City of Carthage, Missouri

# PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

August 20, 2024 - 5:30 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

## MINUTES

**1. Call to Order**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece
**MEMBERS ABSENT**:

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Parks and Recreation Director Abi Almandinger, Administrative Assistant Angie Judd, Assistant City Administrator Traci Cox

Chairman Dustin Edge called the meeting to order at 05:30 PM.

**2. Old Business**

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 2.1. by Lori Leece; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

**3. Citizen Participation**

(Citizens wishing to address the Council or Committee should notify the City in advance and provide the item they want to address in written format at least 24 hours before the meeting. Please call Angie Judd at the Parks & Recreation office at 417-237-7035, or email a.judd@carthagemo.gov.)

Jon Skinner from the Missouri Department of Conservation spoke to the committee about a grant opportunity to address the removal and replacement of around 120 Ash trees in the Parks due to the potential threat of Emerald Ash Borer disease. He highlighted the danger posed by the disease if the trees are not removed. The grant offers a 90/10 funding split, with the City responsible for only 10% of the costs, which can include in-kind contributions like administration expenses. The grant operates on a reimbursement basis, requiring the City to cover the upfront costs, with 90% reimbursed later. Mr. Skinner stated that he would collaborate with the Parks Department and Tree Board to develop the plan and budget. He estimated that the removal would cost about $1,000 per tree, while replacement costs would range from $500 to $700 per tree.

**4. New Business**

1. Consider and discuss Maple Leaf Parade.

   Julie Reams, President of the Carthage Chamber of Commerce, requested permission to use park facilities for the 58th Annual Maple Leaf Festival. She noted that the only significant change from previous years would be a smaller stage, which would remain on site for the entire nine days of the festival. Ms. Reams assured that the stage would be secured and locked when not in use to ensure safety. Ms. Schramm motioned to approve use of park facilities for the Maple Leaf Festival as outlined, motion carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.1. by Jana Schramm; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

2. Consider and discuss Joplin Trails Coalition grant.

   Ms. Almandinger introduced Robert Herbst, President of the Joplin Trails Coalition, who requested permission to proceed with a grant to resurface a city-owned parking lot near the Ruby Jack Trail. Mr. Herbst explained that the Joplin Trails Coalition had applied for and received a grant from the Community Foundation of the Ozarks to fund the resurfacing of the trail and the parking lot upgrades, only to later realize that the parking lot was city-owned. He emphasized that the repairs are urgently needed due to erosion, which poses a safety risk and makes parking difficult. Mr. Herbst detailed that the repairs would involve collaborating with the Parks Department to dig a drainage ditch and add two to three loads of gravel, which will be donated by Jasper Limestone. Jasper Ridge will carry out the work once they obtain their Carthage city licensure. Ms. Schramm motioned to approve the acceptance of the grant, motioned carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.2. by Jana Schramm; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

3. Consider and discuss Parks building renovation bid.

   Ms. Almandinger reported that following the May 6 tornado, the Parks Department received two bids for building repairs, with a significant variation in the bid amounts. Due to this wide range, the department worked with the city engineer to prepare a sealed bid request. Two bids were subsequently received: one for $94,000.00 and another for $56,779.00. Ms. Almandinger noted that Mid-Land Enterprises, a company the Parks Department has worked with in the past, submitted the lower bid. She recommended accepting this bid to proceed with the necessary building repairs. Ms. Schramm made a motion to accept the bid from Mid-Land Enterprises and forward to full council, motion carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.3. by Jana Schramm; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |

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| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

