



WATONGA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

In accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Law, this Agenda was posted September 17, 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, September 21, 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 Manger Karrie Beth Little, City Attorney Jared Harrison and City Clerk Verlen Bills.

Declaration of a Quorum: 6:01 PM

AGENDA

1. **Approve the Minutes** of the previous Council Meeting held August 17, 2021

Motion to approve the Minutes of the previous Council Meeting held August 17, 2021 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.

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

Mayor Seitter noted that EMS Director Josh Boden was asking for a meeting with the Okeene 522 Board and the Watonga 522 Board and Watonga City Council.

City Manger Ms. Little indicated that she would look into this and arrange such a meeting after the Cheese Festival.

Motion to approve the Monthly Reports from EMS, Fire Department, City Treasurer, Police Department, Community Development, Library and Library Annual Summary 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.

3. **Review and Accept** the list of Claims against the City of Watonga for the month of August 2021

Mayor Seitter: We had talked about earlier, I am concerned about a couple of invoices from 2019 from Utilities Technology Services.

City Treasure Rodney Jacks and Dacia Phillips with Meacham Accounting suggested that this was not operational at the time of the invoice. There was discussion back and forth. Light and Water Superintendent could have more information but was not present this evening.

Mayor Seitter reported that there were three invoice from September of 2019 with an approximate total of about \$27,000.

Mayor Seitter suggested that Council not approve these invoices until we determine exactly what this was for and why so old. Can we still pay an invoice from this far back?

Ms. Phillips indicated that it would depend on the circumstances.

City Attorney Jarred Harrison also suggested that we use caution with this until the details can be determined.

There was some discussion as to whether or not this should be under the Public Works Authority (PWA) or under General Government.

Mr Bradt asked about an invoice from Parkhill Engineering.

Mr Jacks explained that an invoice got out of order and we did not receive invoice number two until much later. This project is the sewer line south from Four Corners.

Ms. Little noted, her and Mr. Jacks had looked into this and it did get paid.

Details of this project were discussed.

Mr. Cowan explained that we have to spend the money first to get the engineering and planning work done before we can apply for a grant and that is on the agenda tonight.

Mr. Jacks reported that so far the City has spent \$22,219 on the engineering with a possible additional \$14,338. We have spent \$5,100 for the survey and \$2,500 for the Engineering Report.

Mr. Cowan asked about the previous issues with mowing and abatement contracts.

Ms. Little explained that she is approving all contracts and no work is done until she signs off on the estimate.

Allen Cowan made the motion to except the list of Claims against the City of Watonga for the month of August 2021, excluding invoices numbered one, two and three from Utility Technology Service dated from September of 2019. Motion was 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. **Approve the Monthly Financial Report** for August 2021 from RS Meacham.

Ms. Phillips with RS Meacham: On the second page of the Financial Report is the General Fund, the first column is the monthly totals, the second column is the year-to-date total and the third column is the Annual Budget. To compare or gauge where we are in the budget year, we would like revenues to be at 16.67% or higher, and expenditures at 16.67% or lower.

Our total revenue for General Fund is \$388,631 or 22% of budget, our expenditures were \$536,997 or 14% of budget. Overall this looks good. All the major sources of revenue are at or exceed budget. There were a couple of the large expenditures that caused some departments to be over budget in the General Fund. We paid about \$33,470 for insurance premiums, but of course that is for a period of time that will balance out over the year. There was \$5,500 for fireworks. And there was a Police expenditure. We did go ahead and include the payment for the Jail Contract even though we are working on the contract and it has not been paid yet, but we would have normally paid for this by this time. So after transfers to other income and expense. We have revenues over expenditures of \$60,655. It is good to be in the black in the General Fund in August.

In the Light and Water Account, in Electric year-to-date, we had income of \$294,118. Of course revenue is above budget, but that is expected during the warmer months. Electric expenses were about comparable to that. There were a couple of large expenditures, we did spend \$58,000 on transformers. The Water operating income is \$68,925 or 44% of budget. Sewer income is at \$11,735. We did pay out \$5,600 to Parkhill Engineering for a Sewer Line Project. Garbage operating income is at \$43,364. After Administrative fees, Capital Improvement and transfers, we had net income year to date of \$225,536.

The next page of the Report is the Grant Fund and there was no activity in this account.

In the PWA account there was little activity, we show a loss of \$18,872, but that was for fuel purchase for inventory at the Airport.

In the Sales Tax Account, the revenue is at \$36,356. Expenditures are \$11,178. The \$4,828 is an expenditure for signage. Year-to-date we have a net income of \$14,783.

