

Regular Council Meeting

April 8, 2019

1. **Council President Roger Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:30.** Present were Council members Kale Dankenbring, Amanda Milne and Larry Finley. Also present were City Superintendent JR Landenberger, City Attorney Mike Day, and City Clerk Lila Whitmore. Mayor Scott Schultz, Chief of Police Darrell Thomas, and Council member Dara Carmichael were absent.
2. **Minutes** from the March 25 meeting were distributed and read. It was moved by Amanda and seconded by Larry to approve the minutes as written. Motion passed.
3. **Consent Agenda** – It was moved by Larry and seconded by Kale to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda: Permission for Clerk to pay insurance at time of billing; Permission for Clerk to pay utilities at time of billing; Permission for Clerk to pay utility incentives before the 25th of the month; Permission for Clerk to pay theater bills when due; Permission for Clerk to pay Payment Service Network bills when due. Motion passed.
4. **Visitors** – Deb Harper, George Harper, Kary Meyer, Troy Meyer, Coleen Kirkham, Betty Peterson, Grace Larkin, Jennifer Blair
5. **Police Report:** none
6. **New Business:**
 - a. Grace (Bobbie) Larkin addressed the Council with several concerns. The Council and City Superintendent Landenberger explained the City's plans for improvements to the electrical infrastructure. RVW Inc., the engineering firm hired to inspect the infrastructure and design a plan for improvements, is located in Columbus, Nebraska where the recent disastrous flooding occurred. This put the firm a little behind but they are scheduled to be in St. Francis on May 2nd. Once a scope of work is defined and specifications created the project can be put out for bids and a timeline determined. Between 2015 and 2018 the City invested approximately \$152,000 in the electrical infrastructure for the rebuild of the water supply/well lines. In addition to the labor costs, the City paid a significant amount for all materials used in these improvements. This portion of the infrastructure was considered a priority. The City has \$200,000 budgeted this year for additional improvements once a plan is put together. Mrs. Larkin questioned why the City does not contract out the electrical. Superintendent Landenberger said it is an option that the Council has previously researched. Part of the issue is that the lost revenue would eventually need to be replaced somehow in order to finance the City, either by significantly raising the mill levy and/or increasing water rates which are both unnaturally low. JR further explained that currently very little property tax actually comes to the City. The majority of the City's revenue is generated from utilities. Roger pointed out that if the electrical is outsourced the generators at the power plant would no longer be used as a backup for power. Having local resources to immediately respond to electrical outages is another advantage of public utilities. Mrs. Larkin then asked what is being done to repair the streets and potholes. Attorney Day pointed out that the access roads and crossovers are State property and State maintained. The City is in the process of negotiating with KDOT regarding that issue. Council members Jensen and Finley have been working with Senator Rick Billinger to address the problem. JR explained that there has in fact been quite a bit of work done on the streets in the last few years including College Street, intersections, and crack filling on multiple streets and the City has each year utilized all of the funds that were budgeted for street repairs and improvements. There are also plans to replace the intersection at College and North Street this year. Roger explained that patching potholes is dependent upon weather and it is now getting warm enough to begin working on these. The overall street improvements are a major large-scale project that the Council has been working on for several months. The engineering firm for the street project is Miller & Associates. They have provided preliminary drawings showing the streets and prioritizing them based on condition and other factors including the water infrastructure beneath the streets. Once the scope and the potential cost are determined, the Council will have a better idea of how best to proceed. The City will be applying for a Community Development Block Grant which will require matching funds. Low interest loans and/or issuance of bonds are being considered to finance improvements, but a method of repayment will need to be decided as well. All of these considerations will be subject to a public vote. Mrs. Larkin also expressed concern regarding dogs running loose. There is a City ordinance for this and the Police Department is responsible for animal control. She also feels that the recycling center is not being kept up. JR will look

into this. Clerk Whitmore handed out information showing the City mill levy breakdown and what the City has received in property taxes over the past 20 years. She also shared information showing how the local sales taxes are divided between the various County entities. Kale asked about whole house surge protectors. JR indicated that the City would install them if a citizen purchases one. However, JR clarified that surge protectors are for overvoltage but will not protect against low voltages.

