

**CITY OF HIGHLAND, KANSAS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL
April 8, 2020
5:00 P.M.**

Due to statewide stay-at-home orders, this meeting was held on Zoom video conferencing

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Delzeit, Marty Allen, Rocky Ruhnke, and Terry Gibson

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Collins

CITY EMPLOYEES PRESENT: City Attorney Ted Collins and City Clerk Joann Karn. Water & Sewer Superintendent Trevor Saunders and Chief of Police Brandon Whetstine participated on Zoom

GUESTS PRESENT: Via Zoom – Russell Karn

PRESIDING: Mayor Charles Batchelder

Mayor Batchelder called the regular city council meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Terry Gibson moved and Marty Allen seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2020, regular city council meeting. Motion carried 4-0

Rocky Ruhnke moved and Marty Allen seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2020, special city council meeting. Motion carried 4-0

Terry Gibson moved and Greg Delzeit seconded a motion to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried 4-0

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:

Mayor Batchelder – Began council discussion on fiscal finances knowing the sales tax will be considerably lower. With an unstable future council agreed to look at many possible funding methods, reduce spending and review available grants or low interest loans. Knowing there will be stimulus funds becoming available, consensus was for Attorney Collins to contact BG Consultants for a presentation, either in person or via Zoom at a special meeting. A priority project is the culvert at the North city limits on Kansas Street which the city will work with the county to have it repaired. Supt. Lackey has several verbal bids on the culvert repair/replacement but Council is asking for written bids on the requested bid specifications. Terry Gibson and Water/Sewer Supt. Saunders presented a request for water line repair parts and the purchase of 20 triploid grass carp for feeding on the Duckweed which is becoming a problem in the lagoon ponds. Terry Gibson moved and Rocky Ruhnke seconded a motion to approve the purchase of the water parts from Core & Main in the amount of \$550 and 20 triploid grass carp from Dunns Fish Farm in the amount of \$200 to be delivered in late May or early June. Motion carried 4-0

Attorney Collins – Provide information later in meeting

Clerk Karn – Reminded how vital it is for all citizens to complete the census as it determines numbers for most grant applications and locally receiving federal funding for schools, roads and highways, public health, affordable housing programs and much more. Clerk Karn will not be attending the budget workshop due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Consensus of the council was to continue with a modified Citywide Clean-up on April 24th & 25th. The dumpster will be available for city residents to use located near the burn site on the east side of town. Residents with larger items may set them at curbside, report the item(s) and location to city hall and city workers will pick up. No employee or volunteer will be available to assist with removal from the home. City is continuing with limb pick-up thru April 17th. Clerk Karn had an individual inquire if the lots North of the city ball park on Missouri Street were for sale. If agreed to sale the lots, Council could set conditions regarding the sale. If passed as written, the HB 2656 could have severe financial effects on the cities as Doniphan County Clerk provided a chart showing Highland city would need to increase approximately 20 mill to cover the loss on sales tax revenue, using 2019 numbers. City received notification today the nitrate level is greater than 10 mg/L which requires an immediate precautionary notice to the public. Following discussion on all three wells, council agreed to have each well sample tested for a nitrate level at a private lab.

Police Chief Whetstine – Has met with the County Health Department on COVID-19 virus and the supply of personal protective equipment. With the closing of schools, HCC and USD, activity has slowed down and now the courts are temporarily closed. Officers continue to work on criminal cases.

Superintendent Lackey – Councilman Gibson indicated Supt. Lackey has ordered the replacements for the faded stop and yield signs.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Finance Committee – Marty Allen & Rocky Ruhnke – Rocky Ruhnke commented the cash balances are in good shape but with the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the city needs to monitor all expenditures.

Law Enforcement Committee – Terry Gibson & Marty Allen – Committee is monitoring expenditures. Due to the pandemic, recommendations on the unsightly properties will be postponed until a later date.

Parks and Rec. Committee – Greg Delzeit & Rocky Ruhnke – Rocky Ruhnke reported the youth summer ball program may have a later start date/later finish date instead of cancelling the program this summer. The Smithton Lodge donated a new batting cage which is being installed at the north end of the basketball court. Greg Delzeit reported the 4th of July activities are temporarily on hold and will report when more information is available.

Street and Alley/Bldg & Grounds Committee – Terry Gibson & Dan Collins – Terry Gibson indicated a citizen wanted it recorded the city would refrain lighting the burn pile when the wind was from the North or East.

Water and Sewer Committee – Rocky Ruhnke & Terry Gibson – Waiting on bids for the well house

Planning & Zoning – Marty Allen & Greg Delzeit – From several candidates Mr. Bryan Rhodd was appointed by the Mayor, with council recommendation, to fill the vacancy on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Personnel Committee – Greg Delzeit & Dan Collins – Nothing at this time

OLD BUSINESS:

Terry Gibson indicated Supt. Lackey ordered the stop and yield signs with the cost being under \$500, Mayor's spending authority. Mayor authorized the purchase.

NEW BUSINESS:

Attorney Collins reviewed correspondence from BG Consultants regarding the need for a 2020 Stimulus Infrastructure Project Priority List. Several possibilities for the list would be sewer line repair/replacement, splash park or other park improvements at Minier Park, and wells-well house and electrical/pump upgrade. As earlier discussed, review funding availability and complexity of the projects.

RESOLUTIONS:

Following Attorney Collins review, Marty Allen moved and Rocky Ruhnke seconded a motion to adopt Resolution No. 20-03 which temporarily closes the Highland Municipal Court, acknowledging the COVID-19 pandemic and a state of emergency in the State of Kansas; in response to the Governor's Executive Order 20-16 and Kansas Supreme Court Administrative Order 2020-PR-31. Motion carried 4-0

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Terry Gibson moved and Greg Delzeit seconded a motion to recess into executive session at 6:15 p.m. for 5 minutes for consultation with an attorney on legal matters that would be deemed privileged in attorney-client relationship and the open meeting will resume in the city council chamber at 6:20 p.m. Motion carried 4-0 Mayor asked the city attorney and clerk to remain

Terry Gibson moved and Greg Delzeit seconded a motion to recess into executive session at 6:20 p.m. for 5 minutes to review individual employee(s) pursuant to the non-elected personnel for the protection of the privacy rights of the protected employee(s) and the open meeting will resume in the city council chamber at 6:25 p.m. Motion carried 4-0. Mayor asked the city attorney and city clerk to remain

Terry Gibson moved and Greg Delzeit seconded a motion to recess into executive session at 6:25 p.m. for 15 minutes to review individual employee(s) pursuant to the non-elected personnel for the protection of the privacy rights of the protected employee(s) and the open meeting will resume in the city council chamber at 6:40 p.m. Motion carried 4-0. Mayor asked the city attorney and city clerk to remain

Terry Gibson moved and Marty Allen seconded a motion eliminating the position of the second officer due to reduction in force, anticipated reduced funds available resulting from COVID-19 pandemic, effective end of April 24, 2020, shift. Motion carried 3-1

Rocky Ruhnke moved and Greg Delzeit seconded a motion to adjourn at 6:43 p.m. Motion carried 4-0

Mayor

City Clerk