

City Commission of Arkansas City Meeting Minutes

The Arkansas City Board of City Commissioners met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 1, 2016, in the Commission Room at City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., in Arkansas City.

Mayor Duane L. Oestmann called the meeting to order. Those also present at roll call were Commissioners Charles Tweedy III, Jay Warren and Karen Welch. Commissioner Dan Jurkovich arrived at the room at 5:31 p.m.

City employees present at roll call were City Manager Nick Hernandez, City Attorney Tamara Niles, Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson, City Clerk Lesley Shook, Finance Director Kathy Cornwell, Police Chief Dan Ward, Assistant Public Works Director Mike Crandall and Human Resources Manager Marla McFarland.

Saint Francis Community Services was represented by Brenda Stewart. The Arkansas City Convention and Visitors Bureau was represented by tourism specialist Pam Crain. Traveler reporter Cody Griesel also attended.

Commissioner Warren offered the opening prayer. Mayor Oestmann led the pledge of allegiance.

Agenda Changes and Approval

City Manager Hernandez asked to add a National Adoption Month proclamation under Awards and Proclamations.

Commissioner Tweedy moved to amend the agenda as requested. Commissioner Warren seconded the motion.

A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the agenda amended and approved.

Commissioner Tweedy moved to amend the agenda as requested. Commissioner Jurkovich seconded the motion.

A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the agenda amended and approved.

Awards and Proclamations

Mayor Oestmann proclaimed November 2016 as National Adoption Month and November 19, 2016, as National Adoption Day in Arkansas City. Nearly 1,100 children are in need of adoptive families in Kansas, he said.

The proclamation was presented to Brenda Stewart on behalf of Saint Francis Community Services. She said 65 children in Cowley and surrounding counties will have their adoptions finalized on Nov. 19 at Exploration Place.

Stewart said she was there as an adoption recruiter to say they need more families to volunteer their services.

She left brochures with information about becoming an adoptive parent, and asked for them to be disbursed to local churches and schools. She said she always is looking for families for 150 to 200 children in the local area.

City Manager Hernandez asked if there was a prescreening process. Stewart said there was and likened it to the forms one must fill out when buying a house, only "times two." She said Saint Francis helps with that process.

The organization also offers 10-week classes to help people to prepare for an adoption, she said. Commissioner Warren asked about age demographics. Stewart said all ages are a need, but 8 years or older has the most need.

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Consent Agenda

Commissioner Tweedy made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, including the following:

1. Approving the October 18, 2016, regular meeting minutes as written.
2. Ratifying Mayor Oestmann's appointments of JoAnn Bierle and Josh Hawkins to the Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Advisory Board.
3. Ratifying Resolution No. 2016-11-3053, approving a deed of transfer and contracts with Four County Mental Health Centers, Inc. for property at Strother Field Airport and Industrial Park.

Commissioner Warren asked for more detail about the Four County contracts. City Manager Hernandez said the title of property would be transferred to Four County, which already owns the building, but not the land it's on.

Hernandez said this was the finalization of a lengthy, two-year process to get to this point. Both the Strother Field Commission and Winfield City Commission already have approved the document.

Mayor Oestmann seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the consent agenda approved.

Old Business

Detachable Gooseneck Trailer **Resolution No. 2016-11-3054**

City Clerk Shook presented for discussion a second reading of a resolution authorizing the purchase of a new detachable gooseneck 35-ton lowboy trailer from Holden Industries, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$41,276.

Assistant Public Works Director Crandall said the item had been put on hold at a previous meeting, but the order would have to be executed by November 2 in order for Holden still to honor the existing quote before the City.

In response to a prior question from Commissioner Tweedy, Crandall said there was a one-year warranty on the trailer for parts and labor. Mayor Oestmann asked about the additional steel cover over the back wheels.

City Manager Hernandez said the steel wheel covers with traction bars would be included in the price, as well as outriggers, and they allow for more equipment to be loaded on the trailer without affecting the tires.

Commissioner Warren asked how many times a month the City would use the trailer. Crandall said it varies, but Hernandez estimated an average of five times a month to haul the City's excavator and bulldozer.

