

**MINUTES**  
**North Newton City Council – Regular Meeting**  
**November 13, 2017 – 7:00 P.M.**  
**North Newton City Hall**

**1. Call to Order**

Council President Ron Ratzlaff called the meeting to order. Those present and constituting a quorum were:

**COUNCIL:** Gregg Dick, Paul Harder and Jane Schmidt

**ABSENT:** Mayor Braun and Jim Goering

**STAFF:** John Torline, Danny Bisoni, Gregory Nye, Randy Jordan, Cindy Hiebert and Pat Redding

**OTHERS:** Grace Wild, Mark Jenkins, Lori Jenkins, Reece Hiebert, Kurt Friesen, Andi Andres, Fred Schroeder, Dennis Campbell, Siobhan Scarry and Joel Gaeddert

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the October 9, 2017 regular meeting were presented.

**MOTION:** Harder moved, Schmidt seconded, to approve the October 9, 2017 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Citizen Comments**

Kurt Friesen congratulated the winners of the city council elections.

Siobhan Scarry expressed her concern over safety issues at the crosswalk at K-15 and 27<sup>th</sup> Street. She reported that her 5 year old has almost been hit while riding his bike because cars aren't stopping when the lights are flashing yellow. She suggested that the light be red so drivers actually stop.

Council President Ratzlaff recommended that council discuss this issue during non-agenda items at the end of the meeting.

**4. Consider the Mayor's reappointment to the Newton/North Newton Planning Commission.**

In Mayor Braun's absence, Council President recommended reappointing Joe Slechta to the Newton/North Newton Planning Commission. Slechta's term expired last April and it was an oversight that he didn't get reappointed at that time. He has continued to serve on the Commission and agreed to the reappointment of a three year term.

MOTION: Dick moved, Schmidt seconded, to approve said appointment. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Consider the annual request from Kauffman Museum for the Kansas Day Celebration**

Andi Andres from Kauffman Museum requested a donation of \$1,000 from the City of North Newton for the Kansas Day Celebration at Kauffman Museum. This event is scheduled for January 27, 2018. The theme this year will be the Chisholm Trail Revisited. Last year there were approximately 900 people in attendance.

MOTION: Schmidt moved, Harder seconded, to approve a \$1000 community development grant to the Kauffman Museum for the Celebrate Kansas Day event in January 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

**6. Consider an Agreement creating the North Newton Area Environmental Fund within the North Newton Community Foundation.**

Jim and Shirley Goering are creating the North Newton Area Environmental fund within the North Newton Community Foundation. The earnings from this fund would be used for prairie restoration or maintenance or the use of environmentally responsible efforts in beautifying the City. These earnings would be budgeted annually in a separate line item in the City's general fund. In the proposed agreement the city would be committing that the earnings be used in accordance with the donors wishes outlined in the agreement. The initial donation is \$10,000. Each year the earnings on the fund balance will come directly to the city and it will be decided by city administration how these funds could best be used in North Newton.

MOTION: Dick moved, Harder seconded, to approve the North Newton Area Environmental Fund. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Consider approval of the cost statements for the extension of water and sewer projects for North Woods Plaza; Consider setting a time and date for a Public Hearing on the proposed assessments for these projects.**

Torline reported that we are beginning the process of issuing general obligation bonds to finance past projects as well as projects that will be under contract in the future. The North Woods Plaza water and sewer projects are completed and the next step is for council to approve the final cost statements. These are partially funded by assessments against the property owner. The property owners will have a chance to review the proposed charges and comment on the costs at a Public Hearing which is scheduled for December 11, 2017 at 7:00 pm or soon thereafter.

MOTION: Harder moved, Dick seconded, to approve the final cost statement of \$91,594.28 for the water project at North Woods Plaza. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: Harder moved, Schmidt seconded, to approve the final cost statement of \$89,469.57 for the sewer project at North Woods Plaza. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: Dick moved, Harder seconded, to set the date for a Public Hearing on December 11, 2017 at 7 pm or soon thereafter. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. Consider the proposal from Knudsen, Monroe & Co. LLC for an Audit of the City's 2017 Financial Statements.**

Consideration was given to the proposed engagement letter for an audit of the 2017 financial records at a cost not to exceed \$8,100.00. The proposal reflects a \$150 increase from last year's cost.

MOTION: Dick moved, Schmidt seconded, to accept the Knudsen Monroe & Company 2017 audit proposal not to exceed \$8,100.00. Motion carried unanimously.

**9. Begin discussion on hiring a 4<sup>th</sup> Full Time Police Officer.**

Torline reported that Chief Jordan has felt the need for a fourth full time police officer for some time and the two of them have had many conversations regarding this issue. Last month Mayor Braun asked that he and Jordan come to council with more information. Torline reported that North Newton got along with one officer until 2005 when a second full time officer was hired. A third full time officer was hired in December of 2014. We have not budgeted for an additional officer in the 2018 budget and won't know until sometime after January 2018 if we could afford another officer. Therefore, Torline isn't seeking action tonight but rather wants to start the discussion with city council.

Jordan reported that one of his main reasons to get a fourth officer is to be able to rotate officers off the night shift. Working nights continually is hard on your mental health and on family life. Jordan said there are 162-200 hours a month that no one is on duty in North Newton. We used to rely on the Harvey County Sherriff Department and on Newton Police Department to respond when no one was on duty. However the call load has increased significantly for both of these entities making it more difficult for them to respond. There were concerns about how often we respond to calls outside North Newton. Jordan said we only respond when dispatch or the street supervisor requests help. Once the situation is under control our officers return to North Newton. Another concern was that the officers would get burned out if continually working on the night shift.

**10. Reports**

**a. Mayor/Council.** Ratzlaff reported that city council elections were last week and the two incumbants, Jim Goering and Gregg Dick, were re-elected. Dennis Campbell was elected to the third open seat. Kurt Friesen and Nathan Murphy were the other candidates on the ballot.

**b. Staff Update.** Torline reminded everyone about the Christmas Party on December 9 at D'Veers Family Center in Elbing. Torline also reported that City Clerk Redding is researching health insurance options for city employees. Presently the city doesn't offer health insurance to the employees.

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Redding reported that the North Newton Community Foundation's (NNCF) assets are approximately \$208,300. There is \$3,800 left to be matched by the City of North Newton. Gerald Greene has announced his resignation on the Board due to health related reasons.

Bisoni reported Fall Clean-up is finished and less was picked up than last year. Councilman Goering thanked Danny Bisoni and Danny Entz for their hard work and efficiency in the clean-up process. Bisoni also reported that the new skid-steer was delivered last week.

Police Chief Jordan had nothing additional to report.

Attorney Nye had nothing additional to report.

**c. Clerk/Treasurer.** Redding presented November accounts payable and miscellaneous checks and October payroll for approval.

**MOTION:** Ratzlaff moved, Dick seconded, to approve November accounts payable and miscellaneous checks in the amount of \$108,538.28 as presented and October/November payroll checks in the amount of \$26,526.74 for a total of \$135,065.02. Motion carried unanimously.

**11. Non-Agenda Items**

Council President Ratzlaff opened the discussion on the safety issue at the crosswalk at 27<sup>th</sup> and Main Street. After some discussion Ratzlaff recommended contacting KDOT to explore our options. He also suggested that we let Siobhan Scarry know that we are looking into this issue.

**12. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Council President adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Patricia Reddy  
City Clerk

Ronald D. Brown  
Mayor

December 11, 2017  
Date Approved