

REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL

February 12, 2020

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Syracuse, Nebraska met at 6:00 P.M. on February 12, 2020 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 Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner; Council Member Orv Gigstad absent. A copy of the posting notice and acknowledgement of notice to the Council is attached to these minutes.

Mayor Ortiz welcomed and recognized a group of local Boy Scouts present at the meeting for the purpose of earning of their communication badge.

Minutes for the January 12, 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 of BMG present. BMG has sent the January 2020 financial report for the Mayor and Council to review. Blome explained all accounts, CD's, bonds are reconciled. Blome received adjusting journal entries from the City's auditor, Julie Bauman; those have been incorporated into the report. Water revenue is up 50% from this time last year; this is a function of the overhaul of the rate structure implemented in 2019. The second step of the rate increase is scheduled to begin on March 1st, 2020. The CDBG account can be closed out after the 18-19 audit is complete. Utility expenses are down a little due to lower capital expenditures. Ambulance expense is up due to purchase of a new rig. Park expenses are up due to purchase of skid loader and additional maintenance equipment. Street expenses are up a little from purchase of a street sweeper. Fire expenses are up from purchases of air packs. Blome commented on two callable bonds being discussed later on the agenda. Blome said he felt the Municipal Facilities Bond is definitely worth refinancing where the other might just be worth paying off at some point in the near future but there is some savings to be had if the City isn't able to just pay off.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and approval of City's 2019 Financial Audit, Julie Bauman present. A draft version of the audit and power point demonstration was used to go over the audit. Compliance and internal control were additional parts of the financial audit. She also discussed the Board's responsibilities and how important their job is when reviewing the City's financials and budgets. Bauman explained the findings show the City received the best opinion available. In layman's terms Bauman explained the City is very fiscally responsible on where it spends money and where its going and thinking strategically for future projects. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to accept the 2019 Financial Audit, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer. Julie's office will electronically send to the final audit to the state. Nays: none. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve the February Treasurer's report and payment of the claims, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, 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 for January 2020 showed circulation down compared to this time last year. The meeting room had eleven reservations. Scan cards on the front entry doors are not working; Antes has reached out to Johnson Hardware for repair. She spoke with someone from Johnson and they would like a utility person there when Johnson comes; they think maybe it was triggered by a power outage. The third pre-school story time will be starting in March. Project Response will be at the Library the fourth Monday of every month, offering support to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Southeast Nebraska.

SHERIFF'S REPORT – Sheriff Caudill present. Caudill reported 28 total incidents for Syracuse during the month of January 2020. Various calls consisted of nine traffic stops, four return phone calls, two traffic crashes with damage and one minor with injury, and one DUI resulting in an arrest. The reported burglar alarm was a false alarm. Caudill reported deputies are using the office for the department located at City Hall a lot during the evenings. The greatest concern of not having the office to use is

when someone needs to sit down with a deputy; as far as IT, it's almost easier for the deputies to use the computers in their vehicles. Commission Sorenson would like to meet regarding contract negotiations; Attorney Stilmock will reach out for scheduling this. Mayor Ortiz explained to Caudill a parking issue is going to be discussed further down on the agenda. Week 4 of January consisted of the most hours at 112.1, 105.5 of those basic coverage hours.

FIRE REPORT – Fire Chief Bruce Neemann present. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and approval of Kody Cardinal as new members to SVFD. Cardinal works locally is available during the day. He is also on the Syracuse Rescue Squad; it was decided if a rescue call should happen at same time as a fire call he will be present for the Rescue Squad. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve Cardinal as new member, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none. Jerry Werner suggested the City and volunteer departments express thanks to Pet Tech Labs who employee Cardinal and Fire Volunteer Trevor Clark for allowing them to participate in calls during the day; this will be extended to other employers in Syracuse as well.

Neemann has started receiving bids for the fire barn roof.

AMBULANCE REPORT – Rescue Chief Tim Wilson present. Mayor Ortiz led opening, presentation and consideration of bids for ambulance vehicle. Only one bid was submitted for an amount of \$4373.00 from Roger Koski of Michigan. Wilson is fine with accepting the bid as he doesn't have room to store it anywhere. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to accept the bid of \$4373.00 for the used ambulance vehicle, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on EMS Billing ownership change; Wilson doesn't have the agreement paperwork required to be signed but he explained EMS is now Quick Med Claims. The company now has an automatic transmission of the squad's runs to expedite the claim process. The item was tabled and placed on the March City Council meeting agenda.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on usage of Sports Complex east parking lot by SRS. The squad would like to use the area on March 29th for use of Otoe County Mutual Aid Training Day; this will include a MCI training exercise. Tim Wilson will coordinate with P&R Manager Jill Crook and will be allowed to use City barricades to block off entrances of the parking lot. If practices are scheduled by ball teams, the players can enter through the west gates of the Sports Complex.

Wilson announced the new rig was delivered in January. At this time the unit is getting graphics put on and is being stocked.