Commissioner Jurkovich asked how much time could be saving in loading the trailer. Crandall said the value was not so much in time saved during loading, but stability gained and thus safety increased for City workers.

Commissioner Warren said he was fine with the idea of the purchase, but he would prefer to wait until 2017 so they could know if South Central Kansas Medical Center needs more money.

Hernandez and Finance Director Cornwell said this year's bond payments already are accounted for and the only item left to cover is the remaining payment of roughly \$75,000 to Quorum Health Resources.

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Mayor Oestmann asked how this purchase would figure into the budget picture. Crandall said \$57,000 was budgeted for the trailer from the Stormwater Fund, and the proposed trailer came in well under that budget.

Hernandez said it is unlikely money would be transferred from the Stormwater Fund, which is smaller than the other utility enterprise funds, to cover hospital debt, and even if it was, the \$57,000 would not be affected.

Commissioner Tweedy asked Crandall if he thought Holden still would honor the bid if the purchase were delayed until the last week in December. Crandall said the bid was good for 90 days and all bets are off after that.

Mayor Oestmann asked, if the commissioners approved the purchase, how much of a financial bind it might put the City in. Hernandez said he didn't think it would put the City in a bind at all. Cornwell also recommended making the purchase, since it came in under what was budgeted and the fund doesn't generate much revenue.

Commissioner Tweedy made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Welch seconded the motion.

A voice vote resulted in three aye votes and two nay votes, with Commissioners Jurkovich and Warren dissenting. Mayor Oestmann declared the resolution approved and given Resolution No. 2016-11-3054.

Commissioner Warren said he simply wanted to wait on the purchase. Commissioner Jurkovich said he preferred to looking into leasing or rental options rather than purchasing a brand-new trailer for the City.

New Business

Personnel Policy Updates

City Clerk Shook presented for discussion the following personnel policy updates: Knowledge of City Organization, Outside Employment and Employee Council.

Human Resources Manager McFarland briefly described each of the policies, some of which are just minor updates to those already in place. She said the Council had been expanded by two members and adjusted.

Commissioner Warren asked for an explanation of those changes. McFarland said an additional member is being added as of February 2017 for both the Fire-EMS and Police departments, with terms adjusted accordingly.

City Manager Hernandez gave Commissioner Welch a brief overview on the composition and mission of the Employee Council. He said it serves as a communication tool between employees and himself and McFarland.

Commissioner Tweedy said he thinks it cuts down on employee rumors. Both Hernandez and McFarland agreed.

Hernandez said he also uses the Council as a sounding board for new ideas and a gathering place for feedback from front-line employees. Some ideas have been found not to be worth pursuing, while other small ideas have turned into bigger initiatives that make more of an impact due to the feedback provided by the employees.

Commissioner Tweedy asked if the Council had input on the new policy. McFarland said the members had seen it.

Commissioner Jurkovich made a motion to approve the personnel policies. Commissioner Warren seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the motion approved.

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Convention and Tourism Committee Charter Ordinance

City Clerk Shook presented for discussion a first reading of a charter ordinance amending provisions of Charter Ordinances 17 and 22, regarding the name, composition, and length of terms of the Convention and Tourism Committee, and amending the possible uses of the Convention and Tourism Fund.

Public Information Officer Lawson said the ordinance grew out of conversations between City staff and the Convention and Visitors Bureau after it decided to separate from the Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce.

He said the CVB was created June 3, 1986, by Charter Ordinance 9, which later was amended by Charter Ordinances 9-A, 9-B and 9-C. Collectively, they established the CVB and provided for its function by contract with the Chamber, established the Committee to advise on CVB operations, implemented a 4-percent transient guest tax (later increased to 6 percent), and created the Convention and Tourism Fund to manage the tax revenues.

After being amended to allow owners or operators of hotel-related businesses and tourist attractions to serve on the Committee, and change the City Commission representative from the vice mayor to any commissioner, these four ordinances were struck out and replaced by Charter Ordinance 17, which cleaned up the language.

Charter Ordinance 22 further modified that ordinance to allow any Committee member to serve as chair, not just the City Commission representative, who serves as an actual voting member, not just an ex officio member.

