

CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
September 3, 2019
6:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met September 3, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers presided over by Mayor Grant Spieth. Council members present: Connie Bennett, John Brassart, Jerri Burton, Steve Dunlap, Jan Houser, Sammye Opela, Tom Pryor. Council members absent: Alvin Patterson.

Paul Yeager of Center Christian Church provided the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Burton moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of August 19, 2019 Council Meeting minutes, Appropriation Ordinance 19-498 and resignation of Ward 2 City Council Member James Lucian as presented. Houser seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Report –

- Presented Stephanie Farstvedt as appointment for vacant Ward 1 Council Seat.

WARD 1 COUNCIL APPOINTMENT – STEPHANIE FARSTVEDT

Opela moved to approve the Mayor's appointment of Stephanie Farstvedt to the vacant Ward 1 Council seat. Houser seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

-Mayor Spieth informed council Ms. Farstvedt is on the November ballot for Ward 1. She would need to decide should she win the election between the two options; continue to fill the remainder of the current appointment or take the new term and resign from the appointed position.

City Administrator Report-

-Janet Graham Commercial Property Rehabilitation Matching Grant application. Ms. Rivas noted the grant application on their desks was received too late Friday to be included in the Council packets. Mrs. Graham is asking if council might review for possible approval tonight as the construction company submitting the low bid could be available as earlier as next week to begin work.

COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION MATCHING GRANT – JANET GRAHAM

Houser moved to approve Commercial Property Rehabilitation Matching Grant for Janet Graham at 128 South Kansas not to exceed \$5,000 as presented to be paid out of economic development. Opela seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

-Rivas presented a year to date financial report for the City budget excluding reserve funds to the council noting the City was on target through August 31, 2019. She explained the amount that needs to be reviewed towards the end of the year would be transfers out. Transfers out would

need to be increased or decreased according to the General Fund end of year total. Revenues were 99% on target with anticipated expenditures to be slightly under budget. Ms. Rivas mentioned these numbers include the budget adjustments that were made earlier in the year to offset reduced revenue and an increased 2020 budget (Transfers out in the 2019 Property and Pool budgets). Rivas and Lead Fire Driver Steven Burton explained the new Fire Prevention Fund. This fund was created to keep the fire prevention training funds in house in order to be more efficient. In previous years, donations were collected through a third party to provide fire prevention training materials. The department did not have much say in the items provided. This fund currently has a zero balance. Donations will be posted in the coming months and the department will be able to purchase applicable training material for fire prevention program. This fund will be similar to the Police Department VIN fund in that any balance in the fund will carry over to future years/projects.

- Rivas noted she will have a reserve fund report at an upcoming meeting.

City Treasurer Report –

- Treasurer Report in your council packets.

-Mr. Mogle commented on the budgeted water revenue shortfall in the Administrator's financial report. Speaking from personal experience, he noted how excessive rainfall this year could impact the water revenue due to people not having to fill pools and water gardens/yards as much as in a normal summer.

Interim City Superintendent Report

- Mr. Bennett was absent from the meeting.

-Compliments were expressed for the painting of the downtown light poles.

-Cemetery Sweet Gum tree removal progress noted.

-Ms. Rivas was asked to consult with Mr. Bennett regarding mosquito spraying schedule.

City Clerk Report –

-Last call for discounted LKM Conference and room rates. Conference is October 12-14 over Columbus Day weekend.

-First Responder/Veteran Appreciation Picnic Sunday September 8, 5:30 p.m. at the City Park. Food, entertainment and opportunity to thank those who serve.

-Fall cleanup set for September 23 – October 4. Public works crews will spend 2 days in each ward beginning in ward 1. A flyer with dates and more information will be available on the city website, Face book page and at City Hall.

- KPERS 457 representative in last week to speak with employees about this additional retirement tool made available by council resolution earlier this year. Employees are already signing up for the program.

-Thank you to the council for approving the Employee Assistance Program for City Employees. Participation began September 1 and it has already proved to be a valuable tool for staff.

Fire Chief Report –

Lead Fire Driver in attendance for the department.

-180 emergency calls to date. Down 56 from this time last year.

-Community invited to fire department open house September 25 from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. Hot dogs and tours of the department and new equipment will be available.

-First week of October is Fire prevention week. Will be visiting area schools and daycares.

Department was asked to provide updated structure fire report for the next council packet.

-Storm siren policy: alert is activated only when the City is in the direct path of a storm. No all clear signal is sounded. Burton noted recent storm was south of town and moving south and east; Columbus sirens were not activated. Alerts were sounded in Baxter, Galena and the very southeastern parts of Cherokee County.

Police Chief Report –

-Picnic in the City Park honoring all First Responders and Veterans on Sunday September 8 at 5:30 p.m.

-Want to thank the council for approving the Employee Assistance Program for City Staff. Police Department has worked 2 taxing call in recent days and this service is very beneficial.

-Officers Hosier and Petree have 11 weeks to go until KLETC graduation!

-Suggested any after hours animal control or nuisance problems be called in to Cherokee County Sheriff dispatch for a police officer response.

City Attorney Report –

-Craw-Kan Telephone update. In previous years we have assessed fees similar to a franchise fee for allowing Craw-Kan lines and equipment to run through the City. Craw Kan does not conduct business within the City limits however their lines and equipment run through City easements to reach their customers outside of the City. Statutes have changed in recent years regarding franchise fees that bar the City from assessing fees for location, we can only charge for actual costs. If they needed to cut through a street to update or work on lines, we could bill for actual costs to repair the street. We need to repeal Ordinance on file, I will draft document for action at next council meeting.

Old Business –

- 1. Consider Ordinance 1446 naming Eddington Park.** City Attorney Wright stated this ordinance is in response to motion made at the last council meeting. Houser moved to approve Ordinance 1446 officially naming Eddington Park. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.
- 2. Consider Ordinance 1447 naming Froebe Fields.** City Attorney Wright noted this ordinance also is in response to action from the last council meeting. Opela moved to approve Ordinance 1447 officially naming Froebe Fields. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

New Business –

- 1. Consider Advance life insurance renewal for 2020.** City Clerk Chancellor informed the City carries a \$20,000 life insurance policy on all full-time City employees through Advance Life Insurance Company of Kansas as part of the employee benefit package. The current monthly rate is \$6.40 per employee with an annual cost to the City around \$2,500 when we are fully staffed. The renewal information received shows the rate to remain at \$6.40 per person for the coming plan year renewing November 1, 2019 and recommend renewing the Advance Life Insurance plan for City employees. Houser moved to approve Advance Life Insurance renewal for full-time City employees as

presented. Opela seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

2. ***Consider approval of work boot purchase out of 2019 Public Works budgets.*** City Administrator Rivas informed that Interim City Superintendent Bennett proposes to use proceeds from the sale of the old water meters for public works department employee boot purchase. In upgrading the City to digital water meters, the old water meters were sold for scrap. Bennett would like to use these funds for a \$200 work boot allowance for department employees. Houser moved to allow work boot purchase for public works employees as presented. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

Kelli Zillinger, 631 N. Kansas Ave., addressed the Council to discuss mental health in Cherokee County.

ADJOURNMENT

Houser moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Dunlap, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

Meetings:

None.

Cherri Chancellor City Clerk