

MINUTE RECORD
Regular Council Meeting City of Haven

Meeting: REGULAR

Date: January 4, 2010

THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING IN REGULAR SESSION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM BY CODY R. LITTLESTAR, MAYOR WITH THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Council Member: Don Ford

Council Member: Jeff Stringer

Council Member: Amy Hirst

Council Member: John Mitchell

Council member: Paula Scott

ABSENT: None.

Others: Sonia Yutzy, Leslie Warden, Allen Blake, Allen Andresen, Bill Thomas, Ann Chesnut, Bryce Matteson.

No additions to the agenda were necessary. No public comment was provided.

License Approval

At 7:01 PM, Paula Scott moved for the approval of a mobile home park operator's license for Gavin & Dinelle Hunsberger. Jeff Stringer seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2010 Appointments

Don Ford moved and Amy Hirst seconded for the appointment of Dave Chamberlain to the Recreation Board for a one-year term. The motion passed five to zero. Don Ford also moved for the appointment of Emil Savaiano to the Ambulance Board for a two-year term. Jeff Stringer seconded, and the motion carried five to zero.

City Administrator Project Updates

City administrator, Allen Blake, offered his public thanks to Tiffany Howlett for her assistance with the trash truck during our busiest trash time of year. Mayor Littlestar discussed how she came to be temporarily hired. Blake said that Howlett indicated she would be able to help again if we required it, depending on her availability.

Regarding our recycle trailer, Blake advised that Stutzman's new, streamlined operation is now functional, meaning separation of the recyclables is no longer necessary. However, Stutzman's will now be charging us \$30 per ton for the recyclable materials we bring in. Blake guessed we are hauling two tons there per week.

Mayor Littlestar suggested we ask the public if they would want us to continue providing the service, even though it would cost the City. Council member, Paula Scott, suggested we figure the actual cost of providing the service and then ask the citizens whether or not they want the service to continue. Blake said the cost of hauling the recyclables could always be added on top of the disposal refuse rates.

Our new sewer pond is now fully functional. It will not discharge for a long time.

Blake said we do have a tentative agreement with the contractor to remove the old well house structures so they don't need to be mowed around anymore. It is also in the works for them to put in a low water crossing. Amy Hirst asked about the cost. Blake said he does not currently have a work-up of cost or plan right now.

Employee Handbook Revisions

The 31-page proposed handbook basically combines all of our existing policies and has added to it an absenteeism policy and a disciplinary policy that Blake presented several months ago. The new handbook would have one signature page for employees rather than several.

Council member Don Ford said he thought the point system absenteeism policy was confusing. City administrator Allen Blake said that he had no problem with us using a different policy but it would be good for us to have one. Mayor Littlestar said he had not reviewed the handbook and didn't feel comfortable making decisions regarding it at this point.

A few council members discussed the attendance policies at their employers and various questions regarding the proposed handbook were discussed at length. Council member Paula Scott said she didn't feel that the City is a large enough operation to operate under such a technical policy and thought a simpler policy would work better.

Don Ford said he felt that all maintenance employees should be required to get a CDL and the air brakes certification. Andresen said that Chris is set to take his written test this week in Wichita. Mayor Littlestar suggested we also pay for Dewayne "Buck" Palmatier to get the air brakes certification as he already has his CDL. The Council agreed that the process should get underway immediately for all maintenance employees to have the proper licenses to operate our trash truck and the larger machinery.

Maintenance supervisor, Allen Andresen, voiced his concerns about the proposed handbook. He said the policy penalizes employees for using their sick and vacation leave. He was also concerned about "early outs." He said he does not want conflict regarding maintenance employees leaving earlier than the shift's scheduled end time, referring specifically to instances where they are called in early.

Blake suggested we revise the point system absenteeism policy to not apply to time off in which sick or vacation leave is being used. The entire Council seemed to agree that would make the policy acceptable.

City administrator, Allen Blake, also handed out job descriptions for maintenance supervisor and the maintenance department. Stringer said that he didn't see anything in the descriptions not expected of the maintenance crew. It was pointed out that we have not yet established a work order system. Allen Andresen, maintenance supervisor, advised he had not yet had the opportunity to review the descriptions. Council member John Mitchell said he would like to address the subject again at the next meeting.

Utility Rate Proposals – Electric, Water, Sewer, Refuse

At 8:14 PM, City administrator, Allen Blake, provided the Council with several handouts regarding rate increases. In these handouts, Blake proposed a 5% increase in all rates, which for the above average user equates to an estimated \$7 monthly increase. Blake said an incremental rate increase is appropriate to eliminate large increases. He also pointed out that our cash on-hand has decreased from about \$1,122,000 to \$623,000 in only six years. Projected into the future this means we have seven years until the termination of our City operation. Blake expressed that in light of the long-term picture, our financial situation is "almost disastrous." He didn't feel that anyone had been spending frivolously but we must have money to cover our expenses. Blake suggested we take a closer look at our budgeting and income.

