

**CITY OF HIGHLAND, KANSAS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL
DECEMBER 9, 2015
7:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Dana Clary, Matt Peterson, Jerry Twombly and Ben Gilmore and Charles Batchelder.

CITY EMPLOYEES PRESENT: City Attorney Ted Collins, City Clerk Joann Karn, City Police Chief Brandon Whetstine, City Maintenance Supervisor Aaron Leach and Assistant City Clerk Melanie Hollabaugh.

GUESTS PRESENT: Dorothy Diveley, Pam Twombly, Randy Snyder, Selena Diveley, Carmen Crandall, Jerod Edie and Scott Huss.

PRESIDING: Mayor Scott Sisk

7:00 p.m. Mayor Sisk called the Regular City Council Meeting to order.

507 WEST MISSOURI DEMOLITION & REMOVAL PROJECT BID OPENING: The City received four bids for the demolition and removal of the structures located at 507 W. Missouri Street. The bids submitted were: Aller's LLC of Hiawatha, KS - \$8,450, Urban Construction, Inc. of Robinson, KS - \$15,000, Simmons Excavating, LLC of Everest, KS - \$11,800 and Pruett Construction, LLC of Lancaster, KS - \$3,655. Matt Peterson moved and Jerry Twombly seconded a motion to accept the bid from Pruett Construction, LLC for \$3,655 upon receipt of their certificate of insurance. Motion carried 5-0.

Ben Gilmore moved and Matt Peterson seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the last Regular City Council Meeting held on November 10, 2015. Motion carried 5-0.

Asst. Clerk Melanie Hollabaugh presented 7 additional bills to be approved that were not in the original council packet. The total of those bills was \$2,521.82. Jerry Twombly moved and Ben Gilmore seconded a motion to approve the bills for the month of November 2015 including the additional bills presented. Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Dorothy Diveley asked if the 2 blue boxes setting in front of the old grocery store could possibly be removed or just moved out of site because they are no longer in use. City Clerk Joann Karn agreed to send an official letter to the St. Joe News Press and the Kansas City Star for the boxes to be removed.

Randy Snyder expressed his concern about people parking on the south side of Main Street across from the college campus during college games, which is a no parking zone. Police Chief Whetstine said he would look into tougher enforcement and check on missing signs being replaced.

Selena Diveley asked about people blowing leaves out of their yards into the street. City Atty. Collins suggested that Chief Whetstine contact residents that are causing the problem.

Ms. Diveley also asked about the piles of dirt on S. Nebraska Street.

Jerry Twombly asked if the City could put up some kind of slow down signs outside of the city limits coming into town from the south since the City had heard nothing from the state concerning this issue from several months ago. City Atty. Collins stated he would contact the state again and try to get something done. There was also discussion on putting up "bus stop" signs or some other signage at that location.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS: Mayor Scott Sisk updated the Council on the electrical work that had been done at Degginger Park. Council member Clary stated the work had not been completed as asked. Mayor Sisk told the clerks to hold off on paying the bill until the problems were resolved. Mayor Sisk asked City Clerk Joann Karn to meet with Highland Pride and find out what they want and need for the electrical outlets in the park during events. The Mayor also asked Council member Clary to meet with Mr. Leatherman and let him know what the problems were.

Mayor Sisk announced to the Council the Doniphan County Fire District #2 had received a bid from Unruh Seamless Guttering LLC of Hiawatha, KS to install 6" guttering with 4"x5" down spouts on the Community Center and Fire Station for \$4,265. The fire district is asking for the City to split the costs. Jerry Twombly moved and Charles Batchelder to pay \$2,132.50 toward the costs of the new guttering at the Community Center and Fire Station. Motion carried 5-0.

City Attorney Ted Collins said the Recreation Commission would be discussed at a later meeting.

Atty. Collins stated that he, in accordance with the council's directive, and the knowledge of Mayor Sisk and Council members Peterson and Clary, had been negotiating for the purchase of the former Matthias property for the past month. Mr. Collins also stated he had been in contact with the LLC that controls the property and he, as a representative for the City of Highland, had signed a contract to purchase that property for \$16,500. Also, at a meeting of the Highland Saddle Club on December 7th, the Saddle Club voted to donate their property that is contiguous to the Matthias property to the City of Highland on the condition that the City would take care of all expenses associated with the process of reinstating the Saddle Club, paying one year of back taxes, clearing the title, and any required survey and other expenses. It was noted that most of the property involved was transferred by quit claim deed in the chain of title.

Dana Clary moved and Matt Peterson seconded a motion to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute any documents needed to purchase the Matthias property at \$16,500 and to execute all documentation necessary to establish marketable title, including the filing of a quiet title action in district court. Motion carried 5-0.

