

CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
December 21, 2020
6:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met December 21, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. presided over by Mayor Grant Spieth. Council members physically present: John Brassart, Jerri Burton, Kathy Doherty, Stephanie Farstvedt, Jan Houser, Sammye Opela, Tom Pryor. Council members present by zoom: Sean Gilmore. Council members absent: Connie Bennett, Nate Long.

First United Methodist Church Pastor Lindsey Clarke provided the Invocation followed the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Grant Spieth opened the Budget Amendment Hearing at 6:33 p.m. He asked if anyone would like to approach the council regarding the proposed amendments to the 2020 City budget. Seeing none, he asked if council had questions. Seeing none, he requested a motion on the matter. Doherty moved to approve 2020 budget amendments as presented. Houser seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

Budget hearing closed at 6:35 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Burton moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of Appropriation Ordinance 20-531, December 7, 2020 council meeting minutes and Cereal Malt Beverage License renewals for American Legion, American Legion Beverage Hut, Casey's General Store, Dollar General, Fast Mart and G&W Foods as presented. Farstvedt seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

PUBLIC FORUM

Sheila Coburn of 423 West Olive approached the council regarding sidewalks and curbs. Ms. Coburn noted in several residential areas there are not any. She believes curbs increase property value and help with water drainage. She also noted the disrepair of the sidewalk in front of her house. Tree roots have caused areas of the sidewalk to be uneven and she is concerned about someone stumbling or getting hurt. City Administrator Daniela Rivas thanked Ms. Coburn for bringing this to the council. She noted curb and guttering play a big part of a storm water program. The City is working on the storm water issue and hope to have a plan by the end of 2021. Rivas noted currently property owners are responsible for sidewalk maintenance. She also acknowledged residents are not always able to afford the upkeep. New Property/Parks Director Coble is looking into a sidewalk program as well.

Nathan Coleman introduced himself as a local attorney and informed council he would like to be considered for the City's Prosecuting Attorney position. Mayor Spieth advised he received a letter of resignation from current Prosecuting Attorney Jake Conard and planned to present it to the council tonight.

Mayor Report –

- Appoint Daniela Rivas to represent the City on the Cherokee County Economic Development Board for a three-year term.

CHEROKEE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Daniela Rivas

Houser moved to approve the Mayor’s appointment of Daniela Rivas to the Cherokee County Economic Development Board for a three-year term. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

-Presented resignation notice from City Prosecuting Attorney Jacob Conard. Mayor informed this is a one-year position with appointments in June. We will be looking for someone to fill the remainder of Mr. Conard’s term until June.

-Recognized Justin Rogers for ten years of service with the City. Mr. Rogers was unable to attend. Ms. Rivas accepted the award on his behalf.

-Recognized and thanked retiring council members for their service and dedication to the City:

Connie Bennett

John Brassart

Jerri Burton

Sean Gilmore

Sammye Opela

-Recognized and presented 2020 Columbus PRIDE Rising Star Award to Council Member Tom Pryor.

City Administrator Report-

-Council laptops should be here in the next few weeks as we move towards paperless packets.

-Hiring and filling positions in the new Utility and Property/Parks departments.

- I will be off work for the next three weeks on medical leave – contact City Clerk in my absence.

City Treasurer Report

-Report included in council packets. Ending cash balances are stronger than we anticipated six months ago.

City Clerk Report –

- City Hall remodel in the final stages.

-Extend thank you to all council for their service this year, especially the retiring council members.

-Mayor highlighted Cherokee County Economic Overview included in the City Clerk FYI Memo.

Community Development Coordinator Report –

-First Landbank acquisition in the works.

-Working to set up the Farmer’s Market to utilize the SNAP program and possibly a double up food buck program.

Police Chief Report –

-Thank you to council members.

-Kyle Clark has accepted position with the Police Department.

Fire Chief Report –

- 23 calls since the last council meeting, 346 year to date.
- Assisted with Angel Tree deliveries to approximately 50 children last weekend.
- Shopped with 5-6 children last week for Christmas presents with donations to the department. Children and volunteers had a blast.

Property & Parks Director Report –

- Hiring staff for department.
- City Hall remodel coming to a close.
- Finalizing 2021 street paving plan for first work session review.
- Leaf pickup program complete – request to start the program earlier in the fall next year.

Utility Director Report -

On vacation. Report next meeting.

City Attorney Report –

- Attorney General opinions clarifying Landbank tax forgiveness and out of state resident liquor license guidelines.

ON CALL PAY

Opela moved to repeal Personnel Handbook Article IV-10(2) and replacing with: Non-exempt, full-time employees of the public works department scheduled for on call duty, will be paid a weekly stipend as prescribed in the Employee Wage Range Chart and shall earn overtime pay at a rate of one and one-half the employee's regular rate of pay for all hours actually worked over forty (40) hours in a week. Houser seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

PERSONNEL HANDBOOK UPDATE

Opela moved to approve updating the Personnel Handbook Article IV-10(4) to be 'department head' rather than 'foreman'. Houser seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: Motion carried 8-0.

Old Business –

1. *Consider extending paid leave provision approved by council April 6, 2020 of up to 80 hours for full-time employees who are: 1) subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19; 2) has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19; or 3) is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis through December 2021.* Houser moved to approve paid leave provision approved by council April 6, 2020 of up to 80 hours for full-time employees who are: 1)subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19; 2) has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19; or 3) is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis.

Pryor seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

**New Business –
None.**

ADJOURNMENT

Opela moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m. Burton seconded the motion. Voting aye: Brassart, Burton, Doherty, Farstvedt, Gilmore, Houser, Opela, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 8-0.

**Meetings:
None**

Cherri Chancellor City Clerk