4. Consider and discuss liquor license for Golf Course.

Ms. Almandinger introduced Tyler Markham, Associate Head Golf Professional, who discussed the possibility of pursuing an annual liquor license for the golf course to allow alcohol sales. Ms. Almandinger noted that a picnic license had been obtained for a recent golf tournament to serve alcohol, but these licenses are only valid for seven days. She explained that obtaining an annual liquor license would eliminate the need to secure a picnic license for each special event or tournament. Mr. Markham expressed interest in eventually offering daily sales of canned beer at the golf course but emphasized that securing a license for special events is the immediate priority. Ms. Schramm suggested that citizens should be given time to provide input on the idea of alcohol sales and recommended revisiting the discussion at a later time. Mr. Markham added that not having a liquor license could potentially result in the loss of tournaments to other local courses where alcohol can be served as part of the events. Ms. Cossey made a motion to allow the golf course to move forward in obtaining a liquor license for golf course special events and tournaments, motion carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.4. by Tiffany Cossey; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

5. Consider and discuss surplus of mower.

Ms. Almandinger announced that with the new fiscal year, the purchase of a new mower has been included in the budget. She stated that once the new mower is acquired, the Parks Department would like to donate the mower scheduled for removal from rotation to Cedar Hills Cemetery. Ms. Leece made a motion to approve the resolution to surplus the mower and donate it to Cedar Hills Cemetery, motion carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.5. by Lori Leece; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

6. Consider and discuss lighting for playgrounds.

Ms. Almandinger addressed the committee regarding the need for lighting at the newly installed playgrounds in the parks. She presented three options for lighting from a Sourcewell company, Wesco: Option 1 for $124,705.32, Option 2 for $68,523.52, and Option 3 for $60,647.72. Ms. Cossey asked for clarification on Sourcewell, and Ms. Cox explained that Sourcewell manages the bid process, gathering bids to offer the best option for projects, thus relieving departments from handling the bid process themselves. Ms. Schramm requested that a budget sheet for the MBHT Grant be provided at the next committee meeting for review. Additionally, Ms. Cossey expressed concerns about moving forward with accepting the bid, as she had questions about whether it adhered to the city's purchasing policy. Ms. Cossey made a motion to table the discussion until the City Attorney can be consulted.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to table item 4.6. by Tiffany Cossey; second by None;<br>Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

7. Consider and discuss bid for Memorial Hall sign.

Ms. Almandinger informed the committee that the sign at Memorial Hall has been non-functional for some time. The sign, installed over 10 years ago, is now outdated. A replacement sign was included in the new fiscal year's budget, so the department sought initial pricing and published a Request for Proposals (RFP). Two bids were received, one for $35,563.67 and the other for $32,256.00. Ms. Almandinger noted that the lowest bid, from DPI Printing and Signs, is close to the budgeted amount of $32,000.00. Mr. Edge inquired about any noticeable differences in the sign specifications, and Ms. Almandinger confirmed there were no substantial differences between the products. Ms. Leece commented that the pricing seemed reasonable for the size and functionality of the signs presented. Ms. Cossey then asked where the RFP was published. Ms. Almandinger explained that the RFPs are published in the Carthage Chronicle and on the city website. Ms. Cossey expressed concern that the RFPs were not being published broadly enough to attract a wide range of interest, leading her to be unable to vote in favor of accepting the bid. In response, Ms. Cox stated she would contact other municipalities to inquire about their processes for securing bids for projects. Ms. Leece made a motion to approve the bid from DPI Printing and Signs and forward to full council, motion failed.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.7. by Lori Leece; second by None;<br>Motion failed with a 2:1:1 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | Tiffany Cossey |
| **ABSTAIN:** | Jana Schramm |

8. Consider and discuss bid for porta potties.

Ms. Almandinger reported that with the Parks restrooms now open, the need for portable restrooms in the parks has decreased. However, the Parks Department sent out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide portable restrooms as needed for special events. Only one bid was received, from Contractors Portables. Ms. Almandinger clarified that the purpose of this bid is to lock in special pricing rather than to commit to a specific number of units or any particular timeframe. Ms. Schramm made a motion to move forward with entering into a partnership with Contractors Portables for the use of portable restrooms as needed, and to forward the proposal to the full council for approval, motion carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.8. by Jana Schramm; second by None; |

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| | Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