PARKS & REC REPORT – Parks and Rec Manager Jill Crook not present as she is at the annual softball league meeting for the P&R. Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and approval of 50/50 match for soccer field expansion and sprinkler installation, Russ Cooper of Syracuse Soccer Club present. Cooper explained he has been communicating with Crook regarding the club's requests. Cooper contacted the City's reps at Pioneer Sprinklers and received a bid of \$7500 total. The area is the east portion of the soccer fields which runs along the west side of the east soccer parking lot. Cooper will work on a sketch of the area. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve the City's 50/50 match with the Soccer Club, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner. Nays: none. Cooper explained the Club will wait until fall to do any of the work.

Mayor Ortiz tabled remaining Parks and Rec activities until Crook can arrive.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – Superintendent Jeff Vogt present. Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Resolution No. 20-06 on approval of 2020 Lawn and Leaf Pile Cleanup Agreement, authorizing Mayor's signature. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve agreement for Derek Harms to do work at Lawn and Leaf Pile, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led opening, presentation and consideration of bids for 2003 Ford Taurus and 2005 Ford Taurus vehicles. The 2005 received seven sealed bids with Jerry Dutton offering the high bid of \$1469.00. The 2003 received four sealed bids with Brent Teten offering the high bid of \$752.00. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve the bid of \$1469.00 for the '05 Taurus and the bid of

\$752.00 for the '03 Taurus, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on customer curb-stop shutoff requests. Vogt explained the curb stops are the shutoffs in property yards and are the homeowner's responsibility. Currently Syracuse Utilities do the shutoffs when requested but this also holds the City liable if broken while performing the shutoff. The City will continue to locate and unlock the cover; Vogt proposed the homeowner contact a plumber to do the actual shutoff; the plumber could use the City's tool. Mayor Ortiz suggested a disclaimer be signed by property owner and the City still perform the task so if it breaks while the City is performing the shutoff the City is not liable. If there is a water leak when this is done, the water would need to be shutoff at the main by the City. Fees for the shutoff service by the City was also discussed. Vogt explained during the summer the department may do five to ten of these a month. The discussion was tabled to allow time for Vogt to contact other towns to see what they do.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and approval of end of probation for Curtis Stanberry including \$.25/hour pay increase. Stanberry would also be eligible to participate in the City's retirement contribution plan. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve the end of Curtis's 6-month probation, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Vogt also reported JEO and the water department have been placing flags where the water lines are for the GIS Mapping Phase II project. This is done from 9th Street north.

