

MINUTES
North Newton City Council – Regular Meeting
December 9, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.
North Newton City Hall

1. Call to Order

Mayor Ron Braun called the meeting to order. Those present and constituting a quorum were:

COUNCIL: Paul Harder, Jim Goering, Ron Ratzlaff, Dennis Campbell and Gregg Dick

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

OTHERS: Fred Schroeder, Grace Wild, Kurt Friesen, Joyce Dubois, Linda Eustace, Danny and Kathy Benbrook, Chris Vaverka, Al Penner, Esther Kreider Eash, Kelven and Brenda Mays, Jenny Martens, Richard Rempel, Raymond Reimer, Andi Andres, Bill Eash and Eric Shelly

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the November 11, 2019 meeting were presented.

MOTION: Goering moved, Dick seconded, to approve the November 11, 2019 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Citizen Comments

No one spoke.

4. Receive a Representative of the Kauffman Museum who will request a contribution for the annual Kansas Day event.

Andi Andres from Kauffman Museum thanked the city for their contributions to the Kansas Day Celebration for the past 16 years. The event is free to the public and attracted 688 guests last year from 33 Kansas communities, four states and one foreign country. This year's event is scheduled for January 25, 2020 and the theme is Kansas Symbols. Andres requested a donation of \$1,000 for the Kansas Day Celebration at Kauffman Museum.

MOTION: Harder moved, Goering seconded, to approve a \$1000 community development grant to the Kauffman Museum for the Celebrate Kansas Day event in January 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Braun thanked Andres and the many volunteers that give of their time to make this event happen every year.

5. Receive Angela Sharp of Bartlett & West who will present highlights of the Flood Drainage Study.

Angela Sharp handed out maps and reported on her findings regarding the Flood Drainage Study. Sharp stated an item that always needs to be considered when dealing with flooding issues is how any changes will impact those properties that are downstream. Sharp also emphasized that the natural channels should be kept clear from debris if possible. She stated that there are over 1900 acres in the basin that drains into Kidron Creek. Basically this basin is located to the north and west of the city limits of North Newton. She identified five different locations in North Newton where either a detention pond or retention pond could help alleviate the flooding issues. Sharp also stated that a detention pond north of I-135 would be a possibility to catch some of the excess water before it even comes into North Newton.

Sharp stated the first step would be for the City to identify the locations it wants to consider for flood drainage. Bartlett & West would then do more in depth research regarding these locations. This would include getting ground scans of those locations, working with FEMA models and see how changes would impact surrounding areas and also get preliminary cost estimates. Property owners would also need to be contacted.

Residents asked questions and there was some discussion about different possibilities and issues. Resident Bill Eash thanked the city for allowing a time of discussion and thanked Sharp for her presentation.

6. Consider recommendations contained in the 2020 Salary and Benefit Package memorandum from the City Administrator.

Torline is required annually to analyze factors regarding compensation of employees and review employee benefits and present his recommendations to the council. Torline reported on the following three recommendations:

1. Cost of Living Raise

Torline is requesting that all employees except the City Administrator receive a 2% cost-of-living raise on January 1, 2020.

2. Healthcare coverage

The city started offering health insurance coverage two years ago and currently pays 60% of a family premium. Torline is recommending the city contribution increases from 60% to 70% at an estimated cost of \$6,864 to the city.

3. City Attorney compensation

Provide a \$5/hr. increase to the City Attorney's hourly rate. Attorney Nye has been with the city for over 20 years and has not received an increase in pay during those years.

Torline is also recommending that the city continue to provide other benefits at current levels.

Mayor Braun asked that each recommendation be considered separately.

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Cost of Living Raise

MOTION: Ratzlaff moved, Dick seconded, to approve a cost of living increase of 2% to employees except the City Administrator. Motion carried unanimously.

Healthcare coverage

MOTION: Goering moved, Campbell seconded, to increase the City's contribution for healthcare premiums to 70% for employees and families. Motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney compensation

MOTION: Campbell moved, Harder seconded, to increase the City's Attorneys hourly rate by \$5. Motion carried unanimously

Mayor Braun expressed appreciation to Greg Nye for his diligent work as our City Attorney.

