

MINUTES
North Newton City Council – Regular Meeting
June 11, 2018 – 7:00 P.M.
North Newton City Hall

1. Call to Order

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

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

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

OTHERS: Vonda Brecheisen, Kurt Friesen, Fred Schroeder, Katie Schmidt, Nathan Murphy and Adam Strunk

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the May 14, 2018, regular meeting were presented.

MOTION: Dick moved, Goering seconded, to approve the May 14, 2018, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Citizen Comments

No one spoke

4. Receive Vonda Brecheisen of Knudsen, Monroe and Company for a Review of the City's 2017 Financial Statements.

Vonda Brecheisen of Knudsen, Monroe & Company, LLC presented the annual financial statement. Brecheisen explained the governance letter and stated there were no significant audit findings. She stated there were no budget violations and no violations of cash basis accounting laws.

MOTION: Ratzlaff moved, Harder seconded, to accept audit as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Brecheisen and Mayor Braun praised staff in their diligent work concerning the audit.

5. Consider a Merchant Agreement with Government Payment Service, Inc. for credit and debit card service.

Hiebert reported that 7-8 years ago the city started taking credit/debit card payments. All information is entered by hand by staff and is time intensive. Residents have been asking about online payments so Hiebert and Redding have been researching different companies that provide these services. After learning about different on-line payment

providers Hiebert and Redding are recommending using Govpaynet for these services. Govpaynet comes highly recommended by other utility clerks and offers a lower fee than what our customers are currently being charged. Govpaynet will put a link on our website that takes the customer to a secure page where credit or debit card payments are made. After a payment is made there are numerous reports that are generated for our records so Hiebert can post payments to the appropriate account. Adding the Govpaynet link to our website will make paying bills easier for our customers and will save time for city staff. Nye has reviewed the Merchant Agreement and Govpaynet has made the requested edits.

MOTION: Dick moved, Goering seconded, to approve the Merchant Agreement with Govpaynet. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Consider continuing the partnership with KPTS Television for North Newton promotional services.

Torline reported that last summer KPTS came and took some still pictures, drone footage and video footage around North Newton. A thirty second clip was then created and aired twice a week for around 17 weeks. The city paid \$1,000 for this service. The money is used up and so council needs to decide if we want to continue this partnership. There was some discussion about the benefits of this service. Both Mayor Braun and Torline have received positive feedback regarding the 30 second clip. It was suggested that we start running the clip in August and then it will run until early December.

MOTION: Goering moved, Campbell seconded, to continue the partnership with KPTS. The City will pay another \$1,000 to KPTS and request the 30 seconds clip to start airing in August. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Consider a 2019 Budget Work Session

Mayor Braun called for discussion on inclusions or exclusions in the 2019 budget. Torline reported that there is upward pressure on the mill levy as a result of the fourth full-time police officer and health care costs. Health care costs continue to rise and more employees are deciding to enroll in the city health insurance. Torline also reported that our assessed valuation is up to over \$10 million for 2019. There was discussion about budgeting \$10,000 to purchase smart meters. New entrance signs for North Newton were also discussed which would be funded out of capital improvement. The police department might be replacing a patrol car which would be funded out of equipment reserve fund. Torline stated that both capital improvement fund and equipment reserve fund are not budgeted funds. Staff will work on a draft budget for presentation at the July Council meeting.

8. Reports

a. Mayor/Council. Mayor Braun reported that he and Torline presented at the Harvey County Commission meeting. Braun requested Harvey County make a \$20,000 donation for the additional cost of the pedestrian bridge along 36th Street which is a part of the trail project. The commissioners will consider this request but stated they have more requests than money. Torline added that he attended a County Commission meeting in

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April informing them of the upcoming trail project. There was discussion at that meeting about North Newton annexing 15 feet so all of the trail would be on North Newton's property. Anthony Swartzendruber has since been in contact with Torline stating that until KDOT completes the safety review the idea of annexing should be put on hold.

Councilman Campbell stated that he has received complaints from citizens that live near Wheatland Homes regarding residents that are smoking in the street. Wheatland Homes has recently adopted a no smoking policy on the premises. As a result the Wheatland Homes residents sit on the curb or stand in the street to smoke. Chief Jordan stated that he is aware of this change in policy but he and his officers have not observed anything that would be a traffic hazard. Kurt Friesen, the chair of the Housing Authority, suggested these concerns get reported to Carrie Austin, Director of Wheatland Homes.

Councilman Goering reported that the current asset balance of the NNCF is \$214,000. There is still \$18,400 left to be matched by the City's funds. On June 14 the Awards Celebration will be held at the Meridian Center. At that time, \$10,504 will be awarded to eleven deserving organizations. Goering thanked the City and community for their continued support of the Foundation.

b. Staff Update. Torline reported that he will be on vacation the last week of June.

Hiebert reported that she is working on the July 1 Echo. There are some yards in North Newton that are in need of mowing so council suggested that this issue be addressed in the ECHO.

Bisoni reported it will be three years in August that the water tower went into service. It is recommended that the tower be cleaned and inspected every 3-5 years. Bisoni has received two quotes for these services:

1. McGuire Iron's quote included taking the tower out of service for 3-5 days and fully draining the tower. McGuire Iron would then do a full inspection and remove any sediment that has accumulated. The tower would then be disinfected, water samples would be collected and sent to KDHE and the tower refilled. This option would waste a lot of water and require us to get water from the Wholesale Water District while our tower is out of service. The cost for this option is \$2,875.

2. Midco Diving's quote included having divers disinfect themselves, then perform a full inspection of the tower and remove any sediment that has accumulated with a vacuum hose. This process is all on camera and they provide us with a DVD of the results. The tower is never taken out of service, no water is wasted and the process will take one day to complete. The cost on this option is \$2,700.

There was discussion among the council that option one was not a favorable option due to the amount of water that would be wasted and having the tower out of service for 3-5 days. Councilman Harder suggested that Bisoni get feedback from other cities that have contracted with Midco Diving. Bisoni will do some checking and then Torline will report the results in his weekly update to the council.

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Chief Jordan reported that a cement slab was poured for Elsa at the K-9 handler's house. Since this project was on private property the city could not pay for this work to be completed. Chief Jordan reported that an anonymous donor came forward and paid the invoice. He is very appreciative of the donor's generosity. Jordan thanked the council for allowing him to hire a fourth full time officer. The increased visibility at night has been helpful and Officer Wambold has already addressed numerous issues. Jordan also stated at the last Harvey County Drug Task Force meeting there was discussion about the increased pressure from the courts for Police Departments to get involved in civil issues. Sherriff Gay has met with the county attorneys and it was agreed that law enforcement will not get involved in civil issues. Jordan thanked Court Clerk Hiebert for her organization at court and her ability to keep everything running smoothly. Hiebert and Attorney Nye work well together which is helpful when we have a full docket like we did at the last court date.

Attorney Nye had nothing more to report.

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

MOTION: Goering moved, Ratzlaff seconded, to approve June accounts payable and miscellaneous checks in the amount of \$72,476.95 and May/June payroll in the amount of \$27,625.07. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Non-Agenda Items

No one presented.

10. Adjournment

There being no other business Mayor Braun declared the meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Patricia Redding
City Clerk

Donald D. Braun
Mayor

July 9, 2018
Date Approved