Matt Peterson moved and Ben Gilmore seconded a motion to authorize the Mayor to approve the payment of the expenses necessary to reinstate the Saddle Club, to pay one year of back taxes, to pay for the survey and any other expenses required to establish marketable title. Motion carried 5-0.

Attorney Collins stated that he was donating his time spent on this project to date and his services in reinstating the corporate status of the Highland Saddle Club. Mayor Sisk thanked Mr. Collins, Mr. Peterson and Ms. Clary for all their time and work on the project and he also thanked the Saddle Club for their generous donation. Atty. Collins added that the donation was on the condition that the property would be primarily used for youth recreation for the next 20 years.

City Clerk Joann Karn explained to the Council that while looking for ways to streamline the City finances and after speaking with the City auditor, she would like to combine the City's General bank account with the Municipal Court and the Inspection bank accounts. Matt Peterson moved and Dana Clary seconded a motion to combine the accounts, close the Court and Inspection bank accounts and transfer any money in those accounts to the General banking account for year end, December 31, 2015. Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Karn informed the Council that she had been looking into the possibility of new Municipal Accounting Software for the City. After some discussion, Ms. Karn asked for the Council's permission to go forward with scheduling a formal presentation with Data Technologies Inc. at no cost to the City. The Council agreed.

City Clerk Karn reviewed the City's end of the year finances with the Council.

Police Chief Brandon Whetstine presented his report to the Council: 4-Arrests, 11-Citations, 8-Warnings, 27-Calls for Service, 9-Assists to other Agencies, 2-Accident Reports and 15-Criminal Investigations. Chief

Whetstine stated his department had also seized a vehicle for possible drug forfeiture and assisted HCC with a practice lock down drill.

Chief Whetstine explained that the City's grey police pick-up had been involved in a minor accident at his residence and his personal insurance will be covering all costs to repair it.

Mr. Whetstine stated that Officer Williams had taken the white police truck to Stan Boos to get checked out and they estimated around \$3,000 to fix a cam phase. Mayor Sisk asked that the truck be taken to Aberle for another opinion.

Maintenance Supervisor Aaron Leach provided a report of the previous month's projects to the Council. Mr. Leach stated the City had received the radio reads for the new meters and they were still working on installing new meters.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Finance Committee – Ben Gilmore: Stated he had been in contact with the property owner on the west side of the 100 block of S. Nebraska Street and he was on board with the City's plans to clean up and close the street with the City retaining the utility easement. Work to fix the street area and install the inspection pipe will begin as soon as possible.

Law Enforcement Committee – Jerry Twombly: Had nothing to report at this time.

Parks and Rec. Committee – Dana Clary: Reported that despite the bad weather, the Snowflake Festival went pretty well. She also stated she would contact Mike Lamb about his ideas for the electrical in Degginger Park.

Street and Alley Committee – Charles Batchelder: Expressed concern about the crosswalk on Main Street between Ellis Hall and the main HCC campus. He asked if something could be done to refresh the paint on the street and/or replacing the street lights at that location. Maintenance Supervisor Aaron Leach said he would talk to Westar as soon as he could.

Water and Sewer Committee – Matt Peterson: Explained that the Water and Sewer committee would like to gather more information and meet again before giving a recommendation to the Council on changing sewer rates.

Mr. Peterson stated that his committee had been looking into ideas for a good way to secure the City's well site. The Council agreed to revisit the issue in the spring.

OLD BUSINESS: Randy Snyder stated that he would like to thank Aaron Leach for cleaning up the old pieces of asphalt on the 400 block of N. Iowa Street.

Council member Clary asked if anything had been figured out on the leaning light pole on Main Street in front of the old post office. Aaron Leach said he had visited with Westar about it, several options were discussed and Westar felt the pole was safe for now.

NEW BUSINESS: Mayor Sisk stated that employee raises were next on the agenda and he felt that since the insurance premiums were going up so much again, that raises for the employees might not be an option if they were going to keep the insurance. After some discussion the Council agreed not to give the employees raises.

Jerry Twombly moved and Ben Gilmore seconded a motion to renew the current health insurance policy with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas and the current life insurance policy with Advance Insurance Company of Kansas with no changes. Motion carried 5-0.

Jerry Twombly moved and Dana Clary seconded a motion to give the city employees Christmas Eve day off with pay as a Christmas gift and City Hall will be closed that day. Motion carried 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Jerry Twombly moved and Charles Batchelder seconded a motion to recess into executive session at 8:30 p.m. for 10 minutes to discuss contract negotiations and the open meeting will resume in the City Council Chamber at 8:40 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Matt Petersom moved and Dana Clary seconded a motion to recess into executive session at 8:40 p.m. for 5 minutes to discuss contract negotiations and the open meeting will resume in the city council chamber at 8:45 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Jerry Twombly moved and Dana Clary seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:46p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor

City Clerk