

UNAPPROVED

**CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Monday, August 19, 2019**

6:00 p.m.
Cloverleaf Farm Room
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmembers Andy Garvais, Wes Hovland, Richard Paul, Jess Robertson, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: Councilmember Julie Jeppson.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: Acting City Manager Joe Huss; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Fire Chief Charlie Smith; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Senior Engineering Technician Jason Sundeen; Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle; Associate Planner Lori Johnson; Community Standards Director/Fire Marshal Bob Fiske; Communications Technician Roark Haver; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 3M Open Economic Development Recap.

Community Development Director Thorvig stated staff wanted to provide a brief recap on the attendance at the Blaine hospitality tent, media coverage/reception of the tournament and receive feedback for economic development efforts leading into next year's event. The tent was available Tuesday through Sunday and the city was provided with 40 tickets per day for guests. Staff were encouraged by the variety and quality of guests this year as compared to recent years. It was noted the tournament was highlighted by national and worldwide news stations throughout the week with CBS coverage over the weekend. Staff did several local media interviews on the economic impact of the tournament for Blaine and the reception from players, spectators, media and tournament workers were extremely positive. People were complimentary of the golf course, ease of parking/transportation, hospitality and the overall appearance of the city. Staff played a short video for the Council recapping the economic impact from the 3M Open and discussed the areas that would be focused on for 2020.

Councilmember Garvais commented on the role of elected officials at the 3M Open with the respect to engagement activities and stated he saw Councilmembers acting as ambassadors for the City.

Mayor Ryan stated he would like to see the 3M Open become more personal. Councilmember Robertson agreed.

Councilmember Hovland commented the Council has held discussions in the past regarding the type of businesses that should be focused on and attracted to the City.

Councilmember Swanson stated he believed the Council should have been included at the military event, similar to the Anoka County Board.

Councilmember Garvais thanked Police Chief Podany for taking him around to meet the officers who were assisting with the 3M Open and thanked staff for doing the amazing job highlighting the City during the 3M Open. Mr. Thorvig commented on the benefit of meeting business owners and community leaders during the 3M Open.

Councilmember Hovland indicated he was pleased to hear how much the City of Blaine was referred to throughout media coverage. Communications Coordinator Hayle discussed how he worked as the point of contact for the 3M Open and would connect media with the appropriate personnel when needed.

Mr. Thorvig stated he looked forward to next year's 3M Open event and explained the dates for 2020 would be July 20 through July 24.

3.2 Spring Lake Park-Blaine-Mounds View (SBM) Fire 2020 Budget Review.

Fire Chief Smith reviewed the SBM Fire 2020 budget with the Council. He reviewed the population estimates for the fire district noting he anticipated the SBM would be serving 107,000 in the coming years. He reported SBM was working to provide its services at one of the lowest per capita rates in the State of Minnesota when compared to other fire departments. He reviewed the number of full-time personnel and on-call personnel then discussed how Blaine was estimated to grow in the future. He commented on the call volume for the three member cities then reviewed technology, software and equipment upgrades being proposed for the coming year. He discussed the percentage increase being proposed for 2020 for the City of Blaine.

Councilmember Hovland recommended a discussion be held with all three member cities in order to address the budget. Fire Chief Smith noted all three cities met in 2018 to discuss the budget and that the approach for 2019 was different through individual presentations.

Councilmember Hovland questioned how the Fire Department was doing spreading out its large capital purchases. Fire Chief Smith stated he believed the department had done very well spreading these purchases out noting Blaine had recently purchased two large apparatuses. He discussed how the department was working to reduce the age of its apparatuses through equipment replacements.

Acting City Manager Huss asked if the Council had any direction for Fire Chief Smith on the SBM budget.

Councilmember Hovland commented on the need for the two proposed full-time positions and discussed the risk of grant funded positions that at times resulted in continual funding requests.

Mayor Ryan agreed this matter should be further discussed.

Councilmember Garvais indicated he had a difficult time review the budget without reviewing the joint powers agreement. He explained Blaine was paying the majority of the expenses (76%) for the SBM Fire Department and he did not like approving the budget without having ways in place to reduce Blaine's exposure. He asked how soon the Fire Department needed an approval from the City. Mr. Huss reported the

joint powers agreement and the cost-share formula could be addressed in order to reduce the percentage the City paid out, given the high number of full-time employees the City of Blaine had who responded to calls as well.

Councilmember Garvais commented he was not as concerned about the percentage as he was about the risk. Mr. Huss recommended the Council speak with the City Attorney about this matter in further detail.

Councilmember Swanson believed the consensus of the Council was not to move forward with the two full-time employees at this time.

Councilmember Paul thanked the Fire Department for their dedicated service to the community.

Mayor Ryan recommended three Councilmembers meet with the City of Blaine's Fire Board representative in order to discuss the Council's concerns in further detail.

Councilmember Robertson agreed more conversation had to be held and reiterated she appreciated all of the hard work being done by the Fire Department.

Councilmember Swanson recommended the Council interview all Fire Board candidates in a separate interview process from the annual Boards and Commission process.

Council consensus was to direct a subcommittee of Councilmembers to meet with Fire Boardmembers to further review the budget and other aspects of the JPA, contract and bylaws.

The Council thanked Fire Chief Smith and the entire Fire Department for their dedicated service to the community.

3.3 Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance (Sober Living Home).

City Clerk Sorensen stated at the July 15 workshop Council reviewed a proposed reasonable accommodation ordinance that would create the process for a private provider to operate a single-family home as a multi-person *sober living home*. This trend has been occurring in other communities and cities need to address these accommodation requests consistent with the Fair Housing Amendment Act. The Act directs that individuals recovering from addiction are federally protected as a disability group and therefore should receive reasonable accommodations from cities for their lodging and addiction support. Blaine, like several other cities, defines "family" in City Code as not more than four (4) unrelated individuals. Sober house providers are requesting the ability to have more than four unrelated individuals in a home. As the Act requires cities to provide a process for these requests staff has drafted a proposed code amendment to the Rental Licensing program that would establish an application process with neighborhood notice and action by the City Council. Each license request would be evaluated based on a number of criteria and include written notice of a public hearing to all property owners within 350 feet of the property. Staff explained based on Council discussion in July an addition has been made that requires any provider to be a member of the Minnesota Association of Sober Homes as this organization promotes successful management of such residences through code of ethics criteria and standards of living verified through independent inspections.

Councilmember Swanson requested staff investigate if background checks can be conducted on sober house operators.

Council consensus was to review this matter further on September 4 with first reading scheduled for that evening and for staff to explore the ability to conduct background investigations on license applicants.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Tom Ryan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk

Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.