



WATONGA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FOR JULY 20, 2021

In accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Law, this Agenda was posted July 16, 2021 Prior to 5:00 PM. at the Watonga City Hall, on the door of the City Clerk's Office, located at 117 North Weigle, Watonga, Oklahoma.

The City Council of the City of Watonga did meet at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 in the **Council Chamber** of Watonga City Hall, located at 117 North Weigle, Watonga, Oklahoma for a scheduled meeting.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:

Council Present: Travis Bradt, Allen Cowan, Lindsey Doyel, Ladina Willis and Mayor Bill Seitter. Also present, City Manager Larry Mitchell, City Attorney Jared Harrison, and City Clerk Verlen Bills.

Declaration of a Quorum: at 6:02 PM.

AGENDA

1. **Approve the Minutes** of the previous Council Meeting held June 15, 2021

Motion to approve the Minutes of the previous Council Meeting held June 15, 2021 was made by Lindsey Doyel and seconded by Allen Cowan.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion Carried.

2. **Consent to Approve the Minutes** of the following Special Council Meetings;

A. Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held June 18, 2021;

B. Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held June 24, 2021;

C. Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held June 25, 2021;

D. Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held July 6, 2021:

After a brief discussion, City Attorney Jared Harrison suggested that the minutes from each meeting be approved separately.

Travis Bradt made the motion to approve the Minutes for the Special Council Meeting held June 18, 2021. Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel abstained L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

Travis Bradt made the motion to approve the Minutes for the Special Council Meeting held June 24, 2021. Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve the Minutes for the Special Council Meeting held June 25, 2021. Motion was seconded by Lindsey Doyel.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve the Minutes for the Special Council Meeting held July 6, 2021. Motion was seconded by Lindsey Doyel.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

3. **Approve the Monthly Reports** from EMS, Fire Department, City Treasurer, Library, Police Department and Community Development.

Mayor Seitter asked City Treasurer Rodney Jacks about how we made \$10,000.

Mr. Jacks explained that the State had made an error when the repayment schedule was first arranged and they have finally discovered and corrected it. That will save us about one month of paying back this over payment. We have about 13 months left of this payback.

It was noted that the Fire Department reported a lot of Medical Assist Incidents.

Fire Chief Robert Daugherty agreed, but the rains will stop some day and all the vegetation will dry out and start burning again.

Mayor Seitter asked Interim Police Chief Aron Vales about the situation with Police Personnel.

Officer Vales listed the Officers currently in service and the status of those in training. Three are qualified to work on their own. Two are still working with a senior partner and one will finish CLEET in September.

Mr. Mitchell commented, it takes 26 weeks to get an Officer trained.

Mayor Seitter: The future staffing looks good but we are short for now.

Motion to approve the Reports from the EMS, Fire Department, City Treasurer, Library, Police Department and Community Development was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Travis Bradt.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

4. **Review and Accept** the list of Claims against the City of Watonga for the month of June 2021

Mayor Seitter commented that this was the end of our fiscal year.

Mr. Cowan asked about a Purchase Order from March.

Mr. Mitchell explained how invoices and purchase orders can get delayed. Sometimes we make mistakes, sometimes the vendor is in error. Sometimes a purchase order is issued but the shipping is delayed for various reasons. We are trying to get the end-of-year things cleaned up.

Ms. Lindsey asked about a purchase order from December of 2020.

It was determined that this was from Zee Medical.

Chief Daugherty explained how this company works. They show up on occasion and re-stock our First Aid cabinets. This representative may be out on the road for some time and may not get his paper work back to the office in a timely manner.

Mayor Seitter asked, why is this so late?

Chief Daugherty responded; I do not know. I get an invoice I record it and then submit the invoice to be paid.

City Clerk Bills (previous Fire Chief) recalled that this company has had delays with their billing for some time but admitted that 6 months was a serious delay.

Airport Manager Mrs. Jena Ohman noted similar issues with this vendor.

Mr. Seitter expressed concerns about getting invoices paid for the current fiscal year and the lack of a purchase order for this vendor.

Several discussed our procedures for handling invoices and purchase orders.

Mayor Seitter asked to confirm, Supervisors do sign the purchase orders before they are paid?

