

**BLACK DIAMOND CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
September 9, 2021
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom**

CALL TO ORDER, FLAG SALUTE:

Mayor Benson called the regular work session meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led us all in the Flag Salute.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Councilmembers Deady, Oglesbee, Wisnoski, de Leon, O'Donnell

ABSENT: Councilmembers Mulvihill and Page (excused)

Staff present: Deputy City Clerk Carina Thornquist

WORK SESSION:

1) Discussion on Discharge of Fireworks within the City Limits

Below are some concerns that Councilmembers discussed:

- If we were to have fireworks ban, how would it be enforced? Enforcing the action of someone lighting off fireworks is almost impossible. Every Police officer is on duty already and fire fighters aren't enforcers. It was expressed that we won't be eliminating fireworks in Black Diamond no matter what we do.
- Insurance rates were a huge concern since the houses are getting closer and closer together.
- People need to be reminded that there are consequences to misusing illegal fireworks as well as using them outside of the allowed time.

Councilmembers suggested and discussed some possible solutions which are listed below:

- It is important for citizens to have good communication with their neighbors; whether it's about their pets, getting up early for work, etc.
- People need to be educated on the use of fireworks and feel it's a bigger issue than just fireworks.
- Residents need to be responsible, educated, have water and tools handy and clean up the mess in the roads after they're done.
- Maybe adding a survey to the utility bills?
- Taking it back to the Public Safety Committee for discussion.

- Possibly having an Advisory Vote in August 2022.

Councilmembers had some back-and-forth discussion regarding the method to decide if fireworks will be allowed or banned. Also, conversation took place if Councilmembers were in favor of having fireworks or against fireworks. Those discussion points are below:

- A few Councilmembers expressed that they are not in favor of Advisory Votes and went on to say Councilmembers should make the decision and then citizens can make an informed decision and vote them out if they don't believe in their decisions. It was also stated that an Advisory Vote would take a long time.
- Others expressed their approval of fireworks and how much they love the tradition. They stated fireworks should be ok but, used responsibly and needs to be enforced. The fireworks over Lake Sawyer this year was amazing, and they do not want to stop having fireworks in Black Diamond.
- Councilmembers disagreed whether Council should be the ones making the decision or it should be put out to the citizens for an Advisory Vote.
- Also expressed was the Council having bigger issues to work on such as transportation, building a civic center or City Hall, City Administrator, etc.
- It's still going to take more time to discuss and to reach a decision. Spending several different meetings to discuss hours of fireworks is time well spent.

Mayor Benson turned it over to Fire Chief Smith for his comments. He stated that it's usually not the legal fireworks that cause the issues and injuries but it's the larger, illegal fireworks. He also stated the Fire Department "stuffs up" for possible brush fires during this time of year.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Oglesbee **moved** to adjourn the meeting; **second** by Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (5-0). The meeting ended at 7:33 p.m.

ATTEST:



Carol Benson, Mayor



Carina Thornquist, Deputy City Clerk