- b. Lucinda Straub was on the agenda but unable to attend the meeting.
- c. Troy and Kary Meyer were present to discuss the culvert at Majestic Service. Kary explained the history of the culverts and how they came to be installed with assistance from the State. There have been recent issues during periods of heavy rain where the two small culverts within the one large culvert cannot handle all of the water which causes flooding. In the past the ditches to the east and to the south of Majestic were fairly deep which held the water. They have not been dredged and are now filled up with sediment which causes the water to back up at the culvert which in turn causes flooding of the properties to the west. Her suggestion is to dredge out the ditches to the south and east and to put a culvert in at the access to Pizza Hut. JR agreed this is a logical solution but pointed out that the ditch is State property and the City is prohibited from doing what she is suggesting. The City has offered assistance with removing the existing small culverts in order to create better drainage and to direct the flow of the water to the north which is, at this point, the only option. Bud Erskin has indicated he will be reinforcing the culvert from the inside to make it structurally sound for truck traffic. Roger suggested the Meyers contact KDOT and Rick Billinger and file complaints. He offered to provide contact information. This issue is included in the economic impact study being done by Miller & Associates.

7. Old Business:

- a. **Property Cleanup** – Dallas Staples is scheduled to appear in court on April 18. The other property of concern has made substantial improvements and ~~is now in compliance~~ is making progress. Attorney Day indicated with the tax sale that he is hopeful many of the properties will now be cleaned up. Clerk Whitmore indicated that a person who had acquired a property in the tax sale inquired about parking a camper temporarily on the property to use as living quarters while work is being done on the house. Attorney Day confirmed that per City Code there is a 30 day limit for temporary housing. Lila will let the person know.
 - b. **Projects Pending** – Larry indicated that the idea of using the old pool property for a volleyball court is likely not going to work due to lack of room.
8. **Keller Pond Committee** – Larry has spoken to Tom Keller whose main concern was the maintenance schedule, which is now in place. Pre-emergent has been applied around the ponds and along the Riverwalk. The signs at the trail head have been installed. The milfoil was treated with chemicals and the effectiveness of the treatment will be monitored. Tom has indicated that there is outside funding available to help with maintenance costs if needed. It was moved by Amanda and seconded by Kale to accept and file the Keller Pond Committee report. Motion passed.
9. **Theater Report** – Amanda was unable to attend the last Theater meeting. Clerk Whitmore did attend and reported that the Theater Board is looking into what it might cost to repair the suspended ceiling in the main part of the Theater. Lila requested 5 minutes of executive session for non-elected personnel to discuss wage increases for Theater employees. It was moved by Larry and seconded by Amanda to accept and file the Theater report. Motion passed.
10. **Pool Report** – There will be a pool board meeting Thursday April 11. They will be discussing hours and wages. Larry clarified that with regards to the shade structure, because of the many complaints about the astro turf and how hot it would get the Council felt it was a safety concern that needed to be addressed. Larry also clarified for those in the audience that the shade structure at the old pool had been donated by the Van Allens and per their request is planned to be moved to Keller Pond. It was moved by Amanda and seconded by Kale to accept and file the Pool report. Motion passed.
11. **Building Permits** - A motion was made by Amanda and seconded by Larry to approve the following building permits: John Guthmiller – 530 E. Second, storage shed; Eric Hook – 221 W. Jackson, replace concrete driveway. Motion passed.
12. **Superintendent Report** – a) The water tower painting has been completed. b) The installation of the tap at the reservoir on the 14" main for the airport improvements water will be completed tomorrow. c) There was a leak on College Street that has now been fixed. The hole there has been filled and will be patched as time permits.