Chief Daugherty and Mrs. Ohman confirmed yes.

Mayor Seitter: I think I have brought this problem to our attention every year, we are into the next fiscal year and we are still paying last year's invoices. My understanding is that we should not be paying these invoices.

Mr. Harrison explained that this is still being paid from the proper year. Mr. Jacks and your Accounting Firm RS Meacham will see to that. There is a cutoff date for the previous year.

Mr. Mitchell added, it is 90 days from the end of the fiscal year.

Mayor Seitter: This 90-day cut off is being advertised?

Mr. Mitchell: Confirmed yes.

There was more discussion of the process and procedures for invoices and purchase orders.

Motion to accept the List of Claims against the City of Watonga for the month of June 2021 was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Lindsey Doyel

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

5. **Approve the Monthly Financial Report** for June 2021 from RS Meacham.

Mr. Mitchell: Handed out to you is a summary of the Financial Report. Ms. Phillips reports that their office has had four positive tests for COVID and they have shut their office down and are not able to attend this evening. If you have any questions, Mr. Jacks or myself may be able to answer.

Mr. Mitchell continued, my highlights for the year is that we finished the year in the black with both the General Fund and the Public Works. Revenues were over budget and expenditures were under budget.

Mr. Jacks: I was thrilled with the sales tax. We went through a strange year. Sales Tax dropping because of COVID issues and then we took a hit because an oil company over paid and wanted their money back.

Mr. Mitchell: Over all we missed our projections for the year by only about \$500.

Mr. Jacks: I think Meacham did an excellent job trying to estimate the sales tax for the year. And Supervisors did their part and kept expenditures down.

Mayor Seitter commented, and we still managed to get a few capital improvement projects done. And Use Tax has been up for the last three months.

Mr. Jacks, yes internet sales are up and in some respects that is good. All Use Tax goes into the General Fund.

Mayor Seitter: I am concerned about the local businesses as more and more shopping is done online.

Motion to approve the Financial Report from RS Meacham for the month of June 2021 was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Lindsey Doyel.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

6. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve an agreement with the Blaine County Sheriff's Office to provide Dispatch and OLETS Services within the jurisdiction of the City of Watonga.

Mayor Seitter introduced Blaine County Sheriff Travis Daugherty.

Mr. Mitchell: In the Council Packet was a copy of last year's agreement. In front of you is a copy of this year's agreement. They are proposing an increase from last year of \$3660 per month to \$5,000 per month. The Sheriff's Office has been a great help over the last year as our Police Department has been shorthanded. I would recommend the Council approve this agreement with the increase. We currently have a much better working relationship with the Sheriff's Office.

Mayor asked, what is OLETS?

Sheriff Daugherty answered, that is the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Telecommunications system. Officers use the system to do background checks on criminals, information on vehicle tags, driver's license checks and other information. That system is owned by the State and we lease it from them. This expense is shared by all the communities in the County.

Mayor Seitter asked about salaries for the dispatchers and the amounts listed. The City of Watonga is paying for both dispatchers?

Sheriff Daugherty explained, this actually equates to about one full-time dispatcher and one part-time dispatcher. We provide Dispatch Service for the whole County but Watonga is the busiest Community and should pay for a larger percentage of the cost of the service.

Sheriff Daugherty continued to explain the service they provide to the City. We provide service 24 / 7 and 365, not just for Police but for Fire and EMS whenever they need our help. The Dispatching Service cost the County about \$200,000 to \$250,000 per year. We employ 9 full-time Dispatchers and 2 part-time Dispatchers. The individual Cities and Towns could not afford to do their own 24 / 7 dispatching. But, by combining resource through the County makes this work.

Sheriff Daugherty gave a brief history of the Law Enforcement relations between the County and the City of Watonga. He went on to describe how we are working with the 911 System out of Weatherford.

There was discussion as to how emergency calls are answered between the Sheriff's Office and 911 Dispatch and the Fire Department.

Fire Chief Daugherty explained why and how some of this works out.

Sheriff Daugherty reported that they are working with 911 Dispatch out of Weatherford to bypass some of the routing delays and talk directly to the Officers in the field.

There was some brief confusion of the amounts for the agreement.

