

REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL

October 9, 2019

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Syracuse, Nebraska met at 6:00 P.M. on October 9, 2019 for their regular meeting in the Syracuse City Hall Council Chambers at 495 5th Street. Notice of meeting was given by posting in three places. Mayor Ortiz requested roll call, present were Mayor Ortiz and Council members Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner. A copy of the posting notice and acknowledgement of notice to the Council is attached to these minutes. Minutes for the September 25th, 2019 meeting were approved as written. 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 approval of claims and Treasurer's Reports, Todd Blome of BMG present. BMG has sent the September 2019 report for the Mayor and Council to review. Blome reported all accounts and transactions have been tied out; these are for a full year. BMG will work with auditor Julie Bauman to make any end of year entries suggested by the audit outcome. Bauman and her staff will be coming to do the City's audit on November 8th. The balance sheet shows debt has decreased and cash has increased. Overall, utility income has increased. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve the September Treasurer's report and to pay the claims, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none. The claims approved are attached to these minutes.

HEARING OF THOSE PRESENT – no one present.

LIBRARY REPORT – Librarian Antes present; her report was distributed prior to the meeting. The report includes a Year End Report for the 2018-2019 Budget year. The report contents are given to the Nebraska Library Commission and accounts for how much state aid the Library receives. Antes reported circulation totals for September '19 are down compared to September '18. To celebrate the 50-year anniversary of the moon landing, the Library will be hosting a dinner; Dave Straub who worked for NASA will be the guest speaker. Thirty-four children are enrolled in the two Pres-School Storytime days a week. Antes asked to change the Thursday hours from 4:00 – 8:00 P.M. to 3:30 to 7:30 P.M. in order to accommodate kids being released from school at that time. The Mayor and Council are fine with the change. The meeting room was used 11 times during September.

FIRE REPORT – Fire Chief Bruce Neemann present. Neemann explained seven SVFD members were at the school to educate children on fire prevention. Neemann announced he did not think the department received the grant recently applied for; the grant was to be used to purchase air-packs. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and Resolution No. 19-25 recognizing Syracuse Volunteer Fire Department. Attorney Stilmock read the resolution to the audience and a number of SVFD members present. Council member Laramie Werner moved to adopt Resolution No. 19-25, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

CEMETERY REPORT – Cemetery Board members present. Mayor Ortiz will lead discussion on moving portion of Park Hill Cemetery Perpetual Care Funds to CD's. Leonard Buchholz spoke on behalf of the board; they would like to see the funds earn more money in monthly interest. Currently the funds are all held at First Bank of Nebraska. The Mayor explained a portion of the funds needs to stay in the money market in the event any of the funds needed to be used. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve a portion of the Perpetual at discretion of Cemetery Board after their meeting next week, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Orv Gigstad. Nays: none.

PARKS & REC REPORT – Parks and Rec Manager Jill Crook not present. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on dog park. Clerk Farmer explained the three options drawn up by Crook as well as the fence bids. Ian Mitchell, Parks department newest employee, was present and discussed each of the options as well. Option #2 is located west of the soccer fields utilizing the south half of the acreage owned by the City; the north half is used for the Germanfest concert. Council Member Gigstad explained the Germanfest concert will not be held at this site next year. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve option #2 and to use the bid from Elkhorn Fence, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad. Nays: none.

SHERIFF'S REPORT – Sheriff Caudill present. Caudill returned from a conference on active shooter situations specifically at schools. Caudill reported the hours looked accurate and consistent. The September report consisted of a lot of traffic stops and various non-emergency calls. County deputies have been doing walk-thru's at the schools as well as being present at athletic events and at Syracuse Area Health Facility. Caudill is hiring two personnel; an extra deputy was approved for the new budget. Caudill would like to have three on days and three on nights at all times except for Wednesday through Saturday nights he plans to have four. Council Member Werner inquired on the department's thoughts on the request to change bar hours from 2:00 A.M. closing to 1:00 A.M. Caudill explained the department doesn't see an issue with the 2:00 A.M. closing meaning there isn't an increase in calls or disturbances stemming from a later closing time.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – Superintendent Jeff Vogt present. Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Resolution No. 19-26 on approval of placing stop signs at 9th & Locust intersections. The discussion was prompted by Kim Kreifels speaking during Hearing of Those Present at a past meeting. Vogt conducted traffic surveys periodically as well as how many students use the intersection to and from the school. Council Member Orv Gigstad moved to approve the stop signs, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on street sweeper bids. Vogt presented bids for Elgin, Tennant, Global M3 sweepers. Currently the Street department uses a Tennant sweeper; Vogt prefers the Elgin as he has used both. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve the Elgin Pelican at six payments of \$39,216.72, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on sander bids. Vogt presented two bids. The department decided to go with a carbon steel box. Council Member Orv Gigstad moved to approve the SaltDogg from Michael Todd Co. at \$4273.15, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and approval of hiring of Water/Wastewater Employee including approval of hourly wage. Vogt presented Adam Badberg with a start wage of \$16.75/hour. Council Member Jerry Werner approved the hiring of Badberg along with the hourly wage suggested. Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad, Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and authorization to remove action to County Court and file counterclaim against Mark Stubbendeck. Attorney Stilmock explained. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to remove action to County Court and file counterclaim, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

