

CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 15, 2024
6:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met April 15, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. presided over by Mayor Grant Spieth. Council members present: Kathy Doherty, Laura Epler, Tom Pryor, and Lindsay Shoemaker (via Zoom). Council members absent: Wiley Sanders.

Tom Pryor provided the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Doherty moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of Appropriation Ordinance #24-625 – April 15, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes – April 1, 2024, Work Session Minutes – April 8, 2024, and Municipal Court Docket Summary – April 8, 2024. Pryor seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Epler, Shoemaker, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

MAYOR

Mayor Grant Spieth reported that Tom Pryor and himself recently attended the League of Kansas Municipalities City Leaders training in Manhattan, Kansas. Mayor Spieth said city staff, home rule and municipal finance were some of the training topics.

STAFF REPORTS

City Administrator – City Administrator Jake Letner reported that Officer Preston Hosier has brought to his attention a police hiring grant opportunity for the police department. The grant would pay 75% of a newly hired officer’s salary with a matching 25% from the city. The maximum total grant over a three-year period would be \$125,000. Police Chief Jason Daniels said he fully supports applying for the grant. Letner indicated that he will be working with Lexipol on grant writing services for this initiative based on their experience in successfully acquiring grants for similar-size departments across the nation.

City Clerk – City Clerk Ruth Hutley reported that business cards have been purchased for the council members’ use.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Steven Burton reported that the department has responded to 184 emergency calls year-to-date.

-Chief Burton reported that the department recently participated in a mock wreck at Columbus High School and thanked public works employees for assisting them in moving the vehicles.

-Chief Burton stated the fire department will be participating in the “Touch a Truck” event on Friday, April 19th at Park School.

-Lastly, Chief Burton shared there will be a cookout April 26 at the fire station, with proceeds going to the annual Freedom Fest event which is scheduled for July 6, 2024.

Police Department – Police Chief Jason Daniels reported that the police department will be participating in the “Touch a Truck” event on Friday at Park School.

Public Works – Superintendent Randy Coble reported that the public works department will also be participating in the “Touch a Truck” event on Friday at Park School.

-Coble said the city's Splash Pad is scheduled to open on May 17 and the city pool to open May 26.
-Coble reported that spring cleanup is currently underway. Coble asked if the council had any objections to continuing spring cleanup an extra week to pick up brush. He said citizens should put brush near the alley or on the street side of the property for pick up. The council had no objections to adding an extra week for brush pick-up.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider the Disposition of ARPA funds.

City Administrator Jake Letner opened the discussion regarding the disposition of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Letner explained the ARPA funds must be committed by 12/31/2024 and spent by 12/31/2026. If the funds are not committed or spent by the respective deadlines, then the funds must be returned to the US Treasury. Letner requested the City Council authorize staff to use ARPA funds for expenses normally incurred by the general fund, up to the award allocation amount, in 2024. City staff would then transfer money from the general fund to reserve accounts so the ARPA expenses could be tracked. The Council signaled agreement to this strategy to ensure that no funds would need to be sent back to the US Treasury.

Consider Resolution 657, in Support of the Crossland Housing Initiative

Mayor Grant Spieth read proposed Resolution 657 which outlines the City's support of the preparation and submittal by Crossland Construction Company, Inc., of an application to the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation for the Kansas Housing Investor Tax Credit. Pryor made a motion to approve Resolution 657. The motion was seconded by Shoemaker. Voting aye: Doherty, Epler, Shoemaker, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Doherty called for a fifteen-minute executive session at 6:57 p.m. for consultation with an attorney to discuss matters that would be deemed privileged in an attorney-client relationship, subject being contractual with the Council, Mayor, City Administrator, and City Clerk in attendance. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Epler, Shoemaker, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

Regular session 7:12 p.m.

No action taken.

Crossland Construction Company, Inc. to Purchase City Industrial Park Land.

Mayor Grant Spieth announced that the city has an offer from Crossland Construction Company, Inc., to purchase the Merle Evans Industrial Park for future expansion of the company's corporate offices. Mayor Spieth said it is in the best interest of the city to work with Crossland as they are one of the city's largest employers. There recently was interest by a developer to build a housing development in the Merle Evans Industrial Park but Mayor Spieth said the developer would be interested in considering other land options within the city. Shoemaker made a motion to accept the offer by Crossland Construction Company, Inc. to purchase the property at 1050 Merle Evans Drive from the city in the amount of \$70,000. The motion was seconded by Epler. Voting aye: Doherty, Epler, Shoemaker, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0. Mayor Spieth is authorized to sign all necessary documents to convey the property to Crossland Construction Company, Inc.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Doherty called for a ten-minute executive session at 7:18 p.m. for personnel matters of non-elected personnel with the Council, Mayor, City Administrator, and Police Chief in attendance. Pryor

seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Epler, Shoemaker, Pryor. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.


Regular session 7:28 p.m.
No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Doherty moved to adjourn the meeting. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Shoemaker, Sanders, Pryor and Epler. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Upcoming Events:

- **Planning Commission Steering Committee Public Meeting – Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. Community Building.**
- **City Council Meeting – Monday, May 6, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.**


Ruth Hutley, City Clerk