Mayor Seitter noted that the agreement includes an automatic renewal. The City cannot agree to anything for more than one year.

Sheriff Daugherty: The City may need to renew the agreement annually. He was only trying to state that he would not trouble the City for several years to change the agreement or ask for increases.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve an agreement with the Blaine County Sheriff's Office to provide Dispatch and OLETS Services within the jurisdiction of the City of Watonga.

Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

7. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve William S. Blocker as Municipal Judge for the City of Watonga as recommended by City Attorney Jared Harrison.

City Attorney Jared Harrison noted, technically City Manager Larry Mitchell is making the recommendation, but I do concur.

Mr. Harrison: Mr. Blocker has worked with our Office for about a year and a half, he chose to go on his own and do more Court work. He expressed some interest in Municipal Court and I think he is someone I can work with. I cannot recommend him enough.

Mr. Mitchell: Under the Ordinance 674 (changing to the City Manager form of Government), the City Attorney becomes the Prosecutor for the City. I think Mr. Harrison and Mr. Blocker will be able to work together on this to improve and refine our procedures for the Court process.

Mayor Seitter commented to Mr. Blocker about his resume and his experience as a wrestling coach: Explain what you are considering for our Court System. Have you had a chance to review how we do this?

Mr. Blocker: I had been in your Court as an Attorney in the past, at that time there seemed to be some room for improvement. The more efficient we can make it the less it will cost the City to operate. There may be things we can do about the repeat offenders, the same faces showing up again and again. Nor do I want to get a reputation that offenders will not be punished or fined. If they break the law, they will pay the price. I want Municipal Court to have some value in the Community.

Mayor Seitter: It was no different as a School Administrator and the kids I dealt with. I seem to see the same faces over and over.

Mr. Mitchell: The previous year has been difficult for the Courts in general because the Jail has been closed at times.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve the recommendation by City Manager Larry Mitchell to appoint William S. Blocker as Municipal Judge for the City of Watonga. Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

8. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Resolution No. 2021-5 to adopt the updated 2021 version of the City of Watonga Employee Handbook, as recommended by City Attorney Jared Harrison and City Manager Larry Mitchell.

Larry Mitchell: This is another step in our quest to move to a Council Manager Government. We have tried to take everything that Council passed over the last 10 years and bring it all together into a more readable form. We have updated to make sure that we are consistent with current State Law, consistent with standard practices and procedures and with our Insurance Carrier OMAG guidelines

There are a few things that still need to be revised, but time and budget did not allow. Your new City Manager may want to work on Vacation time and Sick Leave Policy.

We spent about six months working on this with input from all the Supervisors and Department Directors. Several made some valid points and we have incorporated these suggestions. We added a policy for employees that need to work from home.

Mayor Seitter: I have read it and I think the Professional Conduct and Anti-harassment policy is great.

Mr. Mitchell noted, that was incorporated from an Ordinance that had been passed about a year ago.

Mayor Seitter: I think the way this has been worked into the Handbook has much more to offer than just a bunch of rules and regulations.

Mr. Bradt: Another section of the Handbook I would like to note is the section on the Code of Ethics and Business Conduct and Practices for every Employee. I think this is very important.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2021-5 to adopt the updated 2021 version of the Employee Handbook was made by Allen Cowan and seconded by Travis Bradt.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

9. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve a lease agreement with Watonga Chamber of Commerce for office space in the new City Hall Building at 410 W. Main.

Mr. Mitchell: The document in front of you is the latest version of the lease agreement and they have already signed this. The premise is that we would charge them a certain amount per month, and in exchange for that they would provide the City with membership, advertising and marketing services to us. It is a wash and we show a benefit for the Public and they show that they are providing services to the community. I think it will be a great relationship.

It was agreed that the old Chamber Building and property should be discussed later, but does not need to be a part of this agreement.

Mayor Seitter noted that the agreement does not specify office equipment use, break room and other common areas and services. Does anything need to be specified about building access?

Mr. Mitchell: We will provide access to the internet service. They will have their own office equipment, furniture and phone system. We will share the break room and work out some of the minor incidentals. If you recall, there are three rooms in the southwest corner of the building that have a separate entrance. We will also work with them if they need access elsewhere.

Mr. Harrison noted that the Lease agreement does say, anything more than what is initially agreed to is at the approval of the City.

Motion was made by Travis Bradt to approve a Lease Agreement with the Watonga Chamber of Commerce for office space in the new City Hall Building at 410 W. Main. Motion was seconded by Ladina Willis.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

10. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To Approve Resolution No. 2021-4 to revise the Watonga Police Department Manual, Section 702.4.2(C), to reset the limits in which Department Vehicles may be used by Employees to take home.

Mr. Harrison: Council had asked previously for this Resolution. The original rules allowed for one hour of drive time and Council thought that was too much. This resolution changes that from driving time to miles from the Police Station. I chose the Police Station because trying to use the City Limits as a boundary was too inconsistent. The actual distance has been left for Council to decide.

Mayor Seitter and Mr. Cowan agreed with that line of thinking.

Interim Police Chief Aron Vales: I have contacted other departments around the State, some larger than Watonga and some smaller. Some allow for only 30 minutes of drive time, others more than an hour. The City of Sperry Oklahoma allows their officers to take a vehicle home to their residence in Tulsa. I would ask that the City Council set limits to at least the boundaries of Blaine County. We continue to have problems recruiting new officers, we do not need any new restraints.

There was some confusion as to where the 60 minutes came from.

Officer Vales gave a brief overview of the situation with Officers and vehicles. He explained how this helps greatly with response times and backup availability. I think we should leave this the way it is at this time until we get a new Police Chief hired and get the Police Department review back from Rick Rumsey and OMMS.

Mayor Seitter brought up the issue of liability for the City.

This became a lengthy debate about the liability of an off-duty Officer in a City Vehicle outside the City Limits verses the liability of not having an officer in a timely manner when needed.

The drive time for one officer in particular was debated.

Discussion went back to liability concerns.

Mayor Seitter expressed concerns of the added expense for vehicle maintenance and repair. Officer Vales pointed out that all vehicles have GPS tracking and are monitored on a regular basis for proper driving and responses.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the response time, is greatly improved when an office can respond directly to an incident, verses having to drive to the Police Station, get a vehicle and then respond. Are we not also increasing our liability by limiting vehicle access to an officer hence increasing his response time?

Mayor Seitter suggested that there is a balance here somewhere between what it costs the City and the benefits to the City. He asked how many times has this particular officer been called out recently.

Officer Vales replied, not very often recently because of the way the shift schedule has to be done.

Sheriff Travis Daugherty commented that this is just part of the liability the City needs to accept as part of having a Police Department. He gave an example, admittedly a worst-case scenario, of how response time can be critical.

There was more discussion about the different sides of the liability issues.

Ms. Willis pointed out that there are concerns for response time liability.

Mr. Mitchell: We could debate this for some time, but what number does the Council want to put into this resolution?

Mayor Seitter: I'm not sure allowing an officer to take a vehicle home off duty will help that much with employing new officers. My other concern is leaving this at the discretion of the Police Chief.

Ms. Willis: I want to make sure we have officers available in a reasonable amount of time.

Mr. Mitchell indicated that the decision about taking police vehicles home off duty could be put with the City Manager. He noted that it does create a positive presence to see a police vehicle in the neighborhood.

There was more discussion about response time and how far to allow a vehicle to be driven home by an officer.

Mayor Seitter asked, which Police Officers do take vehicles home in town.

Officer Vales listed himself and one other.

Discussion continued about response time and the importance of a speedy response.

Officer Vales pointed out that when an Officer is at home off duty it is arranged that they rotate who will be available for immediate call in.

Fire Chief Daugherty pointed out the advantages of the radio in the vehicle, the officer has information of the incident in route.

Sheriff Daugherty allowed that there is always liability, his office has lost two vehicles this year.

Discussion about high-speed pursuits assured.

Ms. Willis confirmed some of the debate with Officer Vales. She continued, we do not want to set you up to fail, but for success.

Officer Vales added, we take care of our vehicles. This is where we work and we take pride and want to keep our office clean and in good condition. Some of that takes time, usually after hours.

Mr. Cowan: I had seen a Watonga Police Unit out of town and was not aware that a Watonga Officer lived in that area. This is partly the reason this has come up. But I am glad we have had this conversation; I think I have a better understanding of why this is important.