OLD BUSINESS – Mayor Ortiz opened the public hearing, discussion on Application for approval of preliminary plat of the following-described real estate: A tract of land located in the NE ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 15, Township 8 North, Range 11 East of the 6th P.M., Otoe County, Nebraska. Ron and Barb Zahn present. Publication was had and a sign posted at the site. Attorney Stilmock explained the preliminary plat for Zahn Meadows was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission with assistance of Evan Wickersham of JEO. Everything would go to R-2 except for the three eastern most larger lots which most likely will go to R-1. One of the streets in Phase 1 is just longer than 600 feet; the subdivision regulation does not allow blocks to be longer than 600 feet therefore the Zahns are asking for a waiver of this regulation. Another item requesting a waiver is to allow a dead-end turnaround be rock instead of paved until the street is eventually extended where at that time it would be paved. Ron and Barb have asked for phasing in of developments; the code says a preliminary plat is only good for 12 months. They are concerned their if they do the subdivision in phases they would need to start over if this goes over the 12-month time period. Zahn recommended after the final plat is approved if he can give City a time period he would have the next phase implemented; Attorney Stilmock recommended this be included in the subdivision agreement. Mayor Ortiz closed the public hearing. Council Member Orv Gigstad approved to allow a variance on 600 feet block length, allow the turnaround to be rock and for the preliminary plat to be allowed longer than a 12-month period, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Ordinance No. ____ on request to change closing time of bar hours back to 1:00 A.M.; the request was made by Darren Allen, Owner of Triple D Saloon, not present. Anthony Hensley, Owner of B&J Restaurant & Bar, present. No action was had; the closing time will remain 2:00 A.M.

Mayor Ortiz spoke of the posting of the City Administrator position; Silas Clark of Hickman and Grayson Path of Nebraska City have been helping the office staff draft the job posting and job description. Ortiz would like to close the applications on November 15th to start the interviewing process hopefully having an individual hired by January 1, 2020.

Ortiz explained he has been in discussions with a couple of fiber companies; he would like this project to be one the City Administrator would be in charge of along with other large City projects.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on request to close 5th Street from Plum to Mohawk Streets Thursday October 31st, 2019 from 1:30 to 3:00 for SDA Halloween Parade; Jenny Janssen not present. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve the street closure request, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on SDL request for Roc Hopper Brewing Company at The Added Touch for the date of Thursday November 7th, 2019 from 5:00 to 8:00 P.M.; Ben Biehl of Roc Hopper present. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve the SDL, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on 2019-2020 employee health insurance plans; Sharon and Wayne McDermott of Diversified Benefits as well as Kyle Kohlmorgen and Marc Munford of Kohlmorgen Benefits present. Kyle and Marc presented their bids first giving a background of the company. Both companies presented comparison bids from United Healthcare as well as others such as Blue Cross/Blue Shield (Blue Flex) and National General. The Blue Cross/Blue Shield and National General would need to go underwriting; some of the plans are partially self-insured plans. Kohlmorgen requires a renewal date of January 1st where the City currently has a December 1st renewal date. Rates and plans do change with a change from December to January. The employees will complete a short questionnaire to help get hard numbers from Kohlmorgen Benefits in order to be comparable. The discussion will be continued until the November Council meeting.

Mayor Ortiz asked a Council Member to motion to adjourn. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 P.M., Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

I the undersigned Clerk hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Mayor and Council; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting; kept continually and available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such subjects were contained in the said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to the said meeting; that at least one copy of the reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available at the meeting for the examination and copying by members of the public; that the said minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting of the body; that all news media requesting notification concerning time and place of said body were provided advance notification of time and place of said meeting and subjects to be discussed at said meeting.


Clerk



Mayor