9. Consider and discuss budget adjustment for grass seed.

Ms. Almandinger introduced Tyler Markham, Associate Head Golf Professional, to discuss a proposed budget adjustment for the purchase of grass seed for the golf course. Mr. Markham noted that $7,000 had previously been spent to repair winter kill areas in the fairways. He proposed a $20,000 budget adjustment to reseed all fairways with bluegrass, which is better suited to withstand harsh winter conditions compared to the existing Bermuda grass. Mr. Markham explained that bluegrass, a cool-season grass that remains green year-round, could increase winter revenue while reducing the need for costly repairs. He highlighted that the golf course maintenance staff has already dedicated over 200 hours to repairing winter kill spots. Additionally, he mentioned that Schifferdecker Golf Course switched to bluegrass last spring and received positive feedback on their green fairways. Mr. Markham noted that many area golf courses are considering similar transitions to bluegrass due to widespread winter kill issues. Ms. Schramm inquired about the reseeding process. Mr. Markham responded that reseeding would begin around late September, with maintenance staff adding bluegrass alongside the existing Bermuda grass. Bluegrass grows thicker and heavier, eventually taking over areas where Bermuda fails to regrow. He added that the course would be cart-path-only throughout the winter after the seeding. Ms. Schramm then asked where the budget adjustment would come from. Ms. Cox clarified that the funds would be drawn from the golf course reserve fund.. Ms. Schramm made a motion to accept the resolution to adjust the budget as outlined for the purchase of bluegrass seed, motion carried.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.9. by Jana Schramm; second by None; |
| | Motion passed with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

10. Consider and discuss advertising with Nexstar.

Ms. Cossey expressed concerns about the City continuing to pay Nexstar Media for advertising due to unprofessional reporting by one of their news stations. She stated that while she has no issue with the news being reported, she feels their reporting has been biased and unprofessional in their coverage on city issues. She proposed that no more advertising funds be spent with Nexstar until the Council sees that they are able to report without bias. Mr. Edge acknowledged the valuable coverage Nexstar provides for city events, particularly through their streaming services and programs like Good Morning Four States and Living Well. He cautioned that discontinuing advertising with Nexstar could negatively impact the promotion of these events. Ms. Cossey noted that there are four local stations, two of which are owned by Nexstar, and suggested shifting advertising to streaming services, as traditional TV viewership has declined. Ms. Leece expressed concern that halting this advertising would punish the community. She recommended openly discussing the matter with the company, emphasizing that the bias might be perceived differently by others. Ms. Cossey stated that the other local stations that don't engage in editorializing or unprofessional segments might be willing to cover city events. Ms. Cossey made a motion for the City to discontinue advertising spending with Nexstar until they can demonstrate unbiased reporting, motion failed.

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to accept/approve item 4.10. by Tiffany Cossey; second by None;<br>Motion failed with a 2:2 |
| **AYES:** | Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm |
| **NOES:** | Dustin Edge, Lori Leece |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |

**5. Staff Reports**

Ms. Almandinger reported that the staff reports included in the packet outline the activities and projects completed in the parks and at the golf course during July. She noted a significant increase in golf rounds, with approximately 400 more rounds played than in previous months. Additionally, she highlighted the tourism report, which details various events held within the city, including Hispanic Heritage Days and the Maple Leaf Rodeo. Ms. Almandinger also mentioned that Jen Kirby published part one of her story on Marian Days. Ms. Almandinger further noted the retirement of Steve Cottrell from the Civil War Museum after many years of service. Ms. Cossey inquired if it would be possible to include revenue data in the financial reports. Ms. Cox responded that once the new software system is fully implemented, those reports would be provided to the full council. Finally, Ms. Almandinger reminded everyone about Sudstock 2024, scheduled for Saturday, August 24th, which will include foam cannons, water slides, puppet shows, and more. She extended an invitation to all to attend.

**6. Other Business**

**7. Adjournment**

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| **ACTION:** | Motion to Adjourn at 07:10 PM by Lori Leece |
| | Motion with a 4:0 |
| **AYES:** | Dustin Edge, Tiffany Cossey, Jana Schramm, Lori Leece |
| **NOES:** | None |
| **ABSTAIN:** | None |