And finally, on Street and Alley Fund, there is little significant activity. We did have some engineering for the Workman and A St. Project. Year-to-date we had a net income of \$2,982.

The last page of the report is the Sales Tax Trend Graph showing the previous two years. We received \$177,333 for September. That is, of course, for the full five cents. Two and a half cents is for the General Fund, One half is for Capital Expense and the other two cents is for the Hospital.

If we look at the first three months of the year, July, August, September, from last year, we had collected \$531,860. This year we collected \$540,892 for an increase of \$9,032 or 1.7%. We will take any increase over the prior year.

For Use Tax for the same time period, last year, we had collected \$53,432. This year we collected \$72,633. That's an increase of \$19,201 or 35.94%. Again, Use Tax is very unpredictable, but it is good to see the extra income.

Mr. Cowan asked about the lesser income from Hanger Rent at the Airport.

Mrs. Ohman respond, we have tenants that might pay six months or a year ahead and others pay only a month at a time. This number can vary greatly, but will even out over time.

Ms. Phillips found an email referring to Utility Technology Service dated August of 2020. It was not even operational at that point. I do not know what happened after that.

Motion to approve the August 2021 Monthly Report from RS Meacham presented by Dacia Phillips was made by Travis Bradt 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. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To open and award the bid for administrative services for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through the Oklahoma Department Commerce for Watonga wastewater system repairs and improvements.

Mayor Seitter noted that we received one bid for administrative services.

Ms. Mareta Woodard with Cardinal Parkhill Engineering: Congratulations on receiving this grant. It is in the amount of \$345,200. This is Federal Money and will pay for grant administration but we must go through this bid process because it is federal dollars. She explained some of the process of working with this grant.

Ms. Woodard described her bid and her resume that had been included with the bid.

Mayor Seitter asked, the administration fee is included in the Grant and part of the Grant Proposal?

Ms. Woodard indicated yes and handed out a Budget Sheet detailing the individual expenses including expenses for grant administration.

The was question as to whether this was a General Government Project or a Public Works Project.

Ms. Woodard explained that the Grant is to the City of Watonga not to Watonga Public Works so the Project will need to be through General Government.

Mayor Seitter asked, the amounts listed for the Project Budget are what is being allowed for by the Grant and the City is responsible for anything over this amount?

Ms. Woodard: Yes. Currently, the City's match for this grant is \$50,800. Ms. Woodard explained the CDBG Detailed Line Item Budget and how this should get filled in as the project progresses. She pointed out that what the City has paid so far is already showing on this Budget Report.

Mayor Seitter expressed concern that this project may extend over time to include more than one fiscal year.

Mr. Jacks suggested that the project may not get started until this spring.

Ms. Woodard described the procedures for this type of grant, there are time limits for payments and release of funds. Contractors want paid in a timely manner. The term of the Grant is the period from September 3, 2021 through September 2, 2023, we have two years to complete this project. My goal is to have this project completed and closed out by December 31, 2022.

There was some discussion as to the Engineering Estimates verses what that actual cost is going to be.

Ms. Woodard assured the Council that there will be some variations but it is rare to see any major differences. Sometimes the project will come in under budget, but the engineers try to be very accurate.

I will have a contract for my services for Council to approve at the next Council Meeting. After that we can start the process for release of funds. There are 13 pages of terms and conditions and I am not going to go through it all. Basically it talks about the environmental review record that has to be completed and I will do that. This will take me about 60 to 90 days to do and this is just one of the items that need to be completed within the 120 days for the release of funds.

Some of the other items that need to be done, The Fair Housing Resolution that is on the agenda this evening, we will follow the State Competitive Bidding Rules, I will find the Equal Opportunity Employment Policy in your Employee Handbook, I will put the City's Financial Reports together, I will make sure the Public Notices are properly posted and I will submit the monthly expenditure reports. This is just some of the items I will do as the Grant Administrator to keep the City in compliance and this is all listed in the Scope of Services in my contract for the City.

Mayor Seitter asked about how the money will flow. The City will pay the pay request and then get reimbursed?

Ms. Woodard, no, the contractor will submit a pay application to the engineer, he will approve it and forward it on to the City, the City will approve it and I will get a copy so that I can request the funds. This will take about 10 to 15 days for the money to hit your bank account. Then the City can generate a Purchase Order and check for approval at the next Council Meeting. This will all be discussed with the contractors at the pre-construction conference.

