

City Commission of Arkansas City Meeting Minutes

The Arkansas City Board of City Commissioners met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. May 2, 2017, 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 Commissioner Dan Jurkovich, Commissioner Charles Tweedy III, Commissioner Jay Warren and Commissioner Karen Welch.

City employees present at the meeting were City Manager Nick Hernandez, City Attorney Tamara Niles, City Clerk Lesley Shook, Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson, Assistant Public Works Director Mike Crandall, Principal Planner Josh White, Human Resources Manager Marla McFarland, Fire Chief Bobby Wolfe, EMS Director Jeri Smith, Police Chief Dan Ward, ACPD Capt. Mark McCaslin, ACPD Lt. Chris Arnett, Master Police Officer Jeremy Samson and Police Officer Wade Hammond.

South Central Kansas Medical Center officials in attendance were Chief Executive Officer Virgil Watson and Chief Financial Officer Holly Harper. AAA was represented by Shawn Stewart. The Kansas Department of Transportation was represented by Traffic Safety Law Enforcement Liaison Troy Wells. Arkansas City Music and Dramatics Club members in attendance were Sherry Baxter, Darlene Patterson and Duane Patterson.

Citizens in attendance included Abby Garcia and her grandparents, Kanyon Gingher, Speedway Pizza owner Russell Graves, Ken Harader, Paisley Howerton, Ophelia Strecker, Cowley County Xchange correspondent Gabrielle Lenker, Ark City Daily Bytes reporter Jeni McGee, and Cowley CourierTraveler reporter Cody Griesel.

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

Agenda Approval

Commissioner Tweedy made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Warren seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the agenda approved.

Awards and Proclamations

Shawn Stewart presented the 2016 AAA Traffic Platinum Safety Award to Chief Ward on behalf of the Arkansas City Police Department. It is the sixth straight year ACPD has received an AAA Award and this was its first Platinum Award, the highest AAA offers. ACPD is one of just two departments to earn five Gold Awards in a row.

ACPD is in its seventh year of the Seatbelts Are For Everyone campaign and requires all officers to wear seat belts.

Stewart also acknowledged ACPD's efforts regarding the annual bicycle rodeo, Cowley County Health and Safety Fair, DARE Camp, educational pamphlets, safety tips on Facebook, and rollover crash demonstration efforts.

ACPD also was recognized for its EMR crash control and special traffic enforcement efforts, K-9 program, bicycle patrol, nighttime seat belt checks, data-driven approaches to accident reduction and electronic speed monitoring.

Mayor Oestmann presented a Good Neighbor Award to Paisley Howerton and Ophelia Strecker for their park cleanup efforts. Howerton and her husband, Josh, have picked up trash in Walnut Park and encouraged others on Facebook to do so. It is the first such award given by the Beautification & Tree Advisory Board in four years.

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Mayor Oestmann recognized and congratulated Cowley College sophomore Abby Garcia for being selected as Arkansas City's Outstanding Student Award winner for 2016-17. Garcia, a Wichita native who plans to transfer to Emporia State University to pursue a degree in elementary education, also received a \$1,000 scholarship.

Mayor Oestmann issued a proclamation that May 2017 is National Foster Care Month in Arkansas City and also read a proclamation recognizing May 7-13, 2017, as Public Service Recognition Week in Arkansas City.

City Manager Hernandez said that as part of the Public Service Recognition Week festivities, he presents to each seventh-grade class about the City. Six students from each class get to tour several City departments that week.

Mayor Oestmann read a proclamation recognizing May 7-14, 2017, as National Music Week in Arkansas City. Sherry Baxter and Darlene Patterson accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Music and Dramatics Club.

Baxter said the group meets at 1:30 p.m. on the third Friday of each month, from September through May, at First United Methodist Church, 2448 Edgemont Drive. The group started in April 1922 and was federated that November, Baxter said. She also promoted the free music program that is held each year in December.

Mayor Oestmann read a proclamation recognizing May 15-21, 2017, as National Law Enforcement Week and May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day in Arkansas City. Chief Ward accepted the proclamation for ACPD.

Mayor Oestmann recognized Speedway Pizza owner Russell Graves for the restaurant's nomination as one of Kansas' Favorite Local Eats by Kansas! Magazine. Graves brought pizza for the audience and urged everyone to vote not just for his restaurant, but on behalf of the community as a whole. He thanked Ark City for raising him.

Recognition of Visitors

Holly Harper, South Central Kansas Medical Center chief financial officer, presented her monthly financial report.

Average daily census has nearly doubled since this time in 2016, from 9.36 to 18.29. That is primarily due to the 8.71 average from the new senior health unit. The goal of 260 patient days has been met and exceeded.

Surgeries are down 30 percent from 2016, but outpatient visits are up 8 percent and emergency visits 4 percent.

Gross revenue is \$19.1 million, but deductions are \$9.3 million. Salaries and benefits are down \$100,000 from 2016, but professional fees are up by \$170,000, due mainly to contracted emergency room provider services.

Harper said net profit is \$1 million higher than in 2016, when there was a \$380,000 deficit, but City Manager Hernandez pointed out that removing the \$620,000 in sales tax revenue reduces that net profit to just \$70,000.

Harper showed the pie graph for accounts payable, on which the 121+ days category has been eliminated (it represented \$531,000 in payables in February 2016) and the 61-90 days category is greatly reduced, as well.

Hernandez said the money owed to the City, which is approaching \$2 million due to unpaid special assessments, is almost all more than 120 days overdue. Harper acknowledged this, but said that debt is not accounts payable.

Harper said repayment to the City will start when all of the payables are no more than 31 to 60 days overdue.

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Commissioner Warren asked if that would occur in 2017. Harper said she hoped sooner than the end of the year.

