

ITY OF COLUMBUS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
June 15, 2020  
6:30 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE**

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met June 15, 2020 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, Kathy Doherty, Stephanie Farstvedt (6:47 p.m.), Sean Gilmore, Sammye Opela and Tom Pryor. Council members absent: Jan Houser and Nate Long.

Council person Kathy Doherty led the Invocation followed the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Burton moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of June 1, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes, Appropriation Ordinance 20-520, Volunteer Firefighter resignation from Austin Neimeyer and Police Officer resignation from Christopher Gurney as presented. Bennett seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

**Mayor Report –**

-Appointment of Taylor Burns to the Volunteer Fire Department.

**VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER – TAYLOR BURNS**

Doherty moved to approve the Mayor's appointment of Taylor Burns as a Volunteer Firefighter. Opela seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

-Appointment of John Bullard as Municipal Judge.

-Appointment of Jacob Conard as Prosecuting Attorney.

**MUNICIPAL COURT APPOINTMENTS – JOHN BULLARD/JACOB CONARD**

Opela moved to approve the Mayor's appointment of John Bullard as Municipal Judge and Jacob Conard as Prosecuting Attorney. Doherty seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

-Appointment of Barbara Wright as City Attorney.

**CITY ATTORNEY – BARBARA WRIGHT**

Opela moved to approve the Mayor's appointment of Barbara Wright as City Attorney. Gilmore seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 7-0.

-Still working on Landbank board appointments. Plan to have these ready for the next council meeting.

**VISITOR – AUDITOR TERRY SERCER**

Terry Sercer of Diehl, Banwart, Bolton accounting firm addressed the council with findings from the 2019 City audit. Mr. Sercer informed the Governing Body that the City received an unqualified opinion in accordance with regulatory basis of accounting which is an accounting

that is designed to show compliance to Kansas Statutes. He also commented that Columbus has healthy cash and reserve balances. Sercer stated as a general rule it is good to have at least two to three month's expenses in your cash balances. The City was not cited for any statutory violations.

#### **City Administrator Report-**

-Memo in council packet.

-Rivas made a statement about what is happening all across the US in response to George Floyd's death and the responsibility of our leaders to assist with dismantling systemic racism. She thanks our LEOs under the leadership of Jason Daniels and requested a continued conversation concerning accountability and equality.

-Waiting on assessed valuation from county for completion of the 2021 budget.

#### **City Treasurer Report**

-Report in the council packet. Very little interest to be had for the next six months to several years. Good news is we are not paying a lot in interest.

Rivas added the work on the City Park basketball court is slated to be complete by July 4. Also noted the final touches on Ian's Place at Reeve's Park will be done by Friday.

Rivas updated the council on water standpipe repair at Lion's Park.

#### **City Superintendent Report –**

-Report in council packet.

-Rivas added the work on the City Park basketball court is slated to be complete by July 4. Also noted the final touches on Ian's Place at Reeve's Park will be done by Friday.

-Rivas updated the council on water standpipe repair at Lion's Park. She was asked to find out to what area of town the standpipe supplies water.

#### **City Clerk Report –**

-Movie Night and Ian's Place details were included in the Administrator's report in the council packets.

-Third Thursday Coffee on Thursday 6/18 at Smittle House, 8:30 a.m. come and go.

-City Pool opens Saturday June 20. Meeting with lifeguards and managers on Wednesday to cover pool manual and extra cleaning and social distancing protocol.

#### **Police Chief Report –**

-Officer training complete for the current year. New training year begins July 1. Constantly training and trying to improve ourselves.

-Officer Holt submitted several mowing work orders today.

-Officer Holt has presentation of four properties to consider for condemnation.

Code Enforcement Officer Gary Holt presented structure reports for:

-302 North Kansas. Officer Holt noted the property is in violation of City Code; overall appearance of the structure is unsightly and is a general blight to the neighborhood and community. Owners have been notified monthly of the condition since October 2019. Property owners have failed to make significant progress towards abatement and failed to remedy the securement violation they were notified of in January 2020.

**PROCEED WITH CONDEMNATION HEARING – 302 NORTH KANAS**

Opela moved to proceed with condemnation process for structure at 302 North Kansas. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

-419 South Delaware. Officer Holt noted the property is in violation of City Code; overall appearance of the structure is unsightly and is a general blight to the neighborhood and community. Owners have been notified monthly of the condition since August 2019. There have also been actions against the property for overgrown grass and weed nuisances.

**PROCEED WITH CONDEMNATION HEARING – 419 SOUTH DELAWARE**

Opela moved to proceed with condemnation process for structure at 409 South Delaware. Bennett seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

-415 South Indiana. Officer Holt noted the property is in violation of City Code; overall appearance of the structure is unsightly and is a general blight to the neighborhood and community. Owners have been notified monthly of the condition since August 2019. Owners have made sporadic contact with the department but has made no significant progress towards abatement of the poor conditions.

**PROCEED WITH CONDEMNATION HEARING – 415 SOUTH INDIANA**

Burton moved to proceed with condemnation process for structure at 415 South Indiana. Farstvedt seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

-533 West Country Road. Officer Holt noted the property is in violation of City Code; overall appearance of the structure is unsightly and is a general blight to the neighborhood and community. Owners have been notified monthly of the condition since August 2019. Overgrown vegetation violation cited April 2020 was taken care of by owner. Property owner has failed to make significant progress towards abatement.

**PROCEED WITH CONDEMNATION HEARING – 533 WEST COUNTRY ROAD**

Opela moved to proceed with condemnation process for structure at 533 West Country Road. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

**Fire Chief Report –**

- 102 runs for the year, down considerably from 160 average for this time of year.
- Department will be participating in the last day of the summer boost program.
- Ladder truck and flag will be at Ian’s Place dedication.
- Learned that manufacturer making the fire bay ventilation system approved by council earlier this year is up and running again. We might get installation later this year.
- No buyer for the old ladder truck. Might be working with the committee later on trade in on a brush truck.

**City Attorney Report –**

- None.

**UPDATE JOB DESCRIPTIONS – COURT CLERK / ASSISTANT CITY CLERK**

Opela moved to approve updated Municipal Court Clerk and Assistant City Clerk job descriptions as presented. Pryor seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

Start here.

**Old Business –**

1. ***Discussion: 2021 Council Structure.*** City Administrator Rivas commented this is a continuation/follow-up from a March council meeting discussion. She noted a change to the committee structure is done through ordinance or resolution by the City Attorney. A couple of options from the last discussion were included in my council packet memo. One idea is to form committees with two council members representing each committee. Another choice is to appoint one council member to be the subject matter expert or department representative and have bi-weekly work sessions in addition to the council meetings. It was agreed to study the matter and discuss again at the July 20 council meeting.
2. ***Consider adding three-year (alternating) terms and vacancies on the board (filled by appointment for the vacant unexpired term) into Land Bank Ordinance 1457-sec. 2.*** Mayor Spieth suggests updating the current landbank ordinance to include board member terms and legal representation information. Discussion ensued. City Attorney will draft ordinance for council consideration at the next meeting.
3. ***Consider adding land bank staff attorney as supporting staff into Land Bank Ordinance 1457-section 3.***

**New Business –**

*None.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

Burton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Doherty seconded the motion. Voting aye: Bennett, Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

**Meetings:**

**None.**

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*Cherri Chancellor City Clerk*