The discussion veered off to the topic of Eighth Street Assessments but came back around when Don Ford said he would rather increase utility rates than personal property taxes. He felt this was a "fairer" way. Mayor Littlestar felt that our utility rates are still competitive, even with the proposed increases.

At 8:35 PM, Don Ford moved for the acceptance of Resolution 227 regarding wastewater rates. Paula Scott seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Paula Scott moved for the passage of Resolution 228 establishing rates for water. Amy Hirst seconded, and the motion carried five to zero.

Jeff Stringer moved for the passage of Resolution 229 regarding refuse and disposal rates. Scott seconded, and the motion passed five to zero.

Paula Scott moved for the adoption of Resolution 230 regarding electrical rates. Hirst seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Council Concerns

At 8:40 PM, council concerns were discussed. Don Ford mentioned some lights out at Haven Buhler and K96. He also questioned why the maintenance crew salted the streets with the truck and a bucket. Ford was reminded that the Council previously advertised for bids on its salt spreader and received none. The plan was to buy a hitch-mounted salt spreader with the money from the sale of the old salt spreader. Mayor Littlestar said he thought a new one would cost about \$2500. Blake pointed out that the bucket method really isn't that bad and is actually quite effective.

Ford asked if we require new hires to undergo a pre-employment physical. Blake said it is not part of our status quo policy, and the Council agreed it is a necessary addition.

John Mitchell discussed a situation involving Haven Police Department, Darrell Rankin, and an issue with a junk car. Mitchell said Rankin's car was licensed, insured, and drivable. Mitchell said it "seems like he got railroaded." Blake said the vehicle was tagged with a removable dealer's tag on Rankin's property. Rankin does not have a dealership here. Furthermore, Rankin took care of the vehicle, and the issue was dismissed with Rankin present in court. Mitchell admitted Rankin did not provide him with all of those details.

Still, Mitchell felt that the junk car ordinances are "selectively enforced" in Haven. He claimed that junk cars sitting at homes of the influential are going unnoticed. Blake asked Mitchell to e-mail him those names so the department could investigate.

Mitchell said it was brought to his attention that there are bricks holding shingles on to the western roof of the Haven Community Building. All agreed the matter was not worth making an insurance claim, especially when the City's deductible is \$1,000.

Mitchell wanted to know if the Kwik Shop got a building permit for the sign they recently erected. The Kwik Shop did indeed receive a building permit for the job. Mitchell asked if there was some sort of height limit, as the sign seems awfully tall. Blake advised there is no height limit but that's something that could be added to the issues for the Planning Commission.

Mitchell also wanted a ruling on whether or not the maintenance crew should shovel and salt the sidewalk in front of the Senior Center. Scott asked if there had been a problem regarding the same. Mitchell said that we currently don't shovel or salt the sidewalks there, and he walks through there occasionally in the cold weather. Other Council members pointed out that the other businesses downtown, even the Post Office and Fire Station, take care of their own sidewalks. Mitchell said it's just "kind of sad" that it doesn't get done, and Mayor Littlestar said it's sad that no one has volunteered to do it.

The pothole at Kansas Avenue and Harland Priddle Industrial Drive, previously mentioned by Charles Arndt, has not been repaired yet, Mitchell pointed out. Blake said that it has been too cold and wet to make such repairs.

Don Ford asked Blake if he could estimate when the work order system would be established for the maintenance department. Blake said he hoped it would be soon. Ford asked if he could have it by the next meeting, and Blake suggested the first meeting in February instead.

Mayor Littlestar acknowledged the many thank you notes and Christmas cards received at the City Office during December. He also asked the City Clerk to send an official thank you to Tiffany Howlett.

Executive Session(s) Regarding Non-Elected Personnel

At 9:10 PM, Don Ford moved that the Council enter into a 30-minute executive session regarding non-elected personnel. John Mitchell seconded, and the motion passed five to zero. At 9:42 PM, the Council resumed regular session with no action taken during executive session. Jeff Stringer then moved and Amy Hirst seconded that the Council goes into executive session for 15 minutes. The motion passed unanimously. At 10:00 PM, the Council resumed regular session with no action taken.

Minutes:

Minutes from the December 21, 2009, council meeting were approved by a motion from Jeff Stringer and a second by Don Ford. The motion passed five to zero.

Accounts Payable:

Paula Scott moved for the approval of the accounts payable, totaling \$56,478.73; Stringer seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Members were provided a summary reconciling receipts between the Jayhawk and Quicken computer programs.

Adjournment:

At 10:07 PM, Stringer moved for adjournment. Hirst seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Cody R. Littlestar, Mayor

Leslie Warden, City Clerk