Mayor Seitter came back to; who and how the authority is determined to allow or not allow a vehicle to go home with an Officer. It appears we are setting this to allow all officers to drive vehicles home.

Officer Vales: As acting Police Chief that is at my discretion. The Officers themselves do not decide this. I weigh these decisions very carefully.

Mayor Seitter: You will not always be the Police Chief. The way the policy is written, it is at the Chief's discretion. The City Manager nor the Council has any say in this.

Mr. Harrison: The resolution before you is just to modify the one item of the distance involved. To change the Police Chief's authority would require a different resolution and we could not do that this evening. We could do this with two resolutions or we could come back later with a single resolution to include both items.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Rick Rumsey with OMMS should have his report, Best Practice Review of the Watonga Police Department, ready for us by mid-August.

Mayor Seitter: I certainly appreciate everybody's comments. It has allowed me to look at things a little differently. I think we have gotten away from what reasonable response is costing the City.

It was agreed that there should be a balance between good public safety and how much it cost.

No Action was taken on Agenda Item number 10.

11. **Discussion and Review;** of Section 10-303 of the Watonga Ordinance Book concerning Fireworks within the City Limits and Fire Limits.

Mayor Seitter asked, what are the Fire Limits.

Fire Chief Daugherty responded; it is a map of the areas in the City determined to be a higher fire danger. Primarily the Business Districts, not the Residential areas.

Mayor Seitter commented about all the noise and how it upset small children and pets. Most others agreed with the Mayor.

Rodney Jacks disagreed: I still enjoy the fireworks even at my age. And my dog eventually learned to tolerate it. I think we should be allowed to celebrate our Independence.

Ms. Willis thought that after midnight was too late for fireworks.

Someone else commented, we should only pop American fireworks to celebrate our Independence. Several saw that as humorous. It was also noted that there was almost a shortage of Chinese Fireworks.

Mayor Seitter asked, does Council want this item to be on the agenda, to take action?

Comments were made about how the noise bothers Seniors and Veterans. It continues on for too long. Fireworks should not go on after midnight, every night for a week.

Mayor Seitter noted that the ordinance states that fireworks stop at midnight.

There was discussion about how difficult it is for Police Officers to enforce a Fireworks Ordinance.

Some thought that we should completely eliminate fireworks in the City Limits.

Others discussed dropping the time limit to 10:00 PM, but it was pointed out that this time of year it does not get dark until about 9:00 PM.

Other time limits were talked about and the fact that some people have to get up the next morning and go to work.

Mayor Seitter agreed, enforcing a Fireworks ordinance is a problem.

Mr. Mitchell agreed, in some communities, the Police cannot act unless they actually witness the fireworks being lit.

Mr. Harrison noted that some places it is illegal to possess fireworks in the City Limits. This can also get complicated to enforce.

The burden of fireworks to the Fire Department was discussed.

Mayor Seitter repeated his question, does Council want this item to be on the agenda, to take action?

Mr. Harrison: We have about a year to look into this. Some of this may need to be changed anyway as part of the change to City Manager form of government. If I understand, we only want to change the dates and times for fireworks. I will draw up an ordinance for the Council to consider.

12. Council Comments:

Mr. Cowan expressed appreciation to the City Employees for the brush and tree cleanup. We have been working under some tough situations. We should say thanks more often.

Ms. Willis agreed. I have brought complaints to Mr. Mitchell and they have been handled. I think the open-door policy will eventually let the citizens feel like we can work together and it is not "us against them". I appreciate your involvement with every aspect of City Operations and keeping up with the day-to-day details.

Mr. Cowan asked, what is the status of the highway drainage project south of town.

Mr. Mitchell: My last meeting with ODOT was several weeks ago, but we are basically at a stalemate. ODOT knows that we have submitted an application for a Community Development Block Grant and they have postponed anything with us, to see whether or not we receive the grant, then they might be willing to assist us. We should know something about this grant by the end of July. But I can tell you, they are not interested in owning up to the design flaws with the highway in that area.

Mr. Cowan: What can we do to help the next City Manager to keep from losing the traction that you've made with this?

