

**BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Work Session**  
**June 21, 2016**

Mayor Darrel Olson called the Work Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Darrel Olson, Council Members Quinn Nystrom, Steve Barrows, Todd Holman, and Mark Cross.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Community Development Director Josh Doty, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, Police Chief Jim Exsted, and Public Works Director Trevor Walter.

**MISSISSIPPI RIVER OVERLOOK PARK CLOSING TIME/CAMPING**

Chief Exsted explained that officers have been conducting patrols at Mississippi River Overlook Park. On these patrols, officers have found individuals setting up camping equipment for the evening, some members of these camping groups are underage and alcohol has been involved. These individuals have received citations and were removed from the park.

As per City ordinance, Mississippi River Overlook closes at 10:00 at p.m. Mayor Olson inquired how officers respond to the park location calls. Chief Exsted stated the officers drive out to the park site.

Chief Exsted inquired what is the vision the City Council has for this park and does an ordinance amendment need to be considered. Since this is a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources designated canoe campsite, the City will need to continue to allow canoeist to camp in the park.

Consensus of the council was to install two sets of no motorized vehicle and park regulations signs at the beginning of the wood chip trail on Oakdale Road and the walking trail to the canoe landing and park. Changes to the ordinance could be made if the police department felt it was a necessity.

The council requested the officers increase the frequency of checking on this park.

**EMPLOYEE INSURANCE ELECTIONS**

Interim Administrator Steele requested council direction regarding the ability of former employees to elect changes to health or dental coverage upon termination or retirement. Specifically to allow a former employee to make changes to add coverage for a spouse or children not originally covered on the City's insurance prior to termination or retirement.

COBRA is very specific terms on the regulations of an employee to continue insurance coverage upon termination or retirement. Retired employees can remain on the City's insurance indefinitely but must pay 100% of the insurance premium. The ability to allow a terminated or retired employee the ability to add coverage for a spouse or children not originally covered by the City's insurance

prior to termination or retirement is not addressed in COBRA and is a policy decision of the City. Increasing the number of people participating in the City's insurance pool could affect future rates paid by both the City and current employees.

Council Member Barrows stated his experience has been the when a person retires they retire with the benefits that are in force at that time. The concern is when people start adding to the policy, generally in the older years, the potential then is to raise the fees to the current group of employees.

Council Member Holman stated he was in agreement the employee leaves with what they have as the benefit; it adds a lot of complicated unknowns which does have an effect on the employee base and long term costs. Council Member Holman felt this matter was important to clarify in the personnel policy.

Staff will propose an amendment for council consideration at the July 5<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Public Works Director/City Engineer Walter discussed parks staff installing a gate at Mississippi River Overlook Park. Staff will work with the church regarding this matter if warranted.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Council Member Nystrom, seconded by Council Member Cross to adjourn at 6:48 p.m. Motion carries unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

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Darrel Olson  
Mayor

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Mary Haugen  
Administrative Assistant