

SPECIAL MEETING_BUDGETS
CITY COUNCIL

July 29, 2015

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Syracuse, Nebraska met at 6:00 P.M. on July 29, 2015 for their special meeting in the Syracuse City Hall Council Chambers at 495 5th Street. Present were Mayor Ortiz & Council members Henke, Dettmer, Gigstad and Britton. Notice of meeting was given by posting in three places. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on the Library budget. Sue Antes, Librarian, present. Librarian Antes presented two budgets, one including being open Thursdays and the other without. Librarian Antes suggested Thursday hours be from 4:00-8:00 p.m. instead of the current hours of 12:00-8:00 p.m., and the remaining hours be given to a library employee for additional help on Mondays and Tuesdays. Librarian Antes included it is very nice to have the Library open on Thursdays but she wasn't sure if it was cost effective as the circulation is not up on this day. The Mayor recommended continuing have the library open the full eight hours except during the school year, opening Thursdays from 4:00-8:00 p.m. Librarian Antes will post new signage including the revised hours.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on the Cemetery budget. Jim Pfeiffer, Cemetery Board member, present. Cemetery Board member Pfeiffer said mowing has been up this season and there have not been any complaints. Drainage work has been finished in the north end of Park Hill Cemetery and dirt work is pending. The Cemetery Board has been looking at sign designs for Park Hill Cemetery, will present to the Council after receive. Trees located on the west side of the cemetery have been trimmed back in order to keep bagworms away. The mowing contract previously held with Gregg Zahn was renewed recently. Two Cemetery Board members are moving in September so replacements will need to be found.

Bruce Neemann, Syracuse Volunteer Fire Department Chief, present. Council member Britton inquired on the balance of the sinking fund noted on the Fire Department's budget and if this was in a separate account. Britton explained the reasoning for the sinking fund is to carry over any unused funds and use for a larger project or item in the future. Neemann included other items the sinking fund could assist with are new air packs, restroom showers, a generator, and the possible widening of Mohawk Street. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on the Water budget. Vogt pointed out the only major change on his budget is on the payment for the water tower; adjustments in Capital Improvement have been revised to reflect this. City Clerk Farmer will remove line items from the budget that are no longer used.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on the Electric budget. Vogt would like to replace Unit 1 utility truck. Vogt inquired on with the closing of the local Ford dealership he will receive bids from area businesses for a new truck as well as servicing of vehicles.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on the Sewer budget. Vogt informed the Council some equipment at the sewer plant needs replaced. Sewer jetting will continue to be logged. Vogt has been speaking with JEO about engineering for a new Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Rec Coordinator Murrell pointed out the requested wage increases for the 2015-2016 pool employees as well as the request of an office person. Setting a higher wage will hopefully bring in more applicants for both managers and lifeguards to hire from. Council member Dettmer recommended holding in-service refresher meetings for all of the pool staff. Coordinator Murrell would like to look into a new fridge for the pool house as the current one is not working properly. Murrell informed the City Council that a new bath house is very much needed. Coordinator Murrell budgeted for new equipment and balls for each age group in the P&R league. She has received feedback from coaches that the equipment could use to be replaced. Coordinator Murrell is continuing to look for a new instructor for the P&R Tumbling program.

Mayor Ortiz pointed out major areas on the Parks budget is seasonal help and the additional funds previously budgeted for a filtration system. Manager Aksamit discussed a 40'x60' maintenance shed for the Ball Complex. The maintenance shed at Williams Park is out of storage room. Mayor Ortiz asked looking at environmental friendly types of sheds; Clerk Farmer will send a message out to other clerks asking if anyone has constructed any sheds of this type. Manager Aksamit received a bid for a new Gator including a new field drag.

Council recommended including overtime on the budgets as well as monthly insurance expenses. Mayor Ortiz would like to move forward on the microphone system for the Council Chambers. Possible use(s) for the 2nd floor level of the City Hall building and basement space were also discussed.

Council approved the street closings for July 30th and August 1st for the Veterans Parade and Otoe County Fair Parade.

Fire Chief Bruce Neemann informed the Council there are now 33 members. Council approved Thomas Volkmer, Derek Harms and Paul Tompkins as new SVFD members. Mayor Ortiz and Council members agreed to finalize the budget hearings at the next scheduled Council meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 12, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Kelly Farmer, City Clerk