

City of Tekoa

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 17, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Roy Schulz called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

Councilpersons* present at the meeting were Dave Tysz, Shelly Ausmus, Mike Hale, Pete Martin, B.J. Sperber, and Angie Rambo. Clerk/Treasurer Eliza Evans-Teague was present, as well as additional attendees Brad Chandler, John Spendlove, Deb Spendlove, Gloria Rasmussen, Ted Rasmussen, Linda Zehm, Joyce Hansen, John Jaeger, Steve Haxton, Doug Palmer, Lydia Spencer, Mandy Prince, Connie Marsh and Mike Bogenreif.

*In following paragraphs, Councilperson(s) will be abbreviated as: "C."

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Roy Schulz led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: Doug Palmer commented about the burn pile and how people are showing up at all hours of the day and night and how it is getting out-of-hand.

Steve Haxton reported that the Keegan building inspection happened last Tuesday. There was some work done on the building in 2019. The roof is a problem. Denise Keegan is in the process of getting a couple of bids for the roof. Mayor Schulz suggested that the proposal for the Keegan building stipulates that the roof has to be fixed in six months to stop the damage to the neighboring buildings. It is not an attractive nuisance, but there needs to be significant action in three months. Denise Keegan will be advised and have the opportunity to come to the next meeting and give a counter-proposal. Steve Haxton commented that there had obviously been an attempt to shore the roof up. The neighbors are finding new damage as they take displays off of walls, etc. C. Martin commented that approximately 15 years ago the same problem and similar fix had been proposed, and followed through on at that time. There is obvious damage now. C. Ausmus asked if the roof repair in and of itself was enough to remedy ongoing damage to the buildings alongside. Steve said that "no, structural repairs need to be made." Steve then brought up the back wall and the deterioration thereof. There was some discussion that a letter must be very clear about the nature of the repairs, possible outcomes and timelines. C. Ausmus suggested that we ask Ms. Keegan to cover the windows completely so that the building doesn't become an attractive nuisance. Steve Haxton will draft a letter with all the issues mentioned.

Matt Morkert from Century West reported there is a change-order for the Influent Lift Station because of the bedrock issue. The exploratory measures showed that the rock is a shelf that extends the entire site of the WWTP. It is solid granite. One alternative is to use a submersible pump system. Another possible set-up would be a wet well/dry well scenario; this would require two vaults. The two-vault set-up would save some depth so not as much rock would have to be removed. (3-4 feet vs. 10 feet of depth). With this scenario, the rock removal would be cut approximately to a third of the proposed price. There was discussion about the pros and cons of the system long-term with maintenance and service. C. Sperber

asked about the mobilization cost of the rock-breaking equipment. Matt responded that he had confirmed the necessity of those costs. C. Ausmus asked Matt to clarify the history of the project in the phases it has been implemented. Matt explained the limits of the permit the city has and the Influent and Infiltration (I and I) projects that have happened along the way to decrease I and I. This Lift Station project is the last step to address the I and I and then the city will know what capacity the treatment plant will need to accommodate. He ballparked the possible numbers for the upcoming sewer plant **between 5-10 million dollars* and let the city know that the current planning phase will get the city to an actual number. The facilities plan will take about a year to finish up, and then the design phase will follow. C. Tysz explained some of the history with the improvements and how that is setting the city up well for the future. There were questions about accommodating possible growth and whether there are timelines that have to be observed. Matt clarified that there is no timeline, the Spokane Riverkeepers are keeping an eye on things, and they can see significant progress where the city is continuing to keep on with the new project phases. John Jaeger asked about where the city needs to be with sewer rates to qualify for hardship considerations from DOE. Matt informed the city that Tekoa is on the Table 12 list as a community that will be applying to DOE for future monies. *Matt also let the city know rates could go over \$100/month, but could possibly be less* and that there would be realistic answers for the budget/rate questions when the facilities planning is finished. Mayor Schulz asked if there were things we could have done differently that would have helped us. Matt commented that the timing and way the city went about doing the sewer projects has actually saved the city 5-6 million dollars in grant funds and explained the process. John Jaeger asked if our future lagoon would be about the same size as Rockford's. Matt said we won't know until the I and I (Influent and Infiltration) has been addressed as completely as possible. C. Tysz asked about the concrete manholes and Matt addressed his question in context of how they are built. C. Martin moved to accept the change order. C. Tysz seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. C. Ausmus moved to accept the pay estimate. C. Tysz seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE: None.

V. CONTINUING BUSINESS:

- A. COUNCIL MEMBER VACANCY:** Mayor Schulz re-introduced the council member vacancy and invited Mandy Prince up to the podium for interviewing. Mayor Schulz asked what Tekoa needs and what her vision for the city is. She thinks some of Tekoa's strengths are its people who serve with events like Slippery Gulch. Mandy thinks Tekoa has a lot of great things to offer. She thinks Tekoa is great as it is, and she does not see any problems with the city. Mandy wants to serve because she loves Tekoa. In response to a question about prior service, Mandy stated she has helped with Slippery Gulch. She is serving on the Ambulance Board, and has been for two years, and knows she probably has served in other functions in the past. John Spendlove responded to the same service question that he has been a football coach, volunteer with the fire department, local sheriff's department volunteer and a school volunteer. Brad Chandler has been on several non-profit organization boards, including being treasurer, and now he is volunteering to teach soil composition and aspects of electricity. John Spendlove worked for Yellow Pike County for eleven years and dealt with pumps, etc. He is very familiar with sewer plant issues. John said that the sewer plant is something we cannot avoid. If we do not do it, we aren't providing the services we should and will have to explain this to our citizens. Brad also said we should concentrate on

the up-side and explain how the state taxpayers are also contributing. Mandy agreed that as a council person, we must do things we don't want to do, but that are necessary.

- A. **SPRING CLEAN-UP/BURN PILE:** C. Ausmus said the spring clean-up went well. There were some things that had to be removed. C. Tysz said he will start burning as soon as the standpipes are on. Mayor Schulz asked him about parameters for burning. C. Tysz commented on the permit and how the wind direction needs to be considered. There was discussion about the possibility of chipping. Brad Chandler commented on where recent limbs came from. Mayor Schulz will get the water worked on.

- B. **FOOTBRIDGE:** No salvage metal has been found yet. Duane is still looking.

- C. **SALARY/HOURLY WAGE DISCUSSION FOR CLERK/TREASURER POSITION:** C. Tysz moved to move the clerk/treasurer to hourly from salary at her present rate with overtime approved by the mayor, at his discretion. There was discussion about the pros and cons of the position in terms of salary and hourly. Brad Chandler brought up the job description of our clerk/treasurer as being way beyond that of other city clerks. Brad suggested that a part-time person might address the issue sufficiently. C. Sperber asked whether there is currently a task list that could be passed to the deputy clerk. Eliza Evans-Teague said there really was not time for the deputy clerk to pick up extra duties as she is picking up the duties that the ordinances specify. C. Hale still would like to see the clerk/treasurer on salary as being most cost-effective for the city. There was additional discussion about the issue. C. Martin expressed that he doesn't understand why the clerk/treasurer can't do the job in 40 hours/week. The clerk/treasurer pointed out that she actually does her job in fewer hours per week than the previous clerk, per that clerk's estimate. C. Martin stated that he stood by his previous statement. There was discussion about the amount of overtime the previous clerk worked. C. Ausmus would like the schedule C. Hale proposed about insurance to be on the agenda next meeting. C. Martin seconded the motion on the table. There was additional discussion about insurance and addressing that later in the year. C. Martin and C. Tysz voted yes. C. Ausmus, C. Rambo, C. Hale and C. Sperber voted no.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **JOHN JAEGER & GLORIA RASMUSSEN RE: CEMETERY ENDOWMENT:** Gloria Rasmussen addressed the council about the Eleanor Cohn Trust. The remainder of the money left in the trust went to the Goldenrod Perpetual Care Endowment. The cemetery committee was formed as a public entity and the records are also public. When the positions (three-year appointments) are up for renewal, there should be public notification. There was discussion about the funds and what Eleanor Cohn intended the funds to be used for. There was discussion about the different positions and the appointment requirements from where each position originated. C. Ausmus asked about remuneration and the different projects the committee had undertaken. John Jaeger suggested how he would like to see the positions rotated. Gloria Rasmussen explained that the committee already has the rotation schedule. Joyce Hanson listed the niche wall, pressure booster pump addition to the cemetery and the tree trimming project from last year to answer C. Ausmus' question, as well as the duties and responsibilities of the committee. C. Ausmus asked about the remuneration and Joyce

explained that the CPA for the endowment recommended that the committee take some remuneration. Now, she has found in the last week that they maybe shouldn't, so they are looking into that and are not planning to take a fee in the future. She offered that the committee members are happy to return the fees paid the past two years if the council prefers. There was a general consensus that that was not necessary. C. Rambo suggested that there should be an additional plaque or remembrance about Eleanor Cohn. It was brought up that the cemetery sign on Line St. mentions her name. John Jaeger suggested that the minutes of the cemetery meetings be incorporated into the council's meeting minutes. There was additional discussion about the process for choosing committee members in their staggered terms. September is the month when appointments come around. Joyce Hansen will figure out when the next member is up for possible rotation. Ted Rasmussen will make sure there is a current copy of the agreements for the endowment.

B. CODE: CHAPTER 1.08-COMPENSATION: C. Hale will be in touch with Eric Hansen re: his proposed changes to the Compensation Chapter 1.08. and asked that the council or community please get in touch with him with any ideas or thoughts about this chapter. On the subject, C. Ausmus brought up the employment agreement for Brandon Schneider at the next council meeting. This will be up for discussion at the next council meeting.

C. MEETING ORDER: C. Ausmus postponed until next meeting.

VII. REPORTS:

A. MAYOR'S REPORT: PRR suit requests have come in. There was some discussion. The open position will be decided at the end of this meeting. C. Hale is working on the .09 Grant application.

B. CLERK/TREASURER REPORT: Eliza Evans-Teague included an email re: useful answers to EV Charger Station questions. She also informed the council that the Shoreline Management Plan public hearing is scheduled for May 15, 2023, from 5:30-6:30 P.M., and the regular council meeting will have to be pushed back to 6:30 P.M. That will be announced to the community and put in the paper.

C. COUNCIL REPORTS: C. Hale reported that Bud Nevers from the Pilot's Association was put in touch with Yolanda Bone for a presentation for careers in aviation. C. Martin reported the State was still working out how to pay for the trailhead and maintenance. C. Tysz reported Sherma Tysz is retiring May 1, 2023, from the ambulance and there are several upcoming candidates. Rosalia ambulance will respond for a significant emergency. C. Martin added comment re: the ambulance crews. C. Tysz clarified that volunteers for the ambulance must be at least 18 years old. C. Martin added that some trail maintenance is likely to happen. C. Ausmus mentioned that she has seen some EV Charger use. She had some suggestions about the EV charging sign (30 min. for non-EVs and 2 hours for EV charging). C. Ausmus went on to speak about using Rural Resources again for summer help and their extended program. C. *Ausmus was surprised to not see vacant council position in the newsletter, per the prior meeting's discussion, and that that was the reason for postponing the vacancy appointment.* She would prefer to see such things prioritized over thanking our volunteers, regardless of newsletter deadlines, etc. C. Rambo and C. Sperber stated that they expected the position to be in the newsletter and neither had seen any signs in town. The clerk responded that the council vacancy had been posted in five places. C. Ausmus also wants to see a correction of the newsletter COLA

rate (5.9% vs. 5.4%). C. Tysz commented that he will move the bark pile away from the burn pile. C. Tysz then asked the clerk/treasurer to fill out paperwork re: the possible clean-up of land the city may be able to acquire from Union Pacific RR, and send it in to the DOE.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mayor Schulz called an executive session at 9:19 P.M. for 5 minutes to discuss qualifications for the open council position. Ballots were cast. After coming out of executive session, ballots were counted and Brad Chandler will be the new council member.

D. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: None.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. MARCH 20, 2023, COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: C. Tysz moved to accept the March 20, 2023, council meeting minutes. C. Hale seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. APPROVE BILLS FOR PAYMENT: C. Tysz moved to pay EFT payroll checks and check numbers 16466-16477 in the amount of \$12,405.58 and check numbers 16478-16506 in the amount of \$66,074.74. C. Rambo seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: C. Tysz moved to adjourn the meeting. C. Hale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Schulz adjourned the meeting at 9:28 P.M.

**Italics reflect changes to the minutes requested and approved by the council.*

APPROVED:

Roy Schulz - Mayor

ATTEST:

Eliza M. Evans-Teague– Clerk/Treasurer