



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

10801 Town Square Dr.
Blaine MN 55449

City Council Workshop

**While this is a public meeting where interested persons are welcome to attend, it is a work session for Council and staff to discuss issues before them. It is not for the purpose of receiving public input.*

Thursday, November 17, 2011

6:30 PM

Cloverleaf Farm Room A

NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING

Present: 5 - Councilmember Clark, Councilmember Kolb, Councilmember Herbst, Mayor Ryan, and Councilmember Swanson

Absent: 2 - Councilmember Bourke, and Councilmember Hovland

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:30 p.m. Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: Clark Arneson, City Manager; Bryan Schafer, Community Development Director; Bob Therres, Public Services Manager; Joe Huss, Finance Director; Ward Brown, Budget/Fiscal Analyst, Tom Sweeney, City Attorney; Chris Olson, Safety Service Manager/Police Chief; Roark Haver, Communications Technician; Al Thorp, Senior Engineering Technician; Jane Cross, City Clerk; and Recording Secretary Linda Dahlquist.

1. Com 11-01

Connie Forster, Chief Prevention Officer of the Spring Lake Park-Blaine-Mounds View Fire Department, stated the fire department was awarded a grant to expand the current home safety survey program. The funding will be used for marketing the program and expanding the website by adding animation, language translation and an online survey with basic questions. The grant funds are used to provide free 10 year Lithium smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to residents. Other products that are available from the grant funds are flameless candles and fire stop canisters for over the stove hoods. She stated currently an educator goes to the residents' homes to complete a paper survey form. Officer Forster stated she is working on a neighborhood recognition program for when all homes in a neighborhood have home surveys done. Also as part of the grant, Officer Forster is working with Human Services' English is a Second Language Program. In 2010 there were 209 home surveys conducted and currently for 2011 there have been 325 surveys conducted. She stated the increase marketing of the program is working. The Fire Department has a year to complete the grant.

Councilmember Herbst suggested distributing brochures on the fire safety surveys during National Night Out. Officer Forster responded brochures on the program have been distributed in the past.

Mayor Ryan stated the fire survey is really informative and the program does save lives. He stated the Fire Station Open Houses offered multiple training sessions on home safety.

Councilmember Kolb stated she cannot use her iPad unless it is hot. Officer Forster stated Wi-Fi connectors will be available. She stated iPads would be utilized for training and there are some great Utube videos in multiple languages on the Internet.

Mayor Ryan asked about the life of the batteries in the smoke detectors. Officer Forster responded when you change one detector's battery you need to change all of the detectors' batteries. If the alarms are older than 10 years, then the old alarms should be replaced with new alarms.

Discussed

2. [WS 11-03](#)

2012 PROPOSED SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS BUDGET

Sponsors: Huss

Attachments: [Charitable Gambling Fund Bud 2012.doc](#)
[Cable Fund Bud 2012.doc](#)

Finance Director Huss stated the Cable Television Fund accounts for revenue received from the cable franchise fees paid by cable television customers. He stated the cable fees are passed through to the North Metro Telecommunications Commission which is the regulatory body that oversees the cable franchise. The City uses the funding for its municipal cable (Cable Channel 16) related expenses. The largest budget items include administrative charges to the general fund, staffing costs to produce the meetings that the City shows live, and contractual services to maintain website video-on-demand of Council meetings and other City programming and for the maintenance of the Legistar System. He stated the use of the funds is restricted by the Joint Powers Agreement. The next reserve funds will be used to replace aging equipment, wireless upgrades, and third floor expansion. The budget will come back to the Council on December 1.

City Manager Arneson commented that funds have been budgeted in 2012 for the purchase of iPads for the Council.

Councilmember Herbst asked if the Joint Powers Agreement can be changed. Finance Director Huss responded that is an option.

Councilmember Clark asked about PEG fees. Finance Director Huss responded PEG fees are not part of the franchise fees.

Councilmember Swanson stated PEG fees can only be used on capital equipment. The cable company is not buying new equipment, in order to roll more funds to the cities. He stated the cities need the funds to operate.

Finance Director Huss stated franchise fees are paid for the protection of the public.

Councilmember Clark confirmed that the PEG fees are a separate line item. Councilmember Swanson responded yes.

