

MINUTES
North Newton City Council – Regular Meeting
April 13, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.
Meeting via Zoom

Mayor Braun welcomed everyone to the city's first meeting via the Zoom application. Unprecedented circumstances of the COVID-19 virus prompted this virtual meeting. Mayor Braun reviewed etiquette for a virtual meeting and thanked everyone for their patience as we are doing everything we can to provide this service as easily-accessible as possible.

1. Call to Order

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

COUNCIL: Dennis Campbell, Gregg Dick, Kurt Friesen, Jim Goering and Ron Ratzlaff

STAFF: John Torline, Danny Entz, Greg Nye, Randy Jordan, Cindy Hiebert, Jim Bethards and Pat Redding

OTHERS: Grace Wild, Wendy Nugent and Gwen Neufeld

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the March 9, 2020 Regular Meeting were presented.

MOTION: Ratzlaff moved, Campbell seconded, to approve the March 9, 2020 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Citizen Comments

No one spoke

4. Consider an Ordinance that would provide for advance approval of payment of bills previously budgeted.

Torline stated that council is asked to approve expenditures each month presented by the City Clerk so bills can be paid. Appropriations Ordinance 634-20 would provide advance approval of the payment of bills provided the expenditures were included in this year's adopted budget. This ordinance would allow the City Clerk to continue to pay expenditures in the future if there are possible delays or postponements of monthly council meetings. Council will still be provided a list of expenditures at each council meeting and be able to ask questions.

April 2020 Minutes

MOTION: Goering moved, Dick seconded, to approve Ordinance 634-20 approving expenditures to be paid that were included in this year's adopted budget. Motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance 634-20 will take effect after it is published in the Newton Now.

5. Reports

a. **Mayor/Council.** Mayor Braun reported that at the March Council meeting the council approved Mark Jenkin's appointment to serve on the Historic Preservation Commission contingent on receiving his application. Mayor Braun received his application the day after the council meeting and approved his application. Mayor Braun and City Administrator Torline have been attending a weekly Zoom meeting regarding COVID-19 put on by the Harvey County Council of Governments. Representatives from the Harvey County Health Department and Harvey County Emergency Management are also in attendance. Councilman Goering reported that the North Newton Community Foundation (NDCF) current asset balance is \$446,137 which has decreased since last meeting due to the down turn in financial markets. The grant cycle closed and thirteen grant applications are now being scored by the Grant Selection Committee. Approximately \$10,000 will be given away at a later date.

b. **Staff Update.** Torline reported that Vogts Construction started on the KDOT bike path project today. They have fifty-five working days to complete the project. Chuck Regier is planning a Zoom meeting soon to discuss entrance sign design. Those invited to attend this meeting are the contractor, architect, Councilmember Ratzlaff, Councilman Campbell, Irma Voran and Torline. This group will recommend a design and possible locations and this information will then be presented to council for their approval. Torline spoke about the Revenue and Expenditure report and how it relates to the projected revenue decrease from the current pandemic. Torline doesn't expect budget issues this year but we will have to consider the revenue shortfall when preparing the 2021 budget. It is currently estimated that county-wide sales tax and gasoline tax will decrease by 25% in the future months. This decrease would total around \$100,000 for North Newton.

Entz also stated that Vogts Construction started the KDOT bike path project today and is hoping to be moving dirt by Wednesday. Entz and McBeth hauled off 5 dump truck loads of debris from the Kidron Creek clean-up. Mayer Specialty Services is finishing up on sewer patching and repairs. They found some additional issues so Entz gave them permission to do extra repairs while they were already doing the work. McBeth has been doing a lot of mowing around town.

Chief Jordan reported that his staff is all healthy and out patrolling daily. Bethel College athletic director has contacted Jordan saying they have closed the football/soccer fields and tennis courts due to COVID-19. Bethel College asked the police department to patrol these areas and enforce the closures. Jordan reported his department has ordered face shields and Tyvek suites for his officers.

Attorney Nye had nothing to report.

April 2020 Minutes

c. **Clerk/Treasurer.** Redding presented accounts payable and payroll for consideration.

MOTION: Campbell moved, Ratzlaff seconded, to approve April accounts payable and miscellaneous checks in the amount of \$112,120.62 and March and April payroll in the amount of \$27,126.33. Motion carried unanimously.

Redding encouraged everyone to respond to the census if they have not already done so. Harvey County has a response rate of 56% which is the sixth highest in the state.

6. Non-Agenda Items

Mayor Braun is recommending the council work session be rescheduled for May 11 at 5:00 at City Hall. If we are still meeting via Zoom we will postpone the work session again.

Mayor Braun thanked Deputy Bethards and Redding for organizing the Zoom meeting.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business Mayor Braun declared the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Patricia Redding
City Clerk

Donald A. Braun
Mayor

May 11, 2020
Date Approved