

REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL

April 15, 2020

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Syracuse, Nebraska met via teleconference at 6:00 P.M. on April 15, 2020 for their regular meeting. Notice of meeting was given by posting in five places including directions on how to participate in the meeting telephonically. Mayor Ortiz requested roll call, present were Mayor Ortiz and Council members Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad. A copy of the posting notice and acknowledgement of notice to the Council is attached to these minutes. Mayor Ortiz noted the Open Meetings Act was posted in the City Hall Council Chambers and this meeting was being held via teleconference due the current Covid-19 pandemic pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 20-03 in consideration of the public health and safety.

Minutes for the March 11, 2020 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 and Lisa Steffensmeier of BMG present. BMG has sent the March 2020 financial report for the Mayor and Council to review. Blome explained all bank accounts and statements have been reconciled and accounted for. There are six different long-term bonds that have also been reconciled. Blome pointed out how things have changed from last year to current date including sales tax collections being down and the water department's capital outlay specific to well field and transmission main invoices. Park expenses are up due to a series of items as well as Ambulance expenses. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve the March Treasurer's report and to pay the claims, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner. Nays: none. The claims approved are attached to these minutes.

HEARING OF THOSE PRESENT – no one present.

SHERIFF'S REPORT – Sheriff Caudill present. Caudill reported 69 total incidents for Syracuse, 111 total for the area where it would be a Syracuse address. Eighteen parking violations were written during the month of March 2020. One suspicious vehicle call resulting in an arrest; a hand grenade and controlled substance was present. The burglary case has been solved. Mayor Ortiz would like to talk with Caudill more off-line regarding the parking complaints and coverage hours for the future.

FIRE REPORT – Fire Chief Bruce Neemann present. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on bids for repair of fire station roof. Neemann explained the roof has been leaking for some time and continues to worsen. A bid was presented from Doug Damme for spray foam of the roof for \$5,720.00. Neemann did not budget for this but the department has funds left over in Capital Outlay as the generator was purchased with the Landgraaff funds donated. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to accept the bid from Damme, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

PARKS & REC REPORT – Parks and Rec Manager Jill Crook present. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and resolution on proposal for Geotechnical Exploration for Aqua Center Bathhouse site, authorizing Mayor's signature; Jarred Meyer of JEO present. Jerry Stilmock explained he had negotiated with Thiele Geotech regarding the liability amount of \$50,000.00 be increased to \$250,000.00. Meyer said the proposal is standard from what he's seen in the past and has not had issues with either of the bidding company's, Thiele's and Terracon's. Attorney Stilmock and Council members expressed concern over the liability and question if \$500,000.00 would suffice due to the amount of the project. The item will be tabled until a future Council meeting to allow for Stilmock to reach out to the bidders.

Mayor Ortiz discussed the City's pool and the possibility of the pool not opening for the 2020 Summer season. The Governor has discussed pools heavily in his press conferences and does not recommend pool's be open until possibly July 15th, 2020. With the pool already planning to close early for demo and construction of the pool bathhouse, it is not wise to open up the Syracuse Aqua Center for just a few weeks. Ortiz discussed the possibility of pool employees qualifying for unemployment; City Administrator explained work history is looked and is currently undetermined if they can. Crook explained from the employees who have been hired have not been able to complete their training courses

and asked if they can be reimbursed for what they have already been paid for. Ortiz would like to see additional information and would encourage them finishing their training. The training is good for two years therefore they would be able to use their training in 2021. The Council moved forward with deciding not to open the pool this summer.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – Superintendent Jeff Vogt present. Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Resolution No. 20-11 on amendment to Owner-Engineer Agreement between City and JEO for 2019 Water Supply Improvements Project, authorizing Mayor's signature; Dane Simonsen of JEO present. Simonsen explained the amendment is adding a water main replacement on Park Street from 5th to 11th; originally it didn't go all the way up to 11th. The second item in the amendment is some changes in the existing chem-feed building so the system can operate the way Superintendent Vogt would like it to. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to accept Resolution No. 20-11 approving the agreement, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and ordinance on loan contract between City and NDEE for Well Field and Transmission Main project; Steve McNulty of SRF not present. Attorney Stilmock explained the loan contract consists of two loans, the first reimbursing the City for the land purchase then the department will come back for the second loan. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to introduce Ordinance No. 1071 and move that the statutory rule requiring reading on three different days be suspended, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Orv Gigstad. Nays: none. Attorney Stilmock read Ordinance No. 1071 by title. Council Member Orv Gigstad moved for final passage of the ordinance, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Resolution No. 20-12 on NRCS Williams Park project engineering agreement between City and JEO, authorizing Mayor's signature; Jake Miriovsky of JEO present. Miriovsky explained the agreement is a 75% cost share for bank stabilization and repair at the north end of Williams Park. The agreement is for survey, design and bidding to get the project and repairs rolling. The NRCS agreement has a 220-day timeline. Two options will be evaluated by Miriovsky. Experience indicated NRCS are fairly flexible on what the engineer recommends. An additional supplemental contract or amendment will need to be discussed for construction. Miriovsky can have the additional information for the contract amendment needed to complete the proposal by the next Council meeting scheduled for April 29, 2020. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to adopt Resolution No. 20-12, Orv Gigstad seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad. Nays: none.

Jeff Vogt has been in contact with JEO regarding the electrical for the new bathhouse. He also reported they are planning to complete the electrical at the Park Hill Cemetery garage within the week.