Mayor Braun added a fourth recommendation regarding Torline's salary. By statute Torline cannot receive a raise due to KPERS regulations. In the past the council has made a donation to the John and Diana Torline fund at the North Newton Community Foundation in lieu of a raise. This money benefits organizations in and around North Newton. Torline suggested waiting until his anniversary in March to donate to the fund. At that time there should be matching monies available. Braun suggested revisiting this issue again in March 2020.

7. Consider a Resolution describing the boundary of the City of North Newton.

Nye reported that due to the annexation of the strip of land along 36th Street we are required to adopt a resolution to update the boundaries of the city. Resolution 371-19 reflects these changes and will be filed with the Register of Deeds.

MOTION: Ratzlaff moved, Harder seconded to adopt Resolution No. 371-19 updating the legal boundaries of the city. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Consider Authorizing the Mayor to Approve Year End Bills

Braun reported this is an annual event that allows the city to pay invoices that are receive between now and the end of the year.

MOTION: Dick moved, Ratzlaff seconded, to authorize Mayor Braun to approve 2019 year-end bills. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Reports

a. Mayor/Council. Mayor Braun reported that Newton has submitted a draft sewer agreement for our review. Torline and Entz have reviewed the terms and feel like it is reasonable and something we can work with to come to a final agreement.

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Councilman Goering reported that the current asset balance of the North Newton Community Foundation (NNCF) is \$450,086. There is \$10,000 available to be matched by the City of North Newton for new funds that are established. The North Newton funds designated to match existing funds has been exhausted. Councilman Goering thanked the City of North Newton for their continued support.

Councilman Ratzlaff reported that some citizens have requested installing a station to air up tires at City Hall. It has also been suggested that the city consider an incentive for residents to put in low flow toilets. Entz stated that installing a station where tires are aired up would be feasible. It would be located near the city shop.

b. Staff. Torline highlighted his 2019 Year End Report that lists the happenings of this past year. Mayor Braun recommended adding his interview with BBC radio to the year-end list. Torline reported the KDOT path is going to bid on December 18. The bids will be opened at the El Dorado KDOT office. Torline thanked Irma Voran for the nice Christmas decorations at 30th and Main. Torline also reported that we are in good financial standing as we end the year.

Entz reported that he and Justin McBeth dug the missing retainer wall blocks out of Campus Woods pond. These blocks had been pushed in the pond earlier this year. The crosswalk on Bluestem has been installed after the completion of the overlay. Entz stated he cut a path in the woods to help contractors as they prepared bids on the KDOT path.

Chief Jordan reported that the radar trailer has been moved inside as the weather got colder. Jordan stated that his department has dealt with some complex cases over the past six years. He is very appreciative of his officers and the many years of experience they bring to the department.

Jordan identified three areas that he feels needs to be addressed in the coming year:

- Salary structure of the Police Department
- Marijuana issue
- Having 24 hour coverage in North Newton

Mayor Braun thanked Randy for his concerns and stated that these issues could be discussed further at a council retreat in spring. Braun expressed appreciation to the Police Department for all their hard work.

Attorney Nye had nothing more to report.

c. Clerk/Treasurer. Redding presented December accounts payable and November/December payroll for approval.

MOTION: Goering moved, Ratzlaff seconded, to approve December accounts payable and miscellaneous checks in the amount of \$183,238.07 and November/December payroll in the amount of \$26,869.97 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

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Hiebert reported that we went through a software upgrade in the past month which required a lot of work. The upgrade is supposed to make our jobs easier but we have not experienced this as of yet.

10. Non-Agenda Items

Braun recommended appointing Grace Wild to a second four year term on the North Newton Housing Authority Board.

MOTION: Goering moved, Campbell seconded, to approve Wild to a 2nd four year term on the North Newton Housing Authority Board. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Adjournment. Mayor Braun declared the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Patricia Patton Donald D. Braun
City Clerk Mayor

January 13, 2020
Date Approved