

CITY OF COLUMBUS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
December 5, 2022  
6:30 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE**

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met December 5, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. presided over by Mayor Grant Spieth. Council members present: Kathy Doherty, Stephanie Farstvedt, Sammye Opela, Tom Pryor, Lindsay Shoemaker. Council members absent: None.

Linda Howard of Camp Joy Ministries provided the Invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Farstvedt moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of Appropriation Ordinance 22-586, Work Session Minutes – October 24, 2022, Treasurer Report, Personnel Report – November 2022 and Municipal Court Docket Summary – 11/28/2022. Doherty seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Opela, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

**Staff Reports-**

**City Administrator Report –**

- Noted department supervisors will give end of year presentations at the next council meeting. The Administrator report will follow in January.
- Stormwater RFP deadline was Friday, 12/2. We received several proposals which will be reviewed and brought to the next council meeting.
- We have had several problems recently with the Community Building rentals. After speaking with staff, we recommend suspending reservations for a few months in order to have time to address problem areas.
- Employee potluck has been rescheduled to Friday, December 16 at noon. The council previously approved closing city offices to allow employees to celebrate together. I ask that the council extend this opportunity to the new date.

Opela moved to close city offices Friday, December 16 from noon until 1 p.m. to allow employees to participate in a holiday potluck dinner. Farstvedt seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Opela, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

**City Clerk Report -**

- Working on end of year reports and presentation for the next council meeting.
- Reminder that city offices will be closed Monday, December 26 for the Christmas holiday and Monday, January 2 for New Year in accordance with the Employee Handbook. The first council meeting in 2023 will be held Tuesday, January 3.

**Police Chief Report –**

- Christmas parade and festivities went well with no incidents/accidents reported.
- 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with Square 9 on Thursday to begin installation of new document storage system.
- The feral cat TNR (trap/neuter/release) program is being advertised to bring more community awareness to the project. We are working with Farmer's COOP to get more live traps after the first of the year.
- Participating in the new Kansas Law Enforcement Accreditation Program through the State. This is a two-year program that can help improve agency matrix, enhance transparency and accountability, reduce insurance and liability costs, and enhance professional excellence.

### **Fire Chief Report -**

-KU brought Firefighter II extraction training to Columbus this past weekend. Several area departments participated.

-Firefighter Christmas shopping project will be next week. The department worked with area schools to select four individuals to participate. Donations are channeled through the Fire department Smokey Fund.

-Department responded to three structure fires this week and several car wrecks.

### **Community Development Coordinator Report-**

-Working with Mr. Coble on a Champlain tire recycling grant. This is a 50/50 opportunity and could be used for tables, benches, or mulch around the play equipment in the City's parks,

-Attended K-State housing webinar regarding community rehabilitation opportunity.

-Participating in CDRR (Chronic Disease Risk Reduction) and Pathways quarterly video calls.

-Reviewing operating procedures for the Farmers Market.

### **Property/Parks Director Report –**

-Working with CDC Jacob Spencer on a grant for playground surface rubber mulch.

-Staff has been moving brush from the drop off location near the dog pound to the burn site at the city cemetery.

-Getting equipment ready in case of winter weather.

-Will be addressing basic needs at the community building in the coming weeks and the rental process.

-Working at the intersection of Redwood /Quail Drive over the next couple of days adding a concrete flume to help move water off the corner.

-Street sweeper vac hose damaged during recent leaf pickup program. The hose was replaced a few weeks prior to the start of the project. Need to budget for an actual leaf vac machine to save on upkeep costs as well as wear and tear on the equipment.

-Will check on possible drainage problem at Ohio/Walnut near COOP drive.

### **Utilities Director Report –**

-Clearwell inspected last week – process is done every 3-4 years – our last maintenance was in 2019.

-2023 water tower maintenance complete – installed interior safety climb.

-South Park Drive sewer problem repaired.

### **Treasurer Report -**

-Interests rates are going up. Mayor Spieth inquired about cash balance being \$70,000 lower than last year and Administrator Letner noted the Connecting Link (CCLIP) reimbursement is still outstanding.

### **New Business-**

**H.1A. Consider Industrial Park Purchase Proposal.** Administrator Letner informed the council one proposal was received by the deadline for the property and was included in the council packet. He noted it is up to the council how to proceed with the matter. Opela moved to reject the offer received for the 1050 East Merle Evans Drive property. Doherty seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Opela, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

Farstvedt moved to counter Mr. Boesker's offer with a \$67,333 proposal for the 1050 East Merle Evans property. Opela seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Opela, Shoemaker. Voting nay: Pryor. Motion carried 4-1.

**H5A. Consider APAC 2023 street overlay bid of \$152,829.50 to be paid from General Fund – Streets.** Coble noted there were three responses for the 2023 street project and recommends the APAC bid. This covers the base project and does not include alternate streets or the railroad crossing. Shoemaker moved to approve the APAC 2023 street overlay bid of \$152,829.50 to be paid from General Fund – Streets. Farstvedt seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Opela, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

**H5B. Consider Public Works reorganization and approval of associated job descriptions.** Administrator Letner recommended reorganizing the public works department going back to the superintendent/foreman model. He stated it would be in the City’s best interest to consolidate around a superintendent/foreman, hiring both with the foreman learning the ropes under a superintendent. He advised this would help with succession planning. Letner advocated the council hire Randy Coble as superintendent at least on an interim basis as he has proven himself in every way. Letner pointed out the employee handbook process of internal promotion as well. Letner spoke of the difficulty in filling the utility director position in the recent recruitment process and his desire to avoid a repeat experience all the while expressing appreciation for Mr. Davis during the time he has been with the City.

Council members discussed the pros and cons of reorganization.

Pryor moved to reorganize the public works department creating a superintendent/foreman structure and updating corresponding job descriptions and wage chart effective December 11, 2022. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay: Opela. Motion carried 4-1.

Opela left the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Promotion versus advertising an open position discussion. City Attorney Barbara Wright advised of previous council concerns about nepotism and policy to advertise employment opportunities internally and externally before filling the position.

Shoemaker moved to name Randy Coble to the position of Interim City Superintendent effective December 11, 2022, with a salary of \$60,000 per year. Doherty seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding interim notation and salary range.

Shoemaker amended the motion on the floor to name Randy Coble as City Superintendent effective December 11, 2022, with a salary of \$60,000 per year and a probation period of 90 days with salary to be renegotiated at the end of 90 days. Doherty seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay none. Motion carried 4-0.

It was noted the foreman position will be advertised internally and externally.

Mr. Coble’s 90-day probation review will be the week of March 13 with any salary recommendation considered at the March 20, 2023, council meeting.

Mayor Spieth reminded everyone of the employee potluck dinner at noon Friday, December 16, 2022, in the new public works building and that city offices will be closed for one hour to allow employees to participate.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Doherty moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Farstvedt, Pryor, Shoemaker. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Council Meeting**

**Monday December 19, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m.**

**Employee Holiday Potluck Dinner**

**Friday, December 16, 2022 @ noon**

  
Cherri Chancellor, City Clerk