Which brings up another part of my job, making sure the contractor is paying the prevailing wages and that proper payroll records are being kept.

We hope to get all this done within 90 days, we will have to post a public notice of intent, the the Department of Commerce will have a Notice of Intent for the public to comment on. Then the money will be released and we can advertise for bids. We hope to advertise in February and award the construction bid in March.

Ms. Woodard: There will be a lot of agenda items dealing with a CDBG grant. Do not be concerned. It is my job to keep you in compliance. For one thing, CDBG Purchase orders will need to be separate agenda items.

Mayor Seitter and Ms. Woodard briefly discussed construction dates, what all is involved and when construction might get started?

Travis Bradt made the motion to select Mareta Woodard with Parkhill Engineering for the Community Development Block Grant Administrator based on approval from the Department of Commerce. Motion was seconded by Ladina Wills.

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:** Resolution No. 2021 - 10 giving the Mayor or the City Manager authority to sign contractor's pay applications and change orders prior to Council Meetings with final payment to be approved by the City Council for the CDBG Sewer Line Project.

Ms. Woodard: This something we started doing a couple of years back. This will speed up the process of getting the contractors paid. I can send in the paper work sooner so the grant money is released earlier. The check will not go out until Council approves it.

Travis Bradt made the motion to approve Resolution No. 2021 - 10 giving the Mayor or the City Manager authority to sign contractor's pay applications and change orders prior to Council Meetings with final payment to be approved by the City Council for the CDBG Sewer Line Project. 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.

7. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Resolution No. 2021 – 11 establishing a Fair Housing Policy for the City of Watonga.

Ms. Woodard: Every CDBG Grant requires the Fair Housing Resolution be passed for every year the grant is active. This will come to Council again next year. I will see that this gets posted and promoted.

Mayor Seitter asked City Attorney Jared Harrison if he was okay with this Resolution and Mr. Harrison indicated he approved.

Ladina Willis made the motion to approve Resolution No. 2021 - 11 establishing a Fair Housing Policy for the City of Watonga. Motion was 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.

8. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** to approve the Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan for the CDBG Sewer Line Project.

Ms. Woodard: this is also a requirement for the release of funds for the CDBG Grant. This is one of the environmental items. It says that no one is going to be displaced because of this project. I do not think that will be an issue at this location. This will be posted at City Hall for the duration of the project.

Motion to approve the Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan for the CDBG Sewer Line Project was made by Allen Cowan and 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.

9. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To renew the lease agreement with the Mercy Clinic for use of the property described as the North 42 feet of the East 40 feet of Lot 17 and the North 42 feet of Lot 18 and the West 45 feet of Lot 2 all of and in Block 37 of the City of Watonga, with the building thereon erected, and known as 203 North Weigle, in the City of Watonga, Oklahoma, for the term of 1 year from the 1st day of October, 2021 to and thru the 30th day of September, 2022, at a monthly rental rate of \$1,200.

Mr. Bradt asked, is this separate from Mercy Hospital?

Mr. Harrison replied yes. This is an agreement with the Mercy Clinic and not with Mercy Hospital.

Travis Bradt made the motion to renew the lease agreement with the Mercy Clinic for use of the property described as the North 42 feet of the East 40 feet of Lot 17 and the North 42 feet of Lot 18 and the West 45 feet of Lot 2 all of and in Block 37 of the City of Watonga, with the building thereon erected, and known as 203 North Weigle, in the City of Watonga, Oklahoma, for the term of 1 year from the 1st day of October, 2021 to and thru the 30th day of September, 2022, at a monthly rental rate of \$1,200. 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.

10. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve an agreement for maintenance and upkeep of the Huff Lorang Park and Ball Fields between the City of Watonga and Watonga Public Schools.

Mayor Seitter: This appears to be the same agreement that we have had in the past when I was at the school.

Motion to approve an agreement for maintenance and upkeep of the Huff Lorang Park and Ball Fields between the City of Watonga and Watonga Public Schools 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.

11. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To review and renew the Agreement with City Attorney Jared Harrison.

Mr. Harrison assured the Council that his rates did not change. They did not go down but did not go up either. As we work through the changes in Government and management, you will need less of me and the monthly billing should come down some.

We did change this some, the agreement is with the Firm and myself instead of just me directly. This removes some potential liability issues making it more clear that I am an independent contractor and not an employee of the City. That was the primary reason for this change.

Motion to renew the Agreement with City Attorney Jared Harrison was made by Travis Bradt and 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.

12. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Resolution No. 2021 – 4 of the City of Watonga, Oklahoma 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 and determine those limits.

Jared Harrison explained, with this Resolution, he was following the lead expressed by the Council in previous meetings. There had been debate about the distance a vehicle could be taken home by an Officer outside the City Limits and that is what the Council needs to decide.

The Number of Officers and where they live was discussed.

Mr. Bradt commented that he was not comfortable with a City vehicle being driven home that far to American Horse Road and asked is it that difficult to hire new Police Officers?

Interim Police Chief Aron Vales reported that most communities are having this same problem.

Ms. Willis asked Officer Vales how he would determine this if he were a Council Member and not a Police Office.

Officer Vales cited examples of policies from several communities in Oklahoma. They are all different and there is no set standard.

Mayor Seitter asked, when an Officer takes a vehicle home are they on call?

Officer Vales explained yes, but they do trade out off duty or on duty days at times.

The requirements and how this works out between Officers was discussed.

Mr. Cowan: I have asked for opinions from approximate 30 individuals. None of those I talked to thought a Police Vehicle should be taken home outside the City Limits.

Mayor Seitter noted that he had also had similar results talking to people.

The subject of other City Department Vehicles was brought up.

Ms. Little replied that there were a few Department Heads that take vehicles home, but this Resolution before Council at this time just deals with the Police Department. Fire and EMS do respond outside the City Limits and receive some County funding.

Mayor Seitter: Then we are dealing with jurisdiction?

Ms. Little went on to discuss the pros and cons of Police Officers taking vehicles home. There needs to be rules and guidelines, there is the liability concerns, but there is also better response times, neighborhood perceptions and maybe reduced crime. Would this help recruit Police Officers? Somewhere there is a happy medium to this.

Ms. Willis and Mr. Bradt agreed with Ms. Little.

Discussion went to the problems recruiting new Officers and the shortage of candidates.

Mr. Bradt asked Mr. Harrison for an opinion on this.

Mr. Harrison replied that this is strictly a policy decision. This is not a legal decision. I did take a moment to look through City Code and it is mostly silent about taking City vehicles home.

The debate went on to response times versus the liability.

Mr. Harrison noted that he was not aware of anything that requires specific response times. But overall, a history of poor response times could effect the City's ISO / Insurance Rating.

Ms. Willis told of an incident elsewhere when a Community did get sued because of a poor response time.

Discussion continued about liability and the safe driving of an Officer trying to respond back to town in a timely manner.

Ms. Willis asked of Officer Vales; what point can you make to help us make this determination.

Officer Vales: I feel like the Council does not understand Police Department Operations and they do not fully trust the our Officers.

There was discussion back and forth about trust and understanding.

Mr. Cowan added that we need to keep in mind that this is this not personal.

There was talk of the Community perception of the Police Department and what we might do to help this.

Officer Vales noted that there was some improvement in this area.

Ms. Willis asked the direct question of Officer Vales; What do think this distance should be?

Officer Vales replied, I think 15 to 20 miles is comparable between all the towns and cities I have talked too.

Discussion returned to the Officer that resides on American Horse Road.

Mr. Bradt: We need to move on, I am not quite comfortable with 15 miles, but that will be my recommendation.

Mr. Cowan agreed that he thought 15 miles was to far.

Ms. Willis: This will be enforced and verified by the Police Chief?

Officer Vales replied yes, and and as the Interim Administrator, all the other rules that are part of the Lexipol Policy. I am not sure how your next Police Chief will interrupt this.

It was brought up by several, could this Resolution include who or how this is enforced?

Mr. Harrison replied, probably not. There is only the one blank to fill in on the Resolution and that is the way the Agenda reads. We should not step above that with other modifications.

Mayor Seitter asked, if we put 15 miles in the Resolution then anyone that lives in the 15 miles can take a vehicle home?

Mr. Harrison: There are four other items to be considered before deciding whether or not to allow that. Circumstances are unplanned or created by the needs of the department. Other reasonable transportation options are not available. The member lives within a reasonable distance, which is the one we're talking about. And the vehicle will remain locked when not attended.

Mr. Cowan asked, if an officer can no longer take a vehicle home, how will this effect your scheduling?

Officer Vales replied that it will change it up some, an officer or two may not like the situation, but we will get it worked out.

Mayor Seitter: I would throw out the idea that I think we are not ready to make this decision. I think it is an important decision. We brought up some pretty good ideas tonight. I think, as Ms. Little pointed out, there are other parts of this to consider.