OLD BUSINESS – Mayor Ortiz explained the public hearings for current Old Business agenda items 13-A, 13-B & 13-C will be continued until the next City Council meeting to be held on Wednesday March 11th at 6:00 P.M. Attorney Stilmock explained Jeff Ray can explain the maps but there are a couple of incorrect things therefore the discussion will need to be continued. These items are discussion and public hearing on Ordinance to amend Figure 23, Figure Land Use and Transportation Map of the Syracuse Comprehensive Development Plan, discussion and public hearing on ordinance to amend and adopt a new Zoning Map of the City of Syracuse, and public hearing and discussion on ordinance on amendment to Syracuse Code of Ordinances, Appendix A Subdivision Article 4 Design Standards to allow non-paved streets and onsite sanitary waste facilities, Jeff Ray of JEO present. Ray explained these items have been an ongoing discussion for a couple of years to allow for possible acreage development. Areas around the City have been looked at for potential growth opportunities. A ridgeline has been proposed where areas outside of ridge would be allowed for acreage development including non-paved streets. Areas inside the ridge would abide by current subdivision codes as anyone does now. Sanitary sewer us also an important piece of the proposed Appendix A Subdivision Article 4 Design Standards.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and Resolution No. 20-07, authorizing Mayor's signature on City Administrator contract including salary pay. Mayor Ortiz introduced Jessica Meyer of Syracuse who was recently offered the position at a 2-year contract with an annual salary of 70K. Discussion was had regarding paid time off noted in the contract; these changes were noted and will be updated at Attorney Stilmock's office for a clean copy for Meyer and Ortiz to sign off on. Council Member Jerry Werner moved to approve the contract for Jessica Meyer authorizing signature, Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on City employee drug testing. Attorney Stilmock is currently working on the details but would like the item to be tabled until a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Ortiz led the discussion and appointment of new Planning Commission Member, Eldon Mannschreck. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve Eldon as new member of the Planning Commission, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on 2020 Easter Egg Hunt at Williams Park, north and south ends, on Saturday April 11th at 4:00 P.M., Syracuse Snoflakers and Chamber of Commerce not present. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve the use of Williams Park on April 11th, 2020, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on calling of Municipal Facilities Bonds Series 2012 and Combined Revenue Bonds Series 2013, Jay Spearman of Piper Sandler not present. Todd Blome gave the City his comments during his report earlier included in these minutes. The Mayor and Council does not feel comfortable paying off the smaller of the two Blome mentioned paying off if desired. The two callable bonds will be placed on the March agenda for Spearman to discuss at that time.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on airbnbs, Building and Zoning Inspector Bruce Neemann present. Neemann explained the City currently does not have anything in the code book for short-term rentals or Airbnbs. There is concern regarding maximum occupancy and safety codes. Syracuse resident Alan Britton present with his concerns of having a short-term rental property in a residential neighborhood. The Planning Commission discussed short-term rentals at it's January meeting considering the use be possibly a conditional use be required and asked the Council to discuss. Britton asked the question and presumed if an item isn't stated as "permitted" in the code book then it not be "permitted". He doesn't feel a short-term rental where the property owners do not reside in the house, such as a bed and breakfast, do not belong in a residential zoning district. He is concerned about what is going on in the house and that anyone can be there without the owners know what is happening in the house if they do not live around the area and it could be potentially a nuisance. Research has been done to see what other communities such as Lincoln, Beatrice and Nebraska City do with these types of rentals and explained a City can adopt an ordinance. Recently a bill was passed at the state level that said a city cannot prohibit this completely but that through ordinance can regulate. The Mayor and Council would like to explore this more as the City is limited for lodging.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on bids for Voice Over IP Phone system for City buildings, City Clerk Farmer explain. Bids were presented from Verizon and Cellular One. This system would include City Hall, Library, Fire Barn and Utilities Shop. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve the bid for the VOIP system for the four City buildings from Verizon, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on bids for City Hall basement waterproofing system, City Clerk Farmer explain. Bids were received from Ram Jack, Thrasher and BDB Waterproofing. The bid includes waterproofing the entire perimeter of the south half of the City Hall basement as well as installing a vapor barrier from floor to drop-ceiling. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve the bid from Ram Jack for a total amount of \$19,510.00, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led the discussion on proposed parking ordinance. Jerry Werner explained after hearing complaints regarding parking issues around town he did some research on what other communities are doing to alleviate particular issues. Suggestions include no parking 3 feet from driveways or possibly painting curbs red from stop signs to eliminate parking too close to stop signs. Dettmer referenced some cities cutting street back to sidewalk for "off-street" parking in front of residences allowing for parallel parking. There are a few of those in town from when properties were originally constructed many years ago. Discussion was that this would be more of a headache for the City. Mayor Ortiz voiced that parking issues are affecting multiple households all of the town and the City needs to be careful when making decisions based on one person's complaint. It was suggested that Superintendent Vogt look into hiring a seasonal worker to help with the painting. The Mayor and Council directed Attorney Stilmock to work on an ordinance incorporating the no parking distance from driveways and stop signs.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and approval on quote for computer system for City Administrator. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve purchase of laptop, two monitors, and docking station for use in City Administrator office, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner, Jerry Werner. Nays: none.

Moving back up to Parks and Rec, Mayor Ortiz led discussion on approval for potential bathhouse grant by Robert Daugherty Foundation. Manager Crook explained this is a \$50K grant, with no match needed at this time.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion on potential pay increase in regards to Certified Pool Operator Certification for Tyler Collin and Ian Mitchell. This item is in conjunction with Public Works agenda item 12.A for the same potential pay increase for Brian Vodicka who also received the CPO Certification with Tyler and Ian; Brian present at meeting. In 2018, two other City employees (one Parks and one Utilities)

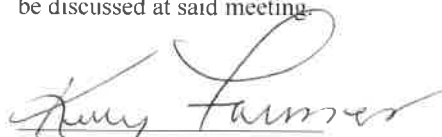
received \$.50/hour pay increase for this particular certification. Crook explained these individuals will help with starting up the pool in the spring and winterizing in the fall as well as helping during times when pool needs to be open and used when much of our staff is no longer available due to returning to school hours. The pool cannot be open or used if someone with a CPO certification is not present. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to approve the \$.50/hour pay increase for Tyler Collin, Ian Mitchell and Brian Vodicka noting this will be the last time any City employees receive a pay increase for a certification and these will be taken into consideration during annual evaluation/budget time when possible pay increases are discussed, Jerry Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Deb Dettmer, Jerry Werner. Nays: Laramie Werner. Motion passed.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and approval of end of probation for Ian Mitchell including \$.25/hour pay increase including participation in retirement contribution. Council Member Jerry Stilmock moved to approve end of probation for Ian Mitchell as of February 26th, 2020, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Laramie Werner, Deb Dettmer. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz led discussion and approval of Park Hill Cemetery garage. Crook reviewed changes made from the last design including removing the two garage doors and install one large garage door, dirt work needed by contractor not Parks department, removing foam in the trusses and installing motion lights. The item was discussed with the Parks employees since they are the ones using the garage and what was more functional and logical for them. The windows originally in the bid were removed as well; the windows accounted between \$150 to \$175 each. Crook budgeted \$30K for this project. Council Member Laramie Werner moved to approve the garage bid, Deb Dettmer seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer, Laramie Werner. Nays: none.

Mayor Ortiz asked a Council Member to motion to adjourn. Council Member Deb Dettmer moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 P.M., Laramie Werner seconded. Roll Call: Yeas: Jerry Werner, Deb Dettmer, 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