OLD BUSINESS – Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on forgiveness of April thru June 2020 Senior Center rent payment by Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging. Ortiz explained he and the director have been exchanging emails regarding Blue Rivers expenditures and additional information. The Mayor asked for guidance from the Council Members. The agency is on their 7th director in 3 years. The agency oversees 21 facilities. Mayor Ortiz explained Blue Rivers is looking at consolidating facilities. City Administrator Meyer reported the agency are still delivering meals out of the Syracuse Senior Center, and the number of Syracuse residents that use services has dropped due to the bus not being in use. Patty Buchholz commented she has been speaking with Blue Rivers working on fundraising for a second bus but the dollar amount of what other communities are contributing is significantly less than what Syracuse has been contributing although they may be larger in population. She explained the second bus the agency is looking at for Syracuse is a hand me down and Nebraska City recently received new buses although the agency is asking for help financially. Gigstad & Dettmer would like to see what the other cities are contributing before the City considers forgiving three months of rent. The item will be tabled until a future Council meeting.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and update on current status of re-issued Combined Revenue and Municipal Facilities Corporation Bonds. Ortiz explained these bonds were approved to be re-issued at the March Council meeting. Since COVID-19, rates dropped drastically and swiftly lowering the amount of savings the City was initially reported. Administrator Meyer and Clerk Farmer have been in

weekly communication with Jay Spearman at Piper Jaffrey watching rates. As of a day ago, the savings are back up to a higher amount of savings than what was originally introduced in March.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Ortiz led the public hearing, discussion and Ordinance No. 1072 for Application for Conditional Use Permit pursuant to Syracuse Municipal Zoning Code Section 5.18.03 to allow campground at the following-described real estate: Lots 7 thru 12 Block 7 Syracuse Proper, Otoe County, Nebraska; Chris Richardson, property owner present. Richardson explained at the time he purchased the property he was not aware the area was not permitted to be a campground site. The Planning Commission recommended approval at their March meeting. Attorney Stilmock explained to Richardson that in the past the Council asked how long campers would be on site at a campground next to Richardson's property. Richardson answered he only has one individual that has been there for an extended amount of time and in the past there have been multiple campers stay there over the winter. These are typically construction workers whose stay could be two weeks up to three or four months. This can be very short notice sometimes. The water facilities at the site are functional during the winter. Water is metered through two water meters, one on the north end and one on the south end. There are seven electric meters. In the future, Richardson would like to upgrade the pads to concrete but they will stay as is for now. Mayor Ortiz and Jerry Werner explained they would like to keep the area kept up as they have given guidance to the adjacent campground site. Council Member Orv Gigstad introduced Ordinance No. 1072 and move that the statutory rule requiring reading on three different days be suspended, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer, Orv Gigstad. Nays: none. Attorney Stilmock read Ordinance No. 1072 by title. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved for final passage of Ordinance No. 1072, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Orv Gigstad, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

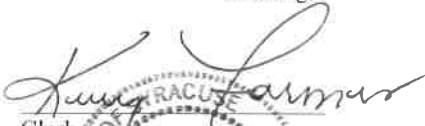
Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Resolution No. 20-13 on Memorandum of Understanding for Southeast District Health Department between City and SEDHD, authorizing Mayor's signature. City Administrator Meyer explained the SEDHD began looking to see if they had any regulations for the counties in their district when COVID-19 began; they realized they did not. The regulations in the memorandum were passed around for review by the municipalities in the counties. If needed they could issue a directive health measure for the City of Syracuse or issue quarantine orders enforceable by Otoe County Sheriff's office. Attorney Stilmock explained the memorandum is a conditional authorization. Laramie Werner asked without the measure in place does the City have the authority to issue what is needed. Attorney Stilmock explained the Governor has already placed restrictions but prior to that the City did not have the authority to place restrictions; the Mayor reaching out to local salons to voluntarily close is an example of this. City of Syracuse has a Board of Health but in speaking with the Mayor and City Administrator the best resources would be utilizing the SEDHD. Attorney Stilmock and Administrator Meyer will reach out to the City's Board of Health eventually but that is not to be done at the current time. The SEDHD would basically be operating as the City's Board of Health. Administrator Meyer gave the example of someone be diagnosed with Measles or Mumps, the SEDHD has the authority to tell that person they are ordered to stay home and if they do not they will be cited by law enforcement; the City would not have the authority to do that. Council Member Orv Gigstad moved to adopt Resolution No. 20-13 approving the Memorandum of Understanding, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad. Nays: Laramie Werner.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and options for residential fiber service. City Administrator Meyer reported has been in contact with two companies, Spiral Communications and Infinity 8 Broadband, regarding providing fiber service to residential customers in Syracuse. Grayson Path with City of Nebraska City gave Spiral a good reference and Hickman has had good service with Infinity 8. Spiral is out of Nebraska City and Infinity 8 is out of Lincoln. Both companies have acknowledged providing services to City facilities at no cost; currently City facilities are contracted with Unite Private Networks for its fiber service. Meyer has learned there are few providers who service residential customers and even fewer who want to come too far out of their home base. Attorney Stilmock has been in communication for some time with Future Tek for site to site internet using the City's water tower; he has not received comment back from them after his last communication sent. Meyer explained Infinity 8 and Future Tek are sister companies. The item will be tabled until a future Council meeting.

Mayor Ortiz requested members of the press on the call please give Jill Crook time to reach out pool staff to let them know of the pool not opening decision instead of hearing about it first via radio, social media, etc.

Mayor Ortiz asked a Council Member to motion to adjourn. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 P.M., Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Orv Gigstad, Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner. Nays: none. The next City Council meeting will be on Wednesday April 29th, 2020.

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