Mayor Ryan asked what happened when Coon Rapids pulled out of the Joint Powers Agreement. Councilmember Swanson responded when Coon Rapids left, they took everything. He stated with the existing Joint Powers Agreement, we would have to buy the other cities out. He commented Blaine's residents are the main users of the facility.

Finance Director Huss stated the budget will come back to the Council on December

1 for adoption. The Council did not have any changes to the proposed budget.

Councilmember Swanson stated at some point the equipment will become obsolete because technology is changing.

Councilmember Clark stated cable's strategic plan should include; if the cable revenue source dries up, the City should have reserve funds or equipment that is flexible to convert to another format.

Discussed

3. [WS 11-04](#)

PAWN SHOP ORDINANCE

Sponsors: Safety Services Manager / Police Chief Olson

Attachments: [Nov 17 2011 City Council Workshop Pawnbrokers 2011.ppt](#)

Safety Services Manager/Police Chief Olson stated the Blaine Police Department has worked with We Pay More Pawn from October 2010 to August 2011 to ensure compliance and a good working relationship. During this time period, no non-compliance transaction fees were charged; however, there were twenty violations. In January 2011, We Pay More Pawn requested a change to the Ordinance in order to lower the holding and redemption periods. It was determined that transaction fees should remain the same; although, the yearly pawn fee should include an ability to set a lower fee for compliance. He noted that the 2011 Legislative session made changes to the Minnesota State Statute governing pawn operations in the holding and redemption periods. Chief Olson stated changes to the City's ordinance on pawnshops needs to be updated to reflect the legislative changes and to determine a yearly fee schedule which includes a graduated scale for compliance.

Councilmember Clark asked if a national pawn chain came to Blaine and transactions increased, how would it impact City staff. Chief Olson responded more transactions would be more work and time for staff to verify the serial numbers and customer names of each transaction.

Councilmember Herbst asked how many transactions took place during the timeframe. Chief Olson responded 1,200 since October 2010.

Councilmember Clark asked if audits are conducted on site. Chief Olson responded some audits are electronic and some are on site.

Chief Olson stated the Legislature changed the following: holding periods from 30 days to 31 days; sellers are able to recover property immediately instead of waiting 3 days; and the seller can redeem their property in 60 days instead of 90 days.

Chief Olson suggested keeping the transaction fee and non-compliance fee the same. He recommended reducing the licensing fee to \$3,000 from the current fee of \$5,000 with no more than 3% error rate.

Councilmember Clark stated he liked the non-compliance tracking. He asked would it be legal for the City to have a transaction rate scale based on compliance rate. City Attorney Sweeny responded it would be legal. Councilmember Clark commented would it be practical to have a graduated schedule.

Mayor Ryan stated there were problems with the previous license fee and a

graduated compliance schedule is more successful.

Councilmember Kolb stated she liked the graduated compliance schedule. She wanted to know if the new ordinance would transfer to a larger pawn chain. Chief Olson responded yes, the transaction fee will cover staff time.

Mayor Ryan stated We Pay More Pawn are a small store and they are a good business for Blaine. He stated he would like to see them expand.

City Manager Arneson stated the proposed program is fair and the ordinance will have a First Reading in December.

Councilmember Clark clarified that the We Pay More Pawn will receive a rebate of \$2000 because they had already paid for their license fee of \$5,000 for 2012.

Discussed

WS 11-03

2012 PROPOSED SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS BUDGET

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Attachments: [Charitable Gambling Fund Bud 2012.doc](#)
[Cable Fund Bud 2012.doc](#)

(Continued)

Finance Director Huss presented preliminary budget for the Charitable Gambling Fund which are the City's special revenue funds. The City's Charitable Gambling Fund comprises of proceeds of a 10% contribution from charitable gambling organizations operating within Blaine. A preliminary projection for 2011 in charitable gambling contribution revenue is more than the budgeted amount. This is the second consecutive year of increasing revenue and staff is recommending an increase in the budget.

Council's consensus was to continue to donate to the six existing charitable organizations for 2012.

Councilmember Swanson asked about the electronic pull tabs for the Viking's Stadium. Finance Director Huss responded the electronic pull tabs will cause a decline in charitable gambling revenues.

Councilmember Kolb asked if the City will be able to control the electronic pull tabs. City Manager Arneson stated it is unknown. Finance Director Huss responded the program will be run similar to the State Lottery.

Finance Director Huss stated the Council will have final approval of the payments made to the charitable organizations.

The workshop adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Adjourned