

CITY OF COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
November 4, 2024
5:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

The City Council of Columbus, Kansas met November 4, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. presided over by Mayor Grant Spieth. Council members present: Laura Epler, Wiley Sanders and Tom Pryor (via Zoom). Council members absent: Kathy Doherty.

Dorcia Johnson of United Methodist Church provided the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Epler moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of Appropriation Ordinance #24-638 – November 4, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes – October 21, 2024, City Council Work Session Minutes – October 28, 2024, and Treasurer’s Report – October 31, 2024. The motion was seconded by Sanders. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 3-0.

MAYOR

Appointment of Council Position 2nd Ward.

Sanders made a motion to approve the mayor’s appointment of Misty Spear to 2nd Ward Council position with term expiring 12/31/2024. Epler seconded the motion. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 3-0.

STAFF REPORTS

City Administrator – City Administrator Jake Letner reported that about 950 tri-fold pamphlets were mailed to water customers as required by KDHE based on the results of a community-wide system inventory. Every public water supply system throughout the state and country is required to distribute similar literature based on federal mandate.

City Clerk – City Clerk Ruth Hutley reported that she recently attended the City Clerk and Municipal Finance Officer academy in Wichita. Some of the topics discussed at the academy included leadership skills, de-escalation of citizens, establishing internal controls, business licensing and bonds.

-Clerk Hutley reminded the council that city offices will be closed on Monday, November 11 for the Veteran’s Day Holiday.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Steven Burton reported the department has responded to 528 emergency calls year-to-date.

-Chief Burton thanked the Public Works department for changing out tires on fire department vehicles that were recently burned.

-Chief Burton announced that Korey Lucian has accepted an offer to fill the vacant full-time fire driver position. Chief Burton said Lucian comes with many years of experience and currently serves as a volunteer for the department.

Police Department – Police Chief Kyle Clark reported police department staff participated in the Halloween Safe Walk, distributing candy to nearly 600 children.

-Chief Clark shared that Officer Christopher Gurney has accepted an offer to fill the vacant full-time police officer position, which means the department will now be fully staffed. Chief Clark said that

Gurney is a trained officer who previously worked for the department. Officer Gurney's first day on the job is November 4.

Public Works – City Superintendent Randy Coble reported that concrete sidewalk in the 200 block of E. Maple has been removed but weather conditions has delayed pouring the new sidewalk.

-Coble reported that crews from Emory, Sapp, & Sons have begun milling work at intersections and pavement will be laid by the end of the week.

Public Hearing to Consider Annexations of 720 E. Country Rd. and 821 S. East Ave.

Mayor Grant Spieth opened the public hearing on the annexations of 720 E. Country Rd. and 821 S. East Ave. at 5:45 p.m. Mayor Spieth explained that the property is owned by Crossland Construction Company, Inc., and they have requested the annexations. No one appeared at the hearing to comment on the annexations. The hearing closed at 5:47 p.m. Epler made a motion to approve the annexations of 720 E. Country Rd. and 821 S. East Ave. The motion was seconded by Sanders. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider 2025 Health Insurance Renewal.

City Administrator Jake Letner opened the discussion regarding the 2025 health insurance renewal for city employees. Joe Holdenried and Derek Dick from Bukaty, the insurance broker for the city's current health insurance plan appeared via Zoom to provide information and answer questions. Epler made a motion to approve the partially self-funded plan's stop loss contract with the proposed rates from Everest Reinsurance and approve the proposed employee contribution amounts for 2025. Spear seconded the motion. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

Consider 2025 Dental Insurance Renewal from Blue Cross Blue Shield.

City Administrator Jake Letner opened the discussion regarding the renewal of the 2025 BCBS Dental Insurance Plan for city employees. Letner reported that rates are unchanged from 2024, except for a \$0.05 decrease in the employee + child and family tiers per month. Epler made a motion to approve the 2025 dental insurance renewal from Blue Cross Blue Shield. The motion was seconded by Spear. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

Consider 2025 Life Insurance Renewal from Advance Insurance.

City Administrator Jake Letner opened the discussion regarding the 2025 life insurance renewal from Advance Insurance for city employees. Letner shared that the proposed 2025 rate remains unchanged from 2024. Sanders moved to approve the 2025 life insurance renewal from Advance Insurance. Epler seconded the motion. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Consider Approval of Additions to the Columbus Police Department's Policy & Procedures Manual.

Police Chief Kyle Clark led the discussion regarding additions to the Columbus Police Department's Policy and Procedures manual. Chief Clark explained that the 28 policies, ranging from Organization and Administration down to the Personnel section have been previously modified and revised with Lexipol. Epler made a motion to approve the additions to the Columbus Police Department's Policy & Procedures Manual as submitted. Spear seconded the motion. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion regarding Ordinance 1515 – An Ordinance Regulating the Parking of, and Residing In, Recreational Vehicles within the City Limits of Columbus, Kansas.

City Administrator Jake Letner shared that since the approval of Ordinance 1515 he has received complaints from both sides regarding recreational vehicles within the city limits. After discussion, City Attorney Barbara Wright was instructed by the council to draft an amended ordinance to be considered by the council at the November 18 City Council meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

Amy Johnson, owner of Bowler's Boulevard, 239 W. Maple, approached the council requesting permission to keep the 5-minute carry-out parking sign in front of her business. Johnson explained that over 60% of Bowler's Boulevard business was carry-out food and the sign was a courtesy for her customers. Nate Long, owner of Life In Bloom, 211 W. Maple, approached the council requesting permission to keep the 5-minute carry-out parking sign in front of his business. Long said it benefits his business to have a designated carry-out parking space for his customers' convenience in picking up to-go items. Randy Hale, owner of H & R Block, 227 W. Maple approached the council expressing concerns about selecting businesses to have designated parking spots on a public street. Spear made a motion to allow Bowler's Boulevard and Life In Bloom to keep their designated parking signs for the time being until further action by the council. Epler seconded the motion. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Epler moved to adjourn the meeting. Spear seconded the motion. Voting aye: Pryor, Epler, Sanders, Spear. Voting nay: None. Motion carried 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Upcoming Events:

- **Columbus Comprehensive Plan Public Open House – Thursday, November 14, 2024, from 5-7 p.m. at the Community Building.**
- **City Council Meeting – Monday, November 18, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.**


Ruth Hutley, City Clerk