Mr. Mitchell: I have been trying to keep in communication with our State Representative Mike Debrinski. I think he is very interested and he is on the Transportation Committee. I would recommend that's probably where you need to continue discussion and ask him to notice and be aware of the situation. Working with the District Engineer has not been effective. The last person I talked with was an ODOT Engineer from the Oklahoma City Office and he is the one that suggested they were postponing pending our grant application. I think you need to get the attention of the ODOT Director or someone from the Director's Office.

There was brief discussion about how the highway surface is starting to deteriorate. Proper drainage will be a major project. ODOT suggests that the drainage is fine yet we continue to have a swamp area along the highway. Several noted, in so many words, water does not run up hill.

Ms. Doyel asked about the Splash Pad.

Several replied that it was open.

Mayor Seitter asked, is that chlorinated water or is that constant fresh water?

Mr. Jacks replied that it is continuous fresh water because we do not have any Lifeguards at the location.

13. Mayor Comments:

Mayor Bill Seitter: I also appreciate the City Employees and all the work you guys are doing. Electricity was out the other day and back on quickly. I appreciate that. I appreciate Mr. Mitchell and the work that you've accomplished for us. I think your contract is up the end of this month.

Mr. Mitchell added, and then I am going on vacation.

Mayor Seitter: The Police Officers are inviting us to do ride arounds or ride-a-longs with them so we can better understand what their world is about. I appreciate that offer.

We are all having trouble finding employees even though the City does offer a complete package of benefits. I am not sure this idea is a doable thing but maybe we could offer to exchange some of the benefits for more salary. Benefits are nice but, priorities of the younger employee may lean more to the three kids at home, mortgage, and car payments and not so much of retirement. We should look at making our Benefits Package more flexible. As employees get older and kids leave home, then the package could be adjusted more toward retirement. I think this is something worth evaluating.

Mr. Mitchell agreed; we do offer good medical insurance for the whole family. Light and Water lost a good employee this week and I looked to see that other cities are paying about \$37 to \$38 per hour for lineman. I think the agreement you signed with OMPA to do some of our line work was a wise decision.

Mr. Mitchell continued; part of our problem are employees getting hit by drug screening. Some think that because they have a marijuana card they can be exempt. Not so with CDL Drivers. Street & Alley is having trouble keeping drivers.

Mayor Seitter commented that CDL Drivers seem to have always been a problem for the City and School, trying to compete with the Oil Industry.

Contract Employees were discussed.

Mr. Harrison replied that can be problematic. Sometimes, there is a very fine line between a contractor and an employee.

Several others commented on the idea of Contract Employees.

Discussion went back to the idea of a flexible employee benefits package.

14. City Manager Comments:

Mr. Mitchell: We have a bid opening Thursday for the Airport Runway Project at 2:00 PM. The State is picking up our local share of the grant so we have no cost in this project. It is a million-dollar project, and the City has no local share. I think it's great. I hope we get a couple of good bids.

Street and Alley Supervisor Justin Woldridge has a schedule for extra junk refuge brush cleanup for the community. This calendar is subject to weather and other problems. This is the result of the \$2.00 surcharge added to the utility billing.

We have also submitted an application for a \$50,000 grant for community cleanup and we hope to hear something back on that in the next week or so. We are still trying to keep the transfer station open on schedule.

I had talked with the Contractor at Workman and A St. They hope to be back in town the first of next week when the ground dries out, if we do not get any more major rain events.

We are starting to make progress moving into the DHS Building. We were hoping to move sometime mid-August but we keep running into the same issues that we talked about earlier. Getting furniture, materials other items that we have ordered. The lettering for the building is ordered, but it's a four-week timeline and then they will schedule a time to install. We have had some of the carpets cleaned and a crew was on the roof today doing some patch seal. We're not having any roof issues, but we think by doing that it's going to extend the life of the roof some.

And then finally, I am planning to be on vacation from July 27 to August 4.

15. Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn was made by Alan Cowan and seconded by Lindsey Doyel.

Mayor Seitter, hearing no further comment, called for a vote;

T. Bradt aye A. Cowan aye L. Doyel aye L. Willis aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

Mayor Bill Seitter

City Clerk, Verlen Bills