JR found that some of the old water mapping was incorrect and they have actually been able to isolate additional areas. In the long run they will be able to have more areas isolated for doing the street improvements. **d)** Wade Krien is still looking into doing the water extension they had talked about last year along Royce Peter Road. **e)** The electrical to the Airport hangar for Devin Conley which the Council previously authorized should be completed by the end of the week. Dave Yost contacted JR indicating the Airport Authority would pay the cost to bring the electrical the additional 300' to the south that he had requested. The materials have been ordered. **f)** As previously discussed, RVW Inc. will be in town on May 2nd to inspect feeders 1 and 3. **g)** There is additional crack seal work to be done on East Emerson and Jackson. Regarding pot holes, millings are used during cold weather but now with warm weather we will need to purchase additional cold mix and tack oil for repairs. **h)** The intersection at College and North Street will be completed soon. The cost will be shared between the County and the City. JR has provided Brock McAtee a copy of the map from Miller & Associates and is requesting he provide estimates for the concrete work for consideration, which includes alley approaches and intersections and some curb and gutter. **i)** JR has spoken to Dave Flemming regarding planting oats on the Empire property to prevent erosion. **j)** There was further discussion about the potholes in the crossovers. It was moved by Kale and seconded by Amanda to accept and file the Superintendent report. Motion passed.

- 13. Attorney Report – a)** Attorney Day and Roger have been in communication with Senator Rick Billinger regarding the crossovers and the service road. A packet of information has been sent to a KDOT representative. **b)** Mike discussed the importance of employees of the City along with Council persons, as representatives of the City, to refrain from commenting on social media regarding topics concerning the City. He cautioned that responding on behalf of the City is only authorized as a whole of the governing body at a Council meeting and not by individual Council members. **c)** Mike continues to work on the tax protest for the Empire Motel back taxes. **d)** A renewal agreement has been received for the KMEA and WAPA contracts. A motion was made by Amanda and seconded by Kale to pre-approve the agreements pending review and approval by Attorney Day. Motion passed. A motion was made by Larry and seconded by Amanda to accept and file the Attorney report. Motion passed.
- 14. Clerk Report – a)** Jeanine Peter has offered to plant flowers in the park and maintain them as she did last year but is requesting that the City pay for the cost of the flowers. The consensus of the Council was that it may be a good idea to reach out to other businesses who may be interested in doing the same. Lila will touch base with Ms. Peter to request a cost estimate and will contact other local businesses. **b)** Jeanine also requested permission to set up a stand along the East side of St. Francis Supers during the car show to sell plants, and to waive any fees that might apply. She has an established business in town, County Seat Greenery. The Council gave approval. Roger asked if the car show was a go since they have not submitted an application to reserve Sawhill Park and the Band shell. Clerk Whitmore will touch base with Troy Zwegardt to request the application be turned in by the next Council meeting. **c)** Lila and Jen will be busy getting prepared for the Audit which is scheduled for April 30. **d)** Lila reminded the Council that she will be attending the CDBG Application Workshop in Salina on April 17-18. It was moved by Kale and seconded by Larry to accept and file the Clerk report. Motion passed.
- 15. Council Comments: Larry – none Amanda – none Kale –** Thanked citizens for coming to the meeting. Kale opened a discussion regarding ways to get updates and progress reports out to the public other than minutes and articles in the newspaper. No decisions were made.
- 16. Council President Comments – none**
- 17. All bills on Ordinance #1025 were reviewed.** It was moved by Amanda and seconded by Kale to approve the bills in the amount of \$349,865.23. Motion passed.
- 18.** At 9:20 a motion was made by Kale and seconded by Amanda for the Council, along with all those present, to recess into **executive session** for the non-elected personnel exception to discuss Theater employee wages, the open meeting to resume at 9:25. Motion passed. At 9:25 the open meeting resumed. A motion was made by Amanda and seconded by Larry to approve the Theater Board's recommendations for wage increases for the Theater employees. Motion passed.
- 19. Adjournment:** It was moved by Kale and seconded by Larry to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.