Mr. Bradt suggested that we might wait until we have a new Police Chief and get input from them.

Mr. Harrison: I would actually recommend we let this die for lack of a motion, because it sounds like Council is wanting to change a lot more than what we have at this time. We can bring this back as a new Resolution at a later time with some broader points added as Council has discussed this evening.

No motion put forth.

13. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Ordinance No. 675 amending Part 6, Chapter 1, Section 6-133 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Watonga, Oklahoma to modify the fines and costs that may be collected as part of a municipal court case; authorizing the collection of fees and costs mandated by state law; authorizing the collection of costs related to prisoner confinement; authorizing collection fees; authorizing a technology fee; providing for severability; providing for repealer.

Mr. Harrison: We have a new contract with the Blaine County Jail for prisoner confinement, but it has been brought up that we do not recoup the cost of the confinement through our Court System. In subparagraph C is the main purpose for this Ordinance. Also, there is some general cleanup and modernization added.

There was some discussion as to how these fees are collected.

Mr. Harrison: This will be just like any other court cost and collected in the same manner.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve Ordinance No. 675 amending Part 6, Chapter 1, Section 6-133 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Watonga, Oklahoma to modify the fines and costs that may be collected as part of a municipal court case; authorizing the collection of fees and costs mandated by state law; authorizing the collection of costs related to prisoner confinement; authorizing collection fees; authorizing a technology fee; providing for severability; providing for repealer. Motion was 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.

- 14. Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Ordinance No. 676 amending Part ten, Chapter three, Section three hundred and three, Subsection D of the Code of Ordinances, City of Watonga, Oklahoma in relation to shooting, exploding, discharging, using or displaying fireworks outside the fire limits of the City during a certain period of time and to determine those times.

Mayor Seitter clarified that the Fire Limits are basically the Commercial areas of Watonga, and that this Ordinance is just to to change or restrict the times that Fireworks could be discharged. (Fire Works are never allowed in the Fire Limits.)

Mr. Harrison: It was talked about at the previous Council Meeting that fireworks were being discharged at a very late hour on some evenings. Council had asked to change this time and that is what this is about.

Some thought midnight was too late especially when the Fourth of July falls during the middle of the week. Others mentioned that it does not get dark until 9:30 PM that time of the year.

Mr. Harrison noted, the current ordinance allows for fireworks from June 28 thru July 4 or the legal holiday, which ever is later and until midnight every evening.

There had been some misunderstanding as most though the cut off time was 10:00 PM except on the Fourth.

Some thought that this would be a good compromise to the current rules.

Mr. Cowan: We can put any time we want to, but we still have the problem of enforcement. Unless the Officer witnesses the fireworks being lite, he can not do much about it.

Mayor Seitter: There are still people with medical conditions that we need to consider.

Ms. Willis and Mayor Seitter agreed that 10:00 PM should be a good time.

Mr. Harrison suggested that we need to think this through. What if the legal observed holiday is on the third or the fifth? Would that change how this might play out? The observed holiday, the day the government is closed to observe the holiday, is already an exception shown in the Ordinance.

There was lengthy debates about this issue. This consensus is, and this is the understanding of this City Clerk; the Fourth of July is the Forth of July and that is the only day fireworks should be allowed until midnight. Should the (Federal) government determine otherwise the fireworks will be allowed until 10:00 PM.

Mr. Harrison suggested that Council table this Ordinance for now, there is ample time before the next holiday. He will rewrite this Ordinance bring it back to Council.

Motion to table agenda item No. 14 for Ordinance No. 676 was made by Travis Bradt 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.

15. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve an estimate of approximately \$15,000 from Steven's Carpet for mold remediation at the Liberty Theater in the event that OMAG denies the claim.

Ms. Little and Mr. Bills noted that nether of them had heard anything from the insurance adjuster about this.

There was comments that the latest estimate was less than the original estimate.

Brandon Stevens with Stevens' Carpet explained how he came up with that estimate for mold remediation. It is based on the cubic feet of the buildings.

Mr. Stevens described the process for this kind of mold remediation. They will gas the whole building for 24 hours, to kill everything and then go in and clean up the residue. The other alternative is to scrub down all surfaces, wash everything that can be washed and clean upholstery and carpets. This is very time consuming and expensive.

This problem came about because of a wet spring and the air conditioning was not turned on. This created perfect mold conditions.

Mr. Cowan asked, do you treat the surfaces so that mold cannot regrow?

Mr. Stevens replied no, the issue is the air condition needs to be left on. Otherwise we will have this same problem again in a few weeks.

