

CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
October 7, 2024
5:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met October 7, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. presided over by Mayor Grant Spieth. Council members present: Lindsay Shoemaker, Kathy Doherty, Laura Epler, Tom Pryor and Wiley Sanders (via Zoom). Council members absent: None.

Jim Thomas of First Baptist Church provided the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM

Jason Wells, 312 S. Florida, approached the council requesting that 909 S. Park, which is commonly known as the Rodeo Grounds and leased by the American Legion to the Saddle Club, be allowed to house farm animals on a permanent basis. Wells said he has been notified by the police department of complaints that he has been harboring his horses on the property. Wells said he is keeping his horses there temporarily. City Attorney Barbara Wright said the American Legion should be consulted first since it's their property. The matter was tabled with no action taken.

Consider Authorizing the Closure of the 500 Block of Sunset Circle on Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024, to Accommodate a Neighborhood Block Party.

Sonja Ledford, 1115 Sunset Drive, was present to answer the council's questions regarding her request to close the 500 block of Sunset Circle on Sunday October 13, 2024, between the hours of 4-8 p.m. for a neighborhood block party. Doherty made a motion to approve closing the street in front of 515, 517, 519 and 522 Sunset Circle for the neighborhood block party on October 13 between the hours of 4-8 p.m. Pryor seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Shoemaker moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of Appropriation Ordinance #24-636 – October 7, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes – September 16, 2024, Work Session Minutes – September 23, 2024, Treasurer's Report – September 30, 2024, and Municipal Court Docket Summary – September 23, 2024. The motion was seconded by Epler. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

STAFF REPORTS

City Administrator – City Administrator Jake Letner shared that the Chamber of Commerce has requested additional volunteers to collect parking fees during Columbus Days weekend. Letner said anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Jean at the Chamber office or himself.

-Lentner shared that questions pertaining to the comprehensive plan have been circulating and clarified that neither the city nor its agents are suggesting a large-scale, unilateral annexation of rural farmland into city limits as part of this process. Letner reminded the council and the public that additional public meetings are scheduled on 10/24 and 11/14 to answer questions and concerns pertaining to the comprehensive planning process.

City Clerk – No report.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Steven Burton reported the department has responded to 467 emergency calls year-to-date.

- Chief Burton shared the department has applied for a Patterson Family Foundation Rural EMS grant which would allow the department to procure additional medical equipment to assist in emergencies.
- Chief Burton reported that Cherokee County has offered to gift the Columbus Fire Dept. a used Ford Explorer to be used as a first-response medical vehicle. The Explorer has a V6 engine that will be more fuel efficient than the vehicle that the department currently uses for this purpose.
- Chief Burton shared that Fire Safety Week is currently underway and students from local schools have been visiting the fire station. Burton shared that the students watch a fire safety video and take part in some interactive drills and activities.
- Lastly, Chief Burton shared that the department will be participating in Career Day at Columbus High School on October 16th.

Police Department – Police Chief Kyle Clark reported the police department will be busy all weekend with the Columbus Day festival.

- Chief Clark reported that he and four staff members will be attending a fentanyl drug detection and intervention training in Pittsburg the following day.

Public Works – City Superintendent Randy Coble reported that Fall cleanup is nearly complete. Coble reported 19-1/2 tons of debris has been disposed of during the cleanup.

- Coble reported the city's lead and copper survey is completed and will be submitted to KDHE in the coming days.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Approval of the Demolition Bid from B-3 Construction, Inc. for 327 N. Florida Ave. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the bid from B-3 Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$3,500 for demolition of the structure at 327 N. Florida. The motion was seconded by Epler. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider Approval of the Demolition Bid from B-3 Construction, Inc. for 526 W. Walnut Ave. City Administrator Jake Letner explained that the demolition bid for the structure at 526 W. Walnut Ave. was higher than the average bid because the structure was much larger and contained a basement that was full of water. Doherty made a motion to approve the demolition bid from B-3 Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$11,600 for the demolition of the structure at 526 W. Walnut Ave. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider Ordinance 1518 – Establishing a Curfew at the Columbus Public Library. Epler made a motion to approve Ordinance 1518 Establishing a Curfew at the Columbus Public Library. The motion was seconded by Pryor. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

Proposed 2025 Salary Schedule.

City Administrator Jake Letner opened the discussion regarding the proposed 2025 Salary Schedule for city employees. The biggest change, Letner explained, is in starting wage for lifeguards and seasonal laborers. The 2025 schedule would set the minimum for lifeguards and summer laborers at \$12.94 an hour increased from \$8.19 an hour in 2024. Letner said he believes this increase will help recruit summer help. Each wage range's minimum, middle, and maximum points will be increased by 3%.

Pryor made a motion to approve the 2025 Salary Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Epler. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider the Land Purchase and Sale Contract for 0 E. Merle Evans Dr.

City Administrator Jake Letner opened the discussion regarding the land purchase and sale contract for 0 E. Merle Evans Dr. Letner explained that the land purchase plat approval should be postponed until the parcel has been annexed into the city. Letner said the annexation approval would come before the council during the second council meeting in November. A discussion was held regarding the amount of assistance the council would like to offer the developer of the housing project. City Administrator Jake Letner said he would prepare a cost benefit analysis for the council's review. The council decided to schedule a work session for October 28, to further discuss this issue.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Consider Revisions to the Columbus Police Department's Policy & Procedures.

Police Chief Kyle Clark presented the council with 28 of the department's policy and procedures that have been modified for Council's review. Epler made a motion to approve the policy revisions as presented. The motion was seconded by Shoemaker. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

STREETS/ALLEYS/BRIDGES/STORMWATER

Consider Approval of the Work Estimate from BG Consultants for the Upcoming SRTS Construction Project in the Amount of \$120,927.46.

City Administrator Jake Letner led the discussion regarding the work estimate from BG Consultants for the upcoming Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project. Letner shared that the sum is an estimate and the actual amount payable to BG for work performed could be different. However, the estimate should be close. Letner reminded the council that the amount is subject to the 80/20 grant provided by the Kansas Department of Transportation, meaning that the city is only responsible for paying 20% of the actual costs incurred. Letner added that the work will commence in 2025 and provide for new sidewalks to be constructed on the south side of W. Maple St. from the intersection of S. High School Ave. extending west to Washington Ave., and on the north side of E. Sycamore from US-69 extending east to Reeves Park. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the work estimate from BG Consultants in the amount of \$120,927.46 for the upcoming SRTS project. Epler seconded the motion. Voting aye: Doherty, Pryor, Shoemaker, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Doherty moved to adjourn the meeting. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Voting aye: Shoemaker, Pryor, Doherty, Sanders, Epler. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Upcoming Events:

- **City Council Meeting – Monday, October 21, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.**
- **City Council Work Session – Monday, October 28, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.**
- **Columbus Comprehensive Plan Public Open House – Thursday, October 24, 2024, and Thursday, November 14, 2024, from 5-7 p.m. at the Community Building.**



Ruth Hutley
Ruth Hutley, City Clerk