The proposed charter ordinance renames the "Convention and Tourism Fund" and the "Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors," to reflect the CVB's new independent status and increased duties of the Committee.

It also transitions the Chamber representative into a third at-large citizen appointment, removing Chamber oversight, and makes future changes to the Committee's bylaws achievable by a simple ordinance in the future.

Grammatical and reference errors were cleaned up, and a reference to various City departments was modified to take into account the 2012 reorganization effort. Economic development was removed as a CVB function.

The terms of the Board of Directors would be increased from two to three years in length, and any language concerning the Board that currently is duplicative of the recently approved general provisions would be struck.

Commissioner Warren asked who the new Board would answer to. Lawson said it would continue to answer to the City Commission, which appoints six of the members and provides the seventh from among its number.

He asked Pam Crain to speak more about the reasons for the separation and the untenable position she was in previously, answering to both the City-appointed Committee and the Chamber of Commerce director.

Crain said the move had been a huge success so far. She works with new Chamber director Kammy Downs on a daily basis to tackle projects. City Manager Hernandez explained how the CVB budget is dictated by tax revenues.

Commissioner Warren made a motion to table the charter ordinance until a second reading on November 15.

Commissioner Jurkovich seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the motion approved.

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City Manager Updates

City Manager Hernandez said Arkalalah went very well and there were no major issues, other than a water main break on Summit Street just prior to the Parade of Lights, which was addressed within 10 minutes.

Hernandez said the Summit Street project continues on schedule, with concrete approaches being poured at each of the intersections in a sequential manner. That work should conclude by Christmas, weather permitting.

He said the City has received a grant for off-system bridge replacement through the Kansas Department of Transportation. He and Public Works Director Eric Broce plan to use it on the Crestwood Drive bridge, built in 1930. Design will be around \$32,000, paid by the City, and its share of the 80-20 construction match is \$42,000.

Commissioner Warren asked about the 15th Street bridge. Hernandez said the plan is to design it in 2017 and replace it in early 2018. The road reconstruction is planned for 2017, with dirt work in the ditches starting soon.

Commissioner Warren asked about fixing Skyline Road from Eighth to 15th streets. He asked about the county improving it, but Hernandez said it's technically still a City street because the annexation swap is not done yet.

The Radio Lane project is complete, with final striping occurring that day at the Summit Street intersection. The next project in the area is reconstruction of Summit Street from Kansas Avenue to Radio Lane, possibly in 2018.

After that, he said, the City will be tapped out for funds for major street projects and new sources will be needed.

Other Business

Commissioner Tweedy asked how the Arkalalah All Class Reunion Concert went. City Manager Hernandez said it went well and was cleaned up thoroughly. He heard a few comments about beverage selection at the concert.

He wants to have more direct control over the downtown public address system, with microphone hookups near the Arkalalah stage location that will allow the live broadcasts to be put on the entire downtown speaker system.

Mayor Oestmann asked if it was too late to apply for Community Development Block Grant funding for the waste line to the new Water Treatment Facility. Hernandez said it was too late, but they could look at it in 2018.

Commissioner Warren asked if construction of the new water plant was behind. Hernandez said they have had about a month's worth of weather delays, but they are starting to catch back up. He thinks walls for the facility could start to go up within the next six weeks, but the crews still are working on subterranean storage tanks.

He said the cost savings on open trenching for the waste line, as opposed to directional boring, will allow the City to put a 10-foot sidewalk on top of it and thus extend the hike-bike trail north. The same work will be done on the South Summit Street KLINK project in 2017, with a lighted pedestrian crosswalk and wheelchair ramps.

Commissioner Warren asked about Chestnut Park. Hernandez said he met with the interested group that day and they are ready to start raising funds for the project. It likely will include a public parking lot near the site.

Mayor Oestmann asked about the new well house. Hernandez said it would go out to bid later that week.

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Adjournment

Commissioner Tweedy moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jurkovich seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

THE ARKANSAS CITY
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS

Duane L. Oestmann, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lesley Shook, City Clerk

Prepared by:

Andrew Lawson, Public Information Officer