It was determined that we should change our policy or practice to make sure the air conditioning is left on even when the the theater is not in use.

Ms. Little assured Council that we are going to start doing routine inspections to avoid this problem in the future.

Mr. Cowan asked about a second part of this treatment that will keep mold from coming back.

Mr. Stevens replied that may not be the right thing for this particular problem.

Mayor Seitter asked, if we approve this now, are we going to wait to see if the insurance company is going to cover this.

Ms. Little: In talking with the insurance company they were favorable to pay this claim, but we have not heard from the adjuster for certain. We need to go ahead and get this taken care of. We need to maintain our buildings whether or not the insurance pays for this or not. We cannot not leave it as is. The mold will continue to grow if we do nothing.

Mr. Stevens added, the buildings are not safe at this time. No one should be in the buildings. The air conditioning is on at this time and will slow down the mold growth but will not eliminate it.

Motion to approve the estimate from Stevens' Carpet for approximately \$15,000 for mold remediation at the Liberty Theater in the event OMAG denies the claim was made by Allen Cowan and 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.

16. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve an amended Council Meeting Schedule for the balance of 2021 moving Council Meetings to 410 West Main St.

Motion to approve an amended Council Meeting Schedule for the balance of 2021 moving Council Meetings to 410 West Main St. was made by Travis Bradt and 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.

17. **Council Comments:**

Mr. Cowan asked about dirt on the curb being removed.

Ms. Little: They are getting to some of this as time and weather permit. It is drying out some this time of year.

Ms. Willis reported that she had received numerous comments on the bridge / culvert at Workman and A St. being reopened. That neighborhood is very appreciative.

18. Mayor Comments:

Mayor Seitter: We have talked about cleaning the drainage ditches in the past and now that it is drying out, can we get this back on the list to get done? The ditch that runs down past the Prouty Pool has gotten quite bad. It is not possible to walk east from where Mr. Bradt and I live to the High School.

Mayor Seitter and Ms. Willis discussed other problem areas around Watonga.

Mayor Seitter noted that Council had approved the purchase of a Gradall (a special backhoe) at one time, to help clean the ditches.

Mayor Seitter asked Ms. Little about the meeting with Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Mr. Armaquest. And where are we in hiring a new Police Chief?

19. City Manager Comments:

Ms. Little: We are excepting applications for Police Chief until this Thursday, then we will be conducting interviews September 30 and October 1. Depending on the applicant pool, I hope to have a recommendation to the Council shortly afterwards.

Mr. Cowan asked, how many applications do we have?

Ms. Little: We currently have five applications but people will typically wait until the last day. We have advertised on five different platforms or outlets across the State including the Watonga Republican, Watonga's Web Site, OMMS, OML and the Police Chief Association Paper.

Ms. Little: I did have a meeting with ODOT this week, we had a very open communication with them and we are going to be looking at the Four Corners projects. We did come to some common ground. I have learned that there is some history with this project with signage, traffic lights and the railroad and I need to research this myself in order to proceed. We did let ODOT know that Council had approved the Sewer Line Project and Four Corners and they are very willing to work with us on that project.

I have another meeting scheduled with Representative Mike Dobrinski later this month to see what we can accomplish with some of these problems.

I have a meeting with the Cheyenne / Arapaho Tribes tomorrow. I have a meeting with the insurance company on Thursday to go over just our insurance policies. I have attended Chamber Meetings, we have established weekly meetings with Department Heads. I have meet with a lot of people my first 30 days as City Manager. I did make it to the OML Conference in OKC for two days which garnered a lot of contacts and good information that I was able to bring back.

I would like to point out that we revamping the Purchase Order System. We are getting to a more fluid system. Immediately, we stopped sending checks out without my approval. I will sign off on all Purchase Orders before the checks are cut. The second phase is that we are now going to process Purchase Orders every two weeks. Our Employees get paid every two weeks so Purchase Orders will be done every opposite two weeks. We are not going to make these changes quickly or we will set ourselves up for failure. We will do this slowly and correctly. When we get this changed we will be compliant with State Statutes concerning the Purchase Order Process. This is some of the highlights of my first 30 days as City Manager.

I am planning to have a booth at the Cheese Festival. Myself and some of the staff will help man the booth. It will be an information and public services booth. We are just going to be out meeting the public. We hope to have a good Cheese Festival this year.

20. **Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn 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 at 7:51 PM.

Mayor Bill Seitter

City Clerk, Verlen Bills