Hernandez said the special assessments represent \$200,000 annually in the City budget that is not being paid. It is roughly equivalent to 4 to 5 mills that cannot be spent on internal services or capital improvement projects.

Commissioner Warren asked to see the actual amount owed to the City on future SCKMC monthly financial reports, as well as net profits after sales tax revenue is removed from the equation. Harper said she can do that.

Commissioner Jurkovich said it was encouraging to see accounts receivable being lower, which helps cash flow.

Commissioner Warren asked how far the reach is for the senior health care unit. Harper said there are some patients coming to SCKMC from Missouri and Oklahoma, as well as from facilities all across Kansas.

Commissioner Warren asked about physician recruitment. Harper said someone was visiting later that week.

Ken Harader, 1313 N. First St., addressed the commissioners about continuing property maintenance issues at Family Dollar, 1313 N. Summit St. He admitted there might have been some improvements.

City Manager Hernandez said the fence was fixed, the gate has been made operational and the trash was cleaned up inside the fenced area. From the City standpoint, he said, the case is closed until there are other issues.

Hernandez said the issue boils down to store management. Harader suggested the manager does not care about these issues. Hernandez asked Harader if he had visited with her personally. He admitted he had not.

Harader said if the property stays maintained, than he will be happy, but he will return if there are further issues. Commissioner Warren suggested the meeting between Harader and the manager should be rescheduled.

Commissioner Tweedy asked if the police department can do anything about enforcement of the "no left turn" sign onto First Street. Chief Ward said he could talk to the manager about that issue.

Consent Agenda

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

1. Approving the April 18, 2017, regular meeting minutes as written.
2. Ratifying Mayor Oestmann's reappointments of Gordon Fry to the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, Toni Greene to the Outstanding Young Student Award Committee, and Tyler Henderson to the Northwest Community Center Advisory Board.
3. Approving the Firefighter/EMT Paramedic Program Benefit personnel policy update.
4. Approving Resolution No. 2017-05-3103, authorizing a Miscellaneous Lease Agreement with Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline, Inc.

Commissioner Warren asked for more information about the third and fourth items.

City Manager Hernandez said the paramedic program benefit would allow City EMTs to attend paramedic classes while on the clock during their scheduled shift. There is a financial impact of around \$3,800 annually.

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The policy requires anyone taking advantage of this benefit to commit to employment with ACFD for a minimum of two years. If they voluntarily separate within that timeframe, they would have to pay the money back.

EMS Director Smith said 965 paramedics did not renew their licenses last year, creating a statewide shortage.

Hernandez said this will help to create more “homegrown” paramedics and fill open positions. Chief Wolfe said there are grants to help students with books and tuition for paramedic classes that ACFD can help them to seek.

Commissioner Tweedy asked about the possibility of hiring paramedics who do not double as firefighters. Chief Wolfe said that would be impractical for a department and community of this size.

Hernandez said the lease agreement updates the one currently in effect to require maintenance of the access road. City Attorney Niles said the lease agreement also doubles the annual lease fee from \$250 to \$500.

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

Old Business

Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Resolution No. 2017-05-3104

City Clerk Shook presented for discussion a second reading of a resolution revising the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP) in effect until December 31, 2020.

Principal Planner White said the commercial cap was increased to \$500,000 without commission approval. The cap does not apply to any property located in the Historic District, however.

Mayor Oestmann asked how many residential properties have more than one housing unit and would be affected by the changes to the residential cap. City Manager Hernandez said quite a few could benefit from this.

Commissioner Jurkovich asked why there would be any cap on commercial properties at all. White said the intent is to nudge larger projects toward abatements, such as CIDs, IRBs or TIFs, versus rebates such as the NRP.

Mayor Oestmann made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Tweedy seconded the motion.

A voice vote resulted in four aye votes and one nay vote, with Commissioner Jurkovich dissenting. Mayor Oestmann declared the resolution approved and given Resolution No. 2017-05-3104.

New Business

Board Appointments

City Clerk Shook presented for discussion Mayor Oestmann’s appointments to various City advisory boards.

Commissioner Tweedy made a motion to table ratifying any appointments until May 16. Mayor Oestmann seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor. Mayor Oestmann declared the action item tabled.

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City Manager Updates

City Manager Hernandez reminded commissioners about the Star Wars doubleheader (“Rogue One”/“Star Wars”) at 7 p.m. May 12 under the Wilson Park rotunda. He said the City will do some Facebook advertising for this one.

Hernandez said the V.J. Wilkins Memorial Foundation has awarded the City a \$500,000 challenge grant over the next two years to advance the Wilson Park Master Plan. If matching funds are raised, this would net \$1 million.

All fundraising will be handled through the Legacy Regional Community Foundation, not the City. Donations may be made to “Friends of Wilson Park.” They will be tracked and a 2-percent administrative fee will be deducted.

J.R. Stelzer has completed all of the sandblasting and lead abatement for the Wilson Park train, at a cost of \$25,800. Kalin Taylor, of L.G. Pike Construction, is well under way with metal fabrication and repair. He is donating all of his labor and materials to restore missing pieces. Rob Carroll also will assist with the restoration.

Hernandez mentioned that the City of Winfield recently passed an ordinance outlawing parking in front yards.

Other Business

Mayor Oestmann made a motion to recess to a five-minute executive session to discuss confidential data relating to financial affairs or trade secrets of corporations, partnerships, trusts and individual proprietorships, as well as preliminary discussions related to the acquisition of real property, concerning property at Goff Industrial Park, to include City Attorney Niles and City Manager Hernandez.

Commissioner Jurkovich seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. The executive session began at 6:50 p.m. and ended at 6:55 p.m.

Adjournment

Commissioner Tweedy moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Warren seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mayor Oestmann declared the meeting adjourned at 6:56 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