

City of Carthage, Missouri

CITY COUNCIL

May 14, 2024 - 6:30 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

The Carthage City Council met in regular session on the above date in Council Chambers at 06:30 PM with Mayor Dan Rife presiding. Deputy Fire Chief Jason Martin gave the invocation. Police Chief Bill Hawkins led the flag salute.

The following Council Members answered roll call: Chris Taylor, Derek Peterson, Lori Leece, Terri Heckmaster, Dustin Edge, Alan Snow, Tom Barlow, Tiffany Cossey, and Jana Schramm. City Administrator Greg Dagnan was also present.

The following Department Heads were present: Police Chief Bill Hawkins, Deputy Fire Chief Jason Martin, Parks & Recreation Director Abi Almandinger, and City Clerk Miranda Deal.

Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to approve the minutes of the April 29 and May 10, 2024, Special Council Meetings.

Ms. Schramm made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cossey, to amend the minutes of April 29 meeting. At the end of the meeting, the minutes state that the meeting was adjourned and it was not adjourned properly so it needs to state that the meeting was left open. Motion carried.

Ms. Cossey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to amend the minutes from April 29 to include a statement from Mr. Dagnan prior to Ms. Cossey's motion to put out and RFP to advertise for an independent municipal law firm. The minutes need to state that Mr. Dagnan said an independent municipal law firm could not be hired without an RFP per the purchasing policy.

Motion to approve the amended minutes carried unanimously.

Mayor Rife presented a state of emergency proclamation for the storm damage. Mr. Snow asked if there was a length of time on it and Mayor Rife stated it would be in effect until the storm damage was cleaned up. Mr. Dagnan stated that they are keeping it open until the Governor declares a state of emergency for Jasper County.

During Citizen's Participation, Regina Shank 510 Belle Air Place, wanted to speak peace, she read a bible verse and prayed that the city could come to reconciliation soon.

Jackie Boyer, 1184 S Main St., spoke on the state of Kellogg Lake Park. It has a lot of work that needs done prior to the Kids Fishing Day event that is on June 8. She asked why the volunteers she had to help clean were told they had to sign in at the parks office, when other volunteers didn't have to sign in. On another issue, she said that the City Administrator is acting as a Manager and the Mayor is not following the Charter, she believes that the Mayor's only function at this point is protecting the administrator. She also asked about various department head positions and asked if resumes were solicited for them or not because she has never seen any.

Bill Scheerer, 423 E 13th St, spoke on the council members recent actions and how it violated the code of ethics. He read section 2-521 – Declarations of policy, and 2-528 – Prohibition of interference. He also read section 2-531 – Sanctions. He also stated that he believes some council members are getting their orders from the elites of the town and that nothing has been accomplished in one month. He also mentioned that the budget meeting the prior night went well and was conducted how a meeting should be.

TJ Teed, 615 Airport Drive, he is also a former city council member. He said he has watched the last several meetings as the council has violated the charter, misled the city, and tarnished the reputation that Carthage once had. He believes every council meeting is creating negative press about Carthage. When he was on council and served with numerous others and 2 Mayors, they got things done and they were respectful even if they didn't agree. He believes there will be a mass exodus of employees if the council continues attempting to remove Mr. Dagnan and Mayor Rife. He stated that the majority of the City stands with Mayor Rife and the employees. He also asked for Ms. Cossey and Ms. Schramm's immediate resignations.

Julie Minor, lives off 96 Highway outside of town, she stated that she was the victim in the hit and run accident with Mark Peterson. She stated that she was told by the police that they could not pursue the issue unless a complaint was filed, so she filed a complaint, she was also told that the accident happened on a private lot and it was later found out that it was a City owned lot. She had also been told that council members had been making negative comments about her on social media, but after researching it, she found it to be untrue. She does not want to a part of what is going on and wants to be left alone, she also wants the council to do their job and get back to doing what is right for the city. **highlighted section added at the May 28 council meeting prior to approval of the minutes.

Mr. Snow reported that the Budget Ways and Means Committee met on May 13 and discussed the budget in detail. They heard budget requests from the departments and the budget was presented as a balanced budget, but that could change. He also reported that Ms. Cox stated that the sales and use tax were up and the marijuana tax was up from the previous month but lower than other months. They also approved a budget adjustment for a new police car that was totaled in an accident which appears in Resolution 2041. They were also presented with some bids for cameras at the police department. He stated that they did not want to go with the lowest bid, due to it having additional yearly costs. The bid they would like to go with still comes in under the budgeted amount for the project. Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Taylor, to accept the best bid from SMC for cameras at the police department in the amount of \$26,916.77. Motion carried. He also mentioned that there would be a special budget meeting on Wednesday May 22 at 5:30 to continue to perfect the budget.

Ms. Cossey reported that the Committee on Insurance, Audit and Claims met on this day and approved the claims. She also mentioned that the committee tabled the media policy and the ethics policy indefinitely. They also approved to forward the council bill for financial software to the full council.

Ms. Heckmaster reported that the Public Safety Committee is between meetings with the next meeting scheduled for May 20.

Mr. Edge reported the Public Services Committee is between meetings with the next meeting scheduled for May 21.

Mr. Taylor reported that the Public Works Committee cancelled the May meeting due to lack of business. The next meeting is scheduled for June 4.

Special Committee and Board Liaison reports were given by Mr. Peterson for the Kellogg Lake Board.

Mayor Rife reported on the storm damage clean up and thanked all the departments for their work. He also reported that the budget process is going smoothly this year.

During Remarks from Council Members, Ms. Cossey asked about State emergency funds for the clean-up. Mayor Rife stated that they are waiting for the declaration from the Governor for Jasper County but we have been in contact with emergency management so if there are funds available, we would be trying to get some. Ms. Cossey asked who is responsible for the emergency management stuff and Mayor Rife stated that the Fire Chief is the Emergency Management Director.

Mr. Snow thanked the budget committee for their time at the previous nights meeting because it went past 9:30. Thanks from all were extended to all departments of the city for their cleanup after the storm. Ms. Heckmaster asked if Abi could provide an explanation of what could be done to help get the lake ready for Kids Fishing Day and thanked Regina for her lovely words. Ms. Leece said she had a lot to say, but after Regina spoke, she changed her mind and want to show love and pray, she was also happy to hear about the budget meeting going smoothly. She also believes that this group can work together and move forward. Mr. Peterson reiterated what Jackie Boyer said about the lake cleanup and hopes to get it ready in time for Kids Fishing Day. Mr. Taylor told a story about George Stines and Elvis from CW&EP helping one of his neighbors who is on a limited income, get her power back on and charging very little for it. He also thanked the street department for continuing their limb pick up.

Police Chief Bill Hawkins reported that the budget meeting went well and that he is thankful for the budget adjustment for the car replacement.

Deputy Fire Chief Jason Marting reported that the National Weather Service did declare that an EF1 tornado touched down around Dyno and went to Municipal park and then there were straight lines winds into town. There were 7 houses with catastrophic damage, and that they have applied for funds from the state and feds and hope to at least get a portion of the money back for cleanup efforts. He also reported that some volunteer groups have come in and helped and then they relocate to some other city, they believe about 40 residents still need help cleaning up.

Parks and Recreation Director Abi Almandinger reported that Municipal and Central Park, as well as the Golf course received substantial damage, Kellogg Lake had more minor damage. There were volunteers to help clean up Central Park and patrons of the golf course helped clean up the course. The groups that volunteered were told to help residents first, she had mentioned to Jackie Boyer that the event at Kellogg may have to be postponed. The Christian Aid that Jackie was talking about, told Ms. Almandinger that they helped private residents and not city property. There have been lots of promises for help and a lot of them fell through. They did get waivers put in place for volunteers, there are lots of events happening at the parks and they have been working with them to relocate them or reschedule. The parks staff has been working a lot and Kellogg Lake was not the highest on the priority list at that time.

City Administrator Greg Dagnan reported that he and the HR Coordinator have looked at the RFP's for City Attorneys and that the Mayor has created a committee to interview the applicants. He also mentioned that the budget is the one thing that every department and council member is involved with creating.

The Committee on Claims filed a report in the amount of \$801,734.40 against the following funds: General Revenue \$170,534.41, Public Health \$964.63, Lodging \$23,379.97, Public Safety \$29,130.00, Parks/Stormwater \$74,279.74, Golf \$22,231.47, Capital Improvements \$103,302.28, Myers Park \$7,953.00, Use Tax \$45,646.40, Public Facilities \$8,666.64, Public Library \$25,000.00, and Payroll \$290,645.86. Ms. Cossey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to accept the report and allow the claims. Motion carried.

Under Old Business, C.B. 24-23 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Contract with Neutron Holdings, INC. d/b/a/ LIME, a Delaware Corporation, for scooter rental in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on second reading followed by a roll call vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Taylor, Peterson, Leece, Heckmaster, Edge, Snow, Barlow, Cossey, and Schramm. The Council Bill was approved and numbered Ordinance 24-26.

Discuss law firm options for opinion on City Administrator removal. Ms. Cossey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to table this indefinitely until called back by the council. Motion carried.

Under New business, C.B. 24-25 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Tyler Technologies, Inc., to provide an annual subscription for financial software for the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on first reading with no action taken.

C.B. 24-26 -- An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Kevin Harrison d/b/a Kevin Harrison Masonry for signage in the Parks in the amount up to \$11,915.21 per sign for a total of 7 signs, in the City of Carthage, Missouri was placed on first reading with no action taken.

Mr. Snow made a motion, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to approve Resolution 2041 -- A Resolution authorizing a supplemental budget adjustment to the General Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Resolution 2041 was adopted after a roll call vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Ayes: Taylor, Peterson, Leece, Heckmaster, Edge, Snow, Barlow, Cossey, and Schramm.

During closing comments, Mr. Snow congratulated Ms. Almandinger, Mr. Carney, and Mr. Huntley's kids who recently graduated from Carthage High School.

Ms. Leece made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snow, to adjourn the regular session of the Council Meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.