City of Carthage, Missouri

CITY COUNCIL

February 14, 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: Robin Harrison, Ed Hardesty, Alan Snow, Mark Elliff, David Armstrong, Ceri Otero, Brandi Ensor, Robin Blair, Tiffany Cossey, Trudy Blankenship. City Administrator Greg Dagnan and City Attorney Nate Dally were also present.

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. Hardesty, to approve the minutes of the regular session and the closed session from the January 24, 2023 Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

During Citizen's Participation, Richard Witt, 503 S.Garrison, spoke to the Council on the Rock Stadium and how he hopes there is a way to preserve the history of the stadium. Later on at the end of the meeting, the Mayor allowed Greg Kyte, 11479 Kafir Road, to address the Council. He stated that the City did the right thing in closing the stadium down. It has been in disrepair for a long time and it needed to be closed. He also asked people not to give the new Parks and Recreation Director a hard time, she is just doing her job.

Mr. Snow reported that the Budget Ways and Means Committee met on February 13. The Committee approved the budget amendment that appears in Council Bill 23-10. They also approved the Budget Goals and Priorities for Fiscal Year 2024. Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hardesty, to adopt the Budget Goals and Priorities as presented. Motion carried. The Committee also heard Capital requests from the IT and Administration departments. There were no approvals or rejections at this time. The sales tax numbers were down for February, the use tax numbers were up, and the use tax year-to-date total will be over budget next month. The next meeting is scheduled for March 13.

Mrs. Harrison reported that the Committee on Insurance, Audit & Claims met on this date and approved the claims. Rebecca Baker, KPM CPA's and Associates, presented a detailed overview of the City's Audited Financial Statements. Ms. Baker noted total cash and investments decreased $1.7 million, General Fund revenues increased $1.5 million and General Fund expenses increased $2.6 million over the previous fiscal year. The Reserve Fund Balance is calculated by dividing the Unassigned Fund Balance by Total Expenditures. The Reserve Fund Balance for the City of Carthage at the end of fiscal year 22 was 62.4%, up from the previous fiscal year of 57.9%. This was due in large part to capital outlay that was carried over to the current fiscal year. Ms. Baker commended the City Staff on an unmodified/clean audit with no deficiencies reported. Mrs. Harrison made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ensor, to accept the audit. Motion carried. There were also staff reports from Mr. Dagnan and Ms. Cox on the budget process using Opengov. The next meeting is scheduled for February 28.

Mr. Elliff reported that the Public Safety Committee is between meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for February 27 due to the 20th being a City holiday.

Ms. Otero reported that the Public Service Committee had a special meeting on January 31. The committee reviewed salt spreader and snow plow bids. Ms. Otero made a motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, to approve the bid from Bus Andrews for a snow plow in the amount of $7,750.00 and a salt spreader for $6,925.00. Motion carried. Also discussed and approved was the list of surplus items that appear in Resolution 1995. The Civil War Museum video bids were reviewed. The Committee did not get what they were hoping for, so they decided to reject all bids and start over. The bids for a John Deere Triplex Mower were discussed. This was originally ordered in July of 2022, and the estimated delivery date is October 2023. The Committee approved a bid from VanWall Equipment for $75,384.64. Ms Otero made a motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong to accept the bid for a John Deere Triplex Mower in the amount of $75,384.64. Motion carried. There was also a presentation of photos from the pool and pool house. The Committee believes it is best to move forward with a professional assessment. Ms. Otero made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ensor to hire WestPort Pools to do an assessment on the pool and pool house. Mr. Snow asked how much this would cost, Ms Otero reported approximately $6,900, if they have to do a leak assessment, it could cost more. Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, to amend the first motion to include a budget amendment for the $6,900 cost. Motion carried. The now amended motion to hire WestPort Pools to do an assessment on the pool and pool house with a budget amendment for the $6,900 cost carried after a unanimous vote. Also reported was the new employee golf discounts, and the status of the firework bids for this years Fourth of July. The next meeting is scheduled for July 21.

Mr. Armstrong reported that the Public Works Committee met on February 7. They heard citizen requests for more lighting and sidewalks in Ward 3 in the Wilson addition. They also discussed funding opportunities and grants. They gave Jason Eckhart permission to apply for the grant for the Baker Blvd expansion. The zoning changes for recreational marijuana were also discussed. The current dispensary in town meets all the requirements, the changes apply to new businesses that would like to open up within the City limits. The committee also received an update on the status of Quality Inn. The next meeting is scheduled for March 7.

Special Committee and Board Liaison Reports were given by Mr. Elliff for the Jasper County Commission, Ms. Blair for the Tree Board, and Ms. Ensor for the Library Board.

During reports from Council Members, Mr. Armstrong thanked Zeb and his staff for presenting their 5 year capital plan at the Public Works meeting. Mr. Snow thanked Administration for their hard work on the budget goals and priorities. Mr. Elliff thanked Zeb and his code enforcement officials for taking care of a problem from a citizen and doing so quickly.

Mr. Dally reported that he has spent recent weeks writing and rewriting Ordinances, he also mentioned what was changed with the marijuana zoning.

Public Works Director Zeb Carney reported that the Quality Inn was allowed to open up 15 rooms, and they are slowly reopening more as problems are fixed. He also reported that there will be a study at the Fir Road and Chapel intersection so a safe streets costshare grant can be applied for. They have also applied for the Baker Blvd expansion grant.

Parks and Recreation Director Abi Almandinger reported that she recently toured all the City buildings in her department. The Rock Stadium was in bad shape and was deemed unfit and unsafe to be in. It will remain closed for the time being, there is no decision on repairs at this time. She also stated that there were some emergency repairs going on at the Golf Pro Shop.

Assistant City Administrator Traci Cox reported that the February sales tax numbers were down 6%, year-to-date they are still up 8%. The use tax has almost surpassed the budgeted amount of $700,000. She also reminded everyone that for the first three years of the use tax it gets allocated as follows: 40% to Parks and Recreation, 30% Public Safety, and 30% to Public Works. She also reported that the property taxes are coming in under budget.

City Administrator Greg Dagnan reported that the marijuana zoning changes are the first step to the new law that was passed. He also reported that there will need to be changes made to the criminal ordinance to follow the new marijuana laws. The Comprehensive Plan has a hard deadline to be done by April 3 where it will go to the Planning & Zoning Commission and then come to City Council for approval. He mentioned that the new budget process has been going great and department heads are getting the hang of it. Agency contracts are currently being worked on. Baker Tilly will start searching for grants for the City based on the priorities and needs the City gives them. The tentative date for the new planning session will be March 2.

The Committee on Claims filed a report in the amount of $3,978,591.21 against the following funds: General Revenue $143,535.18, Public Health $147,192.72, Lodging $1364.07, Parks/Stormwater $71,362.26, Fire Protection $4,664.15, Golf $1,549.86, Capital Improvements $5230.35, Parks and Recreation $203.53, Use Tax $17,566.25, ARPA $432,259.37, Library $25,000, Payroll $628,663.47 and Carthage Water and Electric $2,500,000. Mrs. Harrison made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blair, to accept the report and allow the claims. Motion carried.

Under Old Business, C.B. 23-05 -- An Ordinance Adopting a Public Art Policy of the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, 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 23-11.

C.B. 23-06 -- An Ordinance to amend Section 23-172(d) of the Code of the City of Carthage to add Hazel Avenue from HH Highway to the North Side of the George E Phelps Blvd intersection, as a truck Route in the City of Carthage, Missouri as placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, 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 23-12.

Under New Business, Chuck Bryant presented to the Council that there will need to be an agreement made with a new power station soon. The Carthage Water & Electric Plant Board will be reviewing the new contract at their meeting on Thursday February 16, after that the final document will come to City Council for approval.

C.B. 23-07 -- An Emergency Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement and application with the Missouri Department of Economic Development for a grant concerning land purchase for industrial development was placed on first reading.

Mr. Armstrong made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to advance the council bill to second reading due to its emergency status. Motion carried by vote of 6 yeas and 4 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, and Alan Snow. Nays: Trudy Blankenship, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff.

C.B. 23-07 -- An Emergency Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement and application with the Missouri Department of Economic Development for a grant concerning land purchase for industrial development as placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 7 yeas and 3 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, and Mark Elliff. Nays: Trudy Blankenship, Ed Hardesty, and Tiffany Cossey. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 23-13.

C.B. 23-08 -- An Ordinance to amend Section 10-26 (a) of the Carthage Code to amend the requirement for firefighters by lowering the age to 18 in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on first reading with no action taken.

C.B. 23-09 -- An Ordinance to amend sections of Chapter 25 of the Carthage Code for zoning of newly formed Marijuana-related facilities was placed on first reading with no action taken.

C.B. 23-10 -- An Ordinance amending the Annual Operating and Capital Budget of the City of Carthage for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 for specified funds (General Fund, Golf Course Fund, and Myers Park Fund) was placed on first reading with no action taken.

Ms. Otero made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to approve Resolution 1995 - A Resolution approving the declaration as surplus to the City's needs and authorizing the disposition of certain Parks Department equipment and scrap outlined in Exhibit A. Resolution 1995 was adopted after a roll call vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff.

During Closing Comments, Ms. Ensor thanked everyone in attendance, Mrs. Almandinger encouraged those concerned about the Rock Stadium to come to the Public Services meeting on the 21st, Ms. Blankenship congratulated the Chiefs on their Super Bowl win, Mr. Hardesty thanked the citizens who showed up and voiced their concerns.

Mrs. Harrison made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to close the meeting according to section 610.021 (3), the agenda includes the possibility of a vote to close part of the meeting to discuss hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded followed by a roll call vote on the board of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. Motion carried at 8:19 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Elliff made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hardesty, to return to the regular session of the Council Meeting at 8:54 p.m. followed by a roll call vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. Motion carried.

Ms. Ensor made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliff, to adjourn the regular session of the Council

Meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF CARTHAGE, MISSOURI
FEBRUARY 14, 2023

The Carthage City Council met in closed session on the above date in City Hall Council Chambers at 6:30 P.M. with Mayor Dan Rife presiding.

The following Council Members answered roll call: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff.

City Administrator Greg Dagnan, City Attorney Nate Dally, Assistant City Administrator Traci Cox, City Clerk Miranda Deal, Deputy City Clerk Courtney Walker, Police Chief Bill Hawkins, and Parks and Recreation Director Abi Almandinger were also present.

Mrs. Harrison made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to close the meeting according to section 610.021 (3), the agenda includes the possibility of a vote to close part of the meeting to discuss hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded followed by a roll call vote on the board of 10 yeas and no nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff. Motion carried at 8:19 p.m.

Police Chief Bill Hawkins explained to the Council that there is an ongoing investigation involving the Parks and Recreation and Golf Course department finances that covers the last 3-5 years.

Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, for the City (Police Department) to retain the services of a Forensic Accountant, to collect, analyze and evaluate financial irregularities within the Parks and Recreation department including the golf course. The scope is to include up to 5 years of detailed research and analysis of financial information in order to investigate for any theft, fraud or other financial manipulation of the Parks and Recreation and Golf finances. The accountant shall file a written report of all findings and reports shall be made available to the City Council. Motion carried after a roll call vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff.

Mr. Elliff made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hardesty, to return to the regular session of the Council Meeting at 8:54 p.m. Motion carried after a roll call vote of 10 yeas and no nays. Ayes: Robin Harrison, Brandi Ensor, David Armstrong, Trudy Blankenship, Ceri Otero, Robin Blair, Alan Snow, Ed Hardesty, Tiffany Cossey, and Mark Elliff.