

**CITY OF BAYPORT  
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
JUNE 27, 2022  
5:00 P.M.**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**5:05 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to due call and notice, Mayor St. Ores called the regular City Council meeting to order

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Mayor Susan St. Ores and Councilmembers Michele Hanson, John Dahl, and Ethan Gilmore. Councilmember Connie Carlson arrived at 5:10 p.m.

Staff present: City Administrator Adam Bell, Public Works Director Matt Kline, Police Chief Laura Eastman, Fire Chief Allen Eisinger, and Conflict Attorney John Thames of Carson, Clellan, and Schreder.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Administrator Bell explained that the meeting format was a special meeting versus a workshop only because Business Item #1 (the hiring of the full-time Office Support Specialist) required City Council action. Administrator Bell asked that Discussion Item #3 (Fire Service Agreement) be considered before Discussion Item #2 (Business Meeting Recap) so the parties involved could leave after those items. Motion carried 4-0 (Councilmember Carlson had not yet arrived to the meeting).

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Consider hiring Rachel Wallace as a full-time Office Support Specialist: City Administrator Bell provided an overview of the solicitation and interview process. The city received 18 applications and interviewed 10 candidates in the first round. The second round of interviews included 5 candidates and also included a skills assessment. The city was fortunate to have a strong candidate pool, but after reviewing the candidates, the unanimous opinion of the interview panel was to offer the position to Rachel Wallace. Rachel has been a paraprofessional with South Washington County Schools for the past several years and before that, had worked for the State of Minnesota and Dakota County. Based on her experience, the city made a conditional offer to hire at Grade 2, Step 2 with full-time benefits, which she accepted.

It was moved by Councilmember Dahl and seconded by Councilmember Hanson to approve hiring Rachel Wallace as a full-time Office Support Specialist, per the conditional offer. Motion carried 4-0 (Councilmember Carlson had not yet arrived to the meeting).

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. Request for extension of municipal sewer service to a portion of Baytown Township: City Administrator Bell and Public Works Director Kline provided an overview of the request for sewer services from the Baytown neighborhood of Audubon and the potential neighborhood of Emerald Falls. Both neighborhoods currently purchase water service from Bayport. The reason for the request is that each neighborhood's community septic systems have been recently deemed non-compliant by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Therefore, the neighborhoods are faced with either making repairs to their systems or connecting to municipal sewer, which would occur by connecting to Bayport's sanitary sewer system.

Staff has not spent much time researching the details of this requested extension before gaining City Council input on the proposal, so much information is still unknown. Staff's opinion is that for this extension to occur, the city would not be able to fund any of the improvements and the agreement would have to not place a burden on the city or its taxpayers. There are soft costs associated with managing additional sewer customers that would have to be covered by the agreement that the current water service Joint Powers Agreement does not cover. Because of the large cost of the infrastructure required, it may not be feasible for the respective neighborhood homeowner associations to afford it. Bayport would not be able to afford financing this extension even with some form of an assessment or loan that would be paid back by the customers.

The annexation of these properties was briefly mentioned, but it was noted that the Baytown Town Board has made it clear that they are opposed to attempts by Bayport to annex property, so this was unlikely. The consensus of the City Council was that unless there was some form of incentive for the city to extend the sewer service to the township neighborhoods, there was little interest. However, if there was an incentive, the current City Council would be open to the proposal. Staff was directed to inform the neighborhood contacts of this information and the city's position on the matter.

2. Update on the Bayport Fire Service Agreement Discussions: City Administrator Bell provided an update on the Bayport Fire service agreement negotiations status. It was explained that Oak Park Heights had requested additional historical financial data. Before agreeing to meet again, Bayport was also requested to devise a formal proposal. Administrator Bell and conflict attorney John Thames presented a few different scenarios. The City Council directed staff to draft a letter outlining the possible options and to present it again to the City Council before sending it to the partnering communities as the formal proposal.

3. Business Community Open House Recap: The City Council and staff discussed the May 16 business open house. Owners of four businesses had attended the open house. Some of the feedback received was regarding an increase in commercial taxes, Sewer Access Charges set by the Metropolitan Council, permit fees/requirements, charging for the use of city picnic tables, and difficult city rules/regulations. All the business owners voiced appreciation for the sidewalk clearing in the commercial district. Several of the items that business owners were concerned about were items that did not offer simple solutions due to the city/zoning code, building code, or issues with outside contractors or entities on projects, and learning about issues after the fact.

Suggestions on how the city could assist included adding the businesses to the newsletter distribution list, adding a recurring segment to the newsletter focused on businesses, creating a *Frequently Asked Questions* list for businesses, increasing educational information for businesses, and addressing some of the sign ordinance issues for businesses as part of the upcoming ordinance amendment. The City Council anticipated holding another meeting with local businesses in the fall, possibly in October, and continuing engagement efforts. It was noted that the needs of the businesses and residents need to be balanced because both have an important role in the city.

#### 4. City Council Meeting / Workshop Agenda Process

The City Council had limited time to discuss this item due to the other agenda items taking longer than planned. Mayor St. Ores reiterated her desire for transparency concerning when agendas and materials are posted and made available. Councilmember Gilmore voiced his concern with a two-week posting requirement. He thought two weeks was too long and believed it would require the staff to start preparing the next meeting packet right after completing the previous City Council meeting in order to make the deadline. Councilmember Hanson wants to be careful to not portray the city as not being transparent or hiding something and questioned the level of public concern over the issue. The majority consensus was that the process has been working fine as is and they have not heard any complaints from the public.

Administrator Bell provided an overview of the legal requirements for noticing and publishing regular and special meetings. He also provided survey data of 24 other cities and their meeting notice and agenda posting practices. The average number of days for agendas to be posted was four, which is in line with what Bayport has been doing. He also explained that many cities have multiple meetings a month, which makes it easier to postpone an item to the next meeting without causing undue delay. No one voiced interest in adding additional meetings to the calendar. He stated that while the two-week notice is aspirationally commendable, it poses serious challenges due to various items and issues arising within the last two weeks before a meeting. The timing of many of these items is often not within the staff's control. Administrator Bell suggested that the City Council and staff continue to discuss and adopt a more formal policy, if desired. The consensus supported promoting transparency but acknowledged the burden to be informed was on the general public and that staff should continue the current practice. The city would also further encourage the public to take advantage of the various ways to obtain information about the city and the City Council's activities. No formal policy was adopted and the discussion was ended due to the time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Councilmember Hanson and seconded by Councilmember Dahl to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

---

City Administrator/Clerk