City of Carthage, Missouri
CITY COUNCIL

January 10, 2023 - 6:30 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

The Carthage City Council met in regular session on the above date in the Council Chambers at 06:30 PM with Mayor Dan Rife presiding.

Fire Chief Ryan Huntley gave the invocation.

Police Chief Bill Hawkins led the flag salute.

The following Council Members answered roll call: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, Mark Elliff. City Administrator Greg Dagnan was also present. Council Members Robin Harrison and Brandi Ensor, along with City Attorney Nate Dally were absent.

The following Department Heads were present: Police Chief Bill Hawkins, Fire Chief Ryan Huntley, Public Works Director Zeb Carney, Parks & Recreation Director Abi Almandinger, Assistant City Administrator Traci Cox, City Clerk Miranda Deal, and Deputy City Clerk Courtney Walker.

Mr. Elliff made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2022 Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

During Citizen's Participation, Mr. Dagnan introduced the new CEDC President Jeff Williams, and the new Economic Development Director Jeff Meredith. Jeff Williams spoke to the Council on the CEDC's plan for the future. Jeff Meredith introduced himself and thanked everyone for the support. He looks forward to meeting and talking with everyone. Julie Reams with the Carthage Chamber of Commerce presented Chamber statistics to the Council for the 2022 year. She also mentioned a few events that are already scheduled for 2023.

Mr. Snow reported that the Budget Ways & Means Committee met on January 9 and discussed multiple items. The first item discussed was the RFP's for a new firewall. The committee approved the bid from Firewalls.com in the amount of $5,099.05 for a SonicWall NSA2700. Mr. Armstrong voiced his concerns over the bids. He would like to see what surrounding cities are using for their firewall. He voted no at the budget committee because he believes their should have been more research. Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Ms. Otero to approve the bid from Firewalls.com in the amount of $5,099.05. Motion carried with Mr. Armstrong casting a nay vote. Also discussed at the budget committee was the engagement letter with Baker Tilly. This would allow Baker Tilly to find and write grants for the City, it appears in Council Bil 23-03. The 3% marijuana tax was also approved by the committee and forwarded to Council as Council Bill 23-04. Sales and Use Tax numbers are up, the use tax has been collected for a year now. Chief Hawkins asked the committee to approve the purchase of 7 Dodge Durangos. Four of the Durangos will finish the take-home car project, the other three are replacing the older patrol vehicles that are having problems. These three patrol vehicles would have been replaced in July, but due to ongoing maintenance costs, they were requested earlier. Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliff, to approve the purchase of 7 Dodge Durangos for a total amount of $439,481. Motion carried. The Budget committee approved the budget calendar. There will be more involvement from the committees rather than having a weeks worth of budget meetings with department heads. Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong to approve the budget calendar. Motion carried. The next meeting will be February 13.

Ms. Blankenship reported that the Committee on Insurance, Audit & Claims met on this date and approved the claims. The committee approved payment to Dick Horton Consulting in the amount of $15,000. She reported that the auditor will be at the next Insurance, Audit & Claims meeting to present the Fiscal Year 22 audit, all of council is invited. The next meeting is January 24, that meeting time may need to be moved up in case there is a heavy agenda.

Mr. Elliff reported that the Public Safety Committee meeting for December was canceled due to lack of business. The next meeting is scheduled for January 23 due to the 16th being a City holiday.

Ms. Otero reported that the Public Service Committee met on December 20. The committee discussed the play & park concepts for new playground equipment at Municipal Park and Carter Park. Those items appear in Council Bills 23-01 & 23-02. The larger price tag for the Municipal Park structure in 23-01 includes the surface for the structure, the structure, the installation and a small pavilion near the structure. The structure in Council Bill 23-02 will go to Carter Park which is another highly utilized park in the City. The other structures for the remaining parks will be determined at future meetings.

Mr. Armstrong reported that the Public Works Committee meeting was canceled for January. He reminded everyone that Council Bill 22-55 was to replace the McGregor Street bridge.

Special Committee and Board Liaison Reports were given by Mr. Elliff for the Jasper County Commission.

During reports from Council Members, Mr. Snow reminded the Council that the money being used for the play & park structures in Council Bills 23-01 & 23-02, was from the McCune Brooks Hospital Trust and not the City.

Fire Chief Ryan Huntley reported that the new diesel exhaust system at Station 1 is up and running.

Public Works Director Zeb Carney reported that the bridge replacement on Case Street is finished and the road is now open. He also reported that his department is done collecting leaves for the year.

Parks and Recreation Director Abi Almandinger reported that she is getting to know all of the staff and is trying to get the hang of everything.

Assistant City Administrator Traci Cox reported that she presented the sales and use tax numbers to the budget committee. Sales tax revenue is up $175,000 from last year, and the use tax that has been collected this fiscal year is at $544,000. Last fiscal year, the total amount that came in from the use tax was $403,000. She reminded everyone that the use tax is going to certain capital projects for three years before it can be used for other items. She gave a 6 month budget report and without the capital outlay, all funds are at 50% for expenses. In the general fund alone, expenses are at 43% so everything is on track. The general fund is up $1,000,000 due to the use tax and the sale of land in Myers Park.

City Administrator Greg Dagnan reported that Nate Dally was in St. Louis for the oral arguments hearing at the Court of Appeals. He touched on the new budget process and calendar. The Council packet was very lengthy due to the final documents regarding the Carthage Water & Electric Plant COP's that was passed in December by the Council. Also in the packet was the Certified Local Government approval letter, and the letter from the Steadly grant denying our application for firefighter funding.

The Committee on Claims filed a report in the amount of $2,766,366.14 against the following funds: General Revenue $82,663.24, Public Health $148,554.69, Lodging $2,382.25, Public Safety $759.51, Parks/Stormwater $45,076.16, Golf $3,050.77, Public Facilities $18,573.14, Tax Distribution $31,819.00, ARPA $8,211.00, Public Library $128,000.00, Payroll $597,276.38, and Carthage Water & Electric $1,700,000.00. Ms. Blankenship made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blair, to accept the report and allow the claims. Motion carried.

Under Old Business, C.B. 22-43 -- An Ordinance to amend Chapter 6 Buildings and Building Regulations by adding Article X Public Art Policy was placed on second reading. Ms. Otero briefed the Council on what was decided at the Public Services Committee meeting. The committee has not had time to redo the policy and has recommended that the Council does not approve it. The committee is going to start fresh and bring back a cleaner policy. Council Bill 22-43 failed after a roll call vote of 0 yeas and 8 nays. Nays: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff.

C.B. 22-50 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Carthage, the Carthage Economic Development Corporation, and the Carthage Water and Electric Plant to agree upon the general terms and commit to the financial terms of the agreement was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-01.

C.B. 22-51 -- An Ordinance to amend Section 207 - Resignation and Retirement of the Personnel Policy Manual of the City of Carthage was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-02.

C.B. 22-52 -- An Ordinance to amend Section 503 - Holidays Authorized of the Personnel Policy Manual of the City of Carthage by amending Subsection 09 and adding Subsection 10 was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-03

C.B. 22-53 -- An Ordinance rezoning certain property at 828 and 830 West Fairview in the City of Carthage from District A, to District F, Light Industrial, as requested by Philip K and Sharon R Brown, in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero,

Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-04.
Mr. Armstrong mentioned PWhat.

C.B. 22-54 -- An Ordinance of the City of Carthage, Missouri authorizing the Mayor to execute an Agreement between the City of Carthage, Missouri and the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission to provide funding for ADA compliant sidewalks and crossings on HH Highway from Steadley Elementary to Creekside Subdivision, in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-05.

Mr. Armstrong thanked the staff again for all of their hard work on this project and other projects like it.

C.B. 22-55 -- An Ordinance of the City of Carthage, Missouri authorizing the Mayor to execute an Agreement between the City of Carthage, Missouri and the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission providing replacement of Bridge #0720005 on McGregor Street over Missouri/Northern Arkansas Railroad was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-06.

Mr. Armstrong also thanked the staff and the State representative for their help to get this project done.

C.B. 23-01 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Play and Park for Playground Equipment at Municipal Park for $879,640.63, in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on first reading with no action taken.

Ms. Blair thanked Mr. Snow for pointing out where the money is coming from for the playground structures. Also, as a mother with young children, she appreciates the effort of the committee to get new playground equipment for the kids in our community. Mr. Armstrong said he is often against the projects that the MBH Trust fund gives money to, but this is a project that he greatly appreciates them giving to.

C.B. 23-02 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Play and Park for Playground Equipment at Carter Park for $531,193.60, in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on first reading with no action taken.

C.B. 23-03 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contractual agreement with Baker Tilly US, LLC, for grant writing services, in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on first reading with no action taken.

C.B. 23-04 -- An Ordinance imposing a sales tax at a rate of three-percent on all tangible personal property retail sales of Adult Use Marijuana sold within the City of Carthage, Missouri, pursuant to Article XIV, Section 2.6(5) of the Missouri Constitution subject to the approval by the voters of the City at the General Municipal Election to be held April 4, 2023; designating the form of ballot; and directing the City Clerk to provide notice of said election was placed on first reading.

Mr. Armstrong said this needs to be passed tonight in order to make it onto the April ballot.

Mr. Armstrong made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blankenship, to follow emergency protocol and advance Council Bill 23-04 to second reading. Motion carried.

C.B. 23-04 -- An Ordinance imposing a sales tax at a rate of three-percent on all tangible personal property retail sales of Adult Use Marijuana sold within the City of Carthage, Missouri, pursuant to Article XIV, Section 2.6(5) of the Missouri Constitution subject to the approval by the voters of the City at the General Municipal Election to be held April 4, 2023; designating the form of ballot; and directing the City Clerk to provide notice of said election was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-07.

Ms. Otero thanked Mr. Snow for info on the tax and how it will be collected no matter what the City does. This allows the tax to return to the City.

During Closing Comments, Ms. Otero thanked Jeff Williams and Jeff Meredith for coming and introducing themselves to the Council. Ms. Blair was also thankful for the introductions from the new CEDC President and Economic Development Director, she said she is excited for the future and to have Abi on board. She also thanked Julie for her presentation. Mr. Snow said happy new year to everyone, and also mentioned that in all of his time on Council he has never seen a unanimously failed Council Bill. Mr. Armstrong stated he has been on Council longer than Mr. Snow and it is the second time something has failed unanimously. Mr. Hardesty congratulated Abi on her new job, thank Julie and the CEDC President and Economic Developer for coming. Ms. Cossey agreed with everyone else and what they said.

Ms. Cossey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to adjourn the regular session of the Council Meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.