

City Council Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2023

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Debi Schwerdtfeger called the regular City Council Meeting to order. Council members present were Sharon Haun, Jason Booker, Mark Berner, Denise Hartman and Larry Siegrist also present were the City Administrator Nick Jones, City Attorney Brian Henderson Assistant City Attorney Molly Priest. Others attending were Jan Sciacca, Josh Sciacca, Roger Hoffman, Chris Sederlin, Jason Loader, Andy Benning, Angie Schwerdtfeger, Jim Crosby, Mary Yoder, Karen Exon, Zoey Bond, Sadra Schweger.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION:

Jim Crosby

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Roger Hoffman addressed the Council concerning the proposed plating of the City Lake roads and how that would affect the lease rate and where the funds were coming from to pay for the plat.

Shelley Dunham the Chair of the Morris County Democrats addressed the Council concerning what she says is a disenfranchisement of electorate as the percentage of voters in each ward is not proportional and suggest that moving to an open election might best solve the issue. Dunham said that the issue needed to be addressed before the deadline for elections sign up on June 1.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilperson Jason Booker made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented in the packet. Councilperson Sharon Haun seconded the motion. Motion Carried 5 – 0. The consent agenda consisted of:

- May 2, 2023, Minutes
- May 2, 2023, to Current Appropriations.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Water Tower Update:**
City Administrator Nick Jones said that the work on the Water Tower should be complete by the end of the week and the inside the tank will need to cure for 7 days before it can be disinfected before refilling. Administrator Jones said the plan is to have the Water Tower back online by the 15th of May.
- **Belfry to 4th Street Chip N Seal: Update**
City Administrator Nick Jones informed the Council that the Chip N Seal project from Belfry to 4th street will start on Wednesday. The project will start on the North side from Belfry to the bridge taking approximately 3 days and then flip to the South side for approximately 3 days. The project would then move to the east side of the bride and head east starting on the North side for approximately 3 days and the flipping to the South side for approximately 3 days.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Office Committee Recommendation: BlueCross BlueShield Health Insurance Renewal:**
City Administrator Nick Jones presented the recommendation from the Office Committee to switch the City health insurance to a Level – Funded BlueCross BlueShield Health Insurance Plan at an estimated cost of \$22,313.20 per month and \$267,758.40 per year. Switching to the Level Funded Plan over the City’s current plan with an estimated renewal cost of \$33,601.69 per month and \$403,220.28 will save the City an estimated \$11,288.49 per month and \$135,461.88 per year. The funds saved should be put in a reserve fund as the Level Funded Plan will need to be reapplied for on a yearly basis to ensure the City still qualifies for the plan. Switching to the Level – Funded Plan does not change the amount of insurance coverage provided by the city to its employees. After discussion a motion was made by Councilperson Jason Booker to approve the recommendation from the Office Committee to switch to a level funded plan. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Denise Hartman. Motion Carried 5 – 0

- **Kaw Valley Engineering: City Lake Road and Easement Plat**

Jason Loader and Chris Sederlin with Kaw Valley Engineering presented to the Council the work done to this point with the City Lake road and easement plats. The plat takes into account structures, cul-de-sacs and makes adjustments to allow for a proper easements for utilities. The Council will discuss the work done to this point at the upcoming work study.

- **Neosho Riverwalk Amphitheater Request: Jim Crosby**

Jim Crosby, Together with Veterans AND Morris County spoke to the Council regarding waving the fees for use of the City's Amphitheater to raise funds for the project and would have a comedic group call Veterans of Comedy come preform on June 24th. After discussion Councilperson Mark Berner made a motion to approve the request for the fees to be waiver for the fundraiser. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Denise Hartman.
Motion Carried 5 – 0

- **Sales Tax Grant Committee Recommendations:**

City Administrator Nick Jones presented the Sales Tax Grant Committee Recommendations to the Council to approve the requests for the following applications:

- **Morris County Historical Society: Request \$2,940**

Sharon Haun representing the Morris County Historical Society spoke to the Council about the request for \$2,940 in sales tax grant funds to hire docents for the Post Office Oak and Last Chance store during tourism season. After discussion Councilperson Denise Hartman made a motion to approve the request for \$2,940. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Mark Berner. Motion Carried 4 – 0 with 1 assentation – Sharon Haun

- **Friends of Kaw Heritage, Inc: Request \$600**

Jason Booker representing Fiends of Kaw Heritage requested \$600 for the Westward Expansion series that takes place once a month and has different speakers. After discussion Councilperson Mark Berner made a motion to approve the request for \$600. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Larry Siegrist. Motion Carried 4 – 0 with 1 Abstention – Jason Booker

- **Friends of Kaw Heritage, Inc: Request \$2,000**

Jason Booker representing Fiends of Kaw Heritage requested \$2,000 to assist with bringing the Kaw Nation to Council Grove for Washunga Days. After discussion Councilperson Denise Hartman made a motion to approve the request for \$2,000. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Sharon Haun.. Motion Carried 4 – 0 with 1 Abstention – Jason Booker

- **Together with Veterans and Morris County: Request \$6,000**

Jim Crosby representing Together with Veterans AND Morris County requested \$6,000 in sales tax grant funds to help with personnel and security for the June 24th Veterans of Comedy fundraiser. Councilperson Jason Booker made a motion to approve the \$6,000 request. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Sharon Haun. Motion Carried 5 – 0

- **Community Arts Council: Request: \$5,000**

Mark Yoder representing the Community Arts Council requested \$5,000 for Sethfest. The event will be moved to a 1 day event free to the public with 5 main acts. After discussion Councilperson Jason Booker made a motion to approve the request for \$5,000. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Sharon Haun. Motion Carried 5 – 0

- **Washunga Days: Request \$20,000**

Angie Schwerdtfeger representing Washunga Days requested \$20,000 for marketing of the event. After discussion a motion was made by Councilperson Mark Berner to approve the request of \$20,000. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Sharon Haun. Motion Carried 5 – 0

- **Council Grove Area Trade & Tourism Association: Request \$25,000**

Zoey Bond representing the Council Grove Area Trade & Tourism Association requested \$25,000 in sales tax grant funding for marketing of events for 2023. A motion was made by Councilperson Jason Booker to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Denise Hartman. Motion Carried 6 – 0

• **Utilities Committee Recommendation: Software/Computer Upgrades**


The Utilities Committee recommends the City Council approve the purchase of software and computers from R.E. Pedrotti Company, Inc. to upgrade the equipment at the Utilities Department at an estimated cost of \$48,510. The cost for a Programmer/Software Engineer will be charged at \$170.00 per hour and \$0.60 per mile. The cost for a Field Technician will be charged at \$140.00 per hour and \$0.60 per mile. Total cost should be split between water and sewer funds. After discussion Councilperson Mark Berner made a motion to approve the estimate from R.E. Pedrotti Company, Inc in the amount of \$48,410 plus hourly cost and mileage. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jason Booker. Motion Carried 5 – 0

GOVERNING BODY COMMENTS

- **Mayor Debi Schwerdtfeger** – N/A
- **Councilperson Jason Booker** – Looking forward to main street and the water tower being completed
- **Councilperson Mark Berner** – N/A
- **Denise Hartman** – Looking forward to comedy coming to town and Washunga Days
- **Councilperson Sean Honer** – Absent
- **Councilperson Larry Siegrist** – N/A
- **Councilperson Sharon Haun** – excited things are moving forward
- **City Attorney Brian Henderson** – N/A
- **Assistant City Attorney Molly Priest** – N/A
- **City Administrator Nick Jones** – informed the Council that Cindy Jensen would not be conducting the City Audit and has contacted CPA firms to get proposals.

Adjournment:

Mayor Debi Schwerdtfeger asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilperson Mark Berner made a motion to adjourn. Councilperson Jason Booker seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 – 0



Debi Schwerdtfeger Mayor

ATTEST: 

Nick Jones City Administrator

