Council consensus was to direct staff to move forward with the creation of a small business loan program.

3.2 Concert Events at the National Sports Center.

City Clerk Sorensen stated that with submittal of the 2019 Joyful Noise concert application and the likelihood of other concerts at the National Sports Center with the PGA tour, staff wanted to provide an opportunity for Council discussion regarding noise concerns, stage location, traffic control, etc. The Joyful Noise concert has been held at the NSC since 2008 and expanded to the current two-day format in 2013 after Council adopted a resolution outlining concert guidelines. Staff received noise complaints from this year's Joyful Noise concert. Organizers were aware of the noise concerns that seemed to be attributed to relocation of the stage to the east side of the stadium field, facing west, and sending noise to the residential homes in the west. Reasons for stage relocation included better seating and stage views. With the potential of additional concerts, the NSC may need to consider a more permanent stage location or set-up for concerts.

Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Podany commented on the number noise complaints the City received in 2018. He discussed the number that were related to events held at the National Sports Center and stated speaker placement would have to be addressed.

Councilmember Hovland asked if the City was communicating these events properly to the public. Police Chief Podany explained the City does communicate with the public for both noise and traffic concerns.

Councilmember Jeppson suggested the stage placement be reconsidered to address some of the noise concerns. She indicated she did not support changing the City's noise ordinance and believed 10:30 p.m. was an adequate time for concerts to end.

Mayor Ryan stated the Joyful Noise event was a family friendly event that did not include alcohol and recommended the speakers and stage location be reconsidered. Ms. Sorensen clarified Joyful Noise was not requesting to have alcohol at their event but that staff anticipated future concert events may.

Councilmember Garvais recommended the stage and speaker placement be reviewed by staff to ensure noise complaints were being addressed. He stated he could support concerts going until 11:00 p.m. He commented he supported alcohol sales if licensed and managed properly.

Council consensus was to continue to allow concerts while addressing noise concerns. It was noted concerts were to end at 10:30 p.m., alcohol service would be allowed if licensed/managed properly, the City was to communicate large events with public where possible to inform of noise/traffic impacts.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

Tom Ryan, Mayor

Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk
Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.