

**CITY OF NEW STRAWN
COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, April 13, 2017
New Strawn City Hall
7:00 p.m.**

Call to Order: Mayor Mark Petterson called the regular monthly meeting of the New Strawn City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Those present were: Council Member Jim Weeks
 Council Member Kraig Kirchner
 Council Member Jeanne Haas

Absent: Council Member Bobby Bryant
 Council Member Gary Haehn

Others present were:
 City Superintendent Ron Parkey City Clerk Kerry Templeton
 Code Enforcement Officer Steven Dwight County Commissioner Bob Saueressig
 Russ Taylor Alisa James

Flag Salute: The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Additions:

Staff Reports:

Zoning Administrator

- b. **ADDED:** Building Permit No. 2017-B-03

Code Enforcement/Animal Control Officer

- a. **ADDED:** Resignation

Mayor's Report:

- a. **ADDED:** Permits/Burning in City Limits
- b. **ADDED:** Haying Permits

Street Report:

- a. **ADDED:** 2017 Street Work

Consent Agenda:

- Move to approve the minutes of March 9, 2017 regular council meeting
- Move to approve the March 2017 warrants in the amount of \$52,741.15
- Move to approve the March 2017 payroll in the amount of \$19,839.98
- Move to approve 2017 Electrical License for Thweatt Electric, LLC
- Move to pay annual CCMFOA membership fee for Janell Templeton in the amount of \$25.

Council member Haas moved to approve agenda with additions as presented. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Public Comments:

Alisa James commented that she felt Council needed to review and improve burn and haying permits and how they are issued. Ms. James stated that the smoke from a recent burn within city limits affected the health and homes of several nearby residents, an issue which could have been avoided if notification of the burn had been given to homeowners in advance, in her opinion. She also commented that she would like to see improvements made to Jones Park such as playground equipment for younger aged children with a cover, additional parking and new picnic tables.

Council member Kirchner moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Weeks seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Financial Report:

Council member Haas moved to approve additional warrants in the amount of \$1,017.78. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Staff Reports:

City Superintendent Parkey stated that he and Dwight had finished the dirt work on the north side of the batting cage. They had also repaired the west side of the building and applied a fresh coat of paint as well as putting up the new net.

Parkey stated that he will be changing laboratories for the quarterly monitoring of the City's lagoons. He will be using Pace Labs in Salina instead of Environmental Labs. Parkey noted that the reason for the switch was due to Environmental Labs slow turnaround time which had caused the City's reports to be late on several occasions.

Clerk Templeton stated that Warner Blackburn with Crosswinds Counseling & Wellness had inquired about receiving a complimentary fishing license. Council member Kirchner moved to issue one complimentary 2017 New Strawn City Lake fishing license to Warner Blackburn with Crosswinds Counseling & Wellness, and to allow one individual to accompany him. Weeks seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Templeton asked if Council wanted to purchase flowers for the planters in front of City Hall. Council member Haas moved to spend \$75.00 on flowers for City Hall, funds to be taken from the General Fund. Weeks seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Templeton conveyed to Council that the City's annual audit had been performed on March 7 by Jarred, Gilmore & Phillips and she was awaiting the report.

Templeton reminded everyone that the New Strawn Fire Department would be holding a fund raiser breakfast feed on April 15 beginning at 7:00 a.m. at the fire station. She also noted that NSCIO would be holding their annual Easter egg hunt on the 15th at 10:00 a.m.

Templeton stated that she had to replace one of the computer monitors and that the cost had been less than \$100.

Zoning Administrator Ware reported that two building permits had been issued. Building Permit No. 2017-B-02 had been issued to Steve & Robin Laird on April 4 for a fence and Building Permit No. 2017-B-03 had been issued to Richard & Susan Croll on April 11 for a 24'x30' shop.

Ware also reported that he had spoken with Bickley Foster and the maps for the Comprehensive Plan are nearing completion.

Code Enforcement/Animal Control Officer Dwight reported that he had received several verbal complaints concerning a 'dog at large' problem and possible aggressive behavior. He had spoken with the animal's owner about the issue and reminded them of the City's leash law as well as the requirement to register all dogs and cats annually with the City.

Dwight submitted his resignation as Code Enforcement and Animal Control Officer for the City of New Strawn citing time restraints as the reason. Dwight noted that many of the calls and complaints were received on weekends and evenings, or when he is occupied with other city duties, and felt he couldn't dedicate enough time to the positions.

Council member Kirchner moved to accept Steven Dwight's resignation as Code Enforcement & Animal Control Officer, effective April 13, 2017. Haas seconded, with regret. Motion passed 3-0.

Council member Haas moved to continue employment with Steven Dwight as Maintenance Worker II for the city, but remove the \$1.50/hour compensation for the Code Enforcement & Animal Control Officer positions from his salary. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Discussion followed as to how to fill the positions. Haas asked if the positions should be advertised. Mayor Petterson would like to explore the idea of a part-time law enforcement officer for the city as well as options with Burlington regarding animal control. The mayor will present his findings at the May meeting.

Mayor's Report:

The City's current code and procedures regarding burning within city limits was discussed. The City's Fire Prevention Code states that "all persons must comply with the Coffey County burning requirements". It also prohibits bonfires, rubbish fires or trash fires. However, it does not address vegetation fires. Council had concerns over a recent controlled burn of a large area of grass and cedar trees that occurred in the north end of town which allegedly caused some smoke and health issues for nearby residents. The county's amended resolution restricting open burning approved in August, 2016 will be reviewed by Council as well as the City's current code and the matter will be revisited at the May meeting.

The procedure and regulations concerning haying permits within city limits was discussed. The City's Weeds Code states that "areas zoned other than agricultural may be exempted from the provisions of said article with an approved haying permit". Currently, permits are "issued on an annual basis by declaring that the land sought to be exempted by an approved hay permit shall be hayed by September 1". Council member Weeks thought the provisions of a haying permit obtained by the property owner where the controlled burn had occurred in the north end of town had not been met because the property had not been hayed by September 1, 2016. However, the city clerk and code enforcement officer noted that the property had been hayed once prior to September 1 and pointed out that the Code does not stipulate exempted property has to be hayed more than once. Requirements for a haying permit will be reviewed at the May meeting. Council member Haas moved to suspend issuance of haying permits until after the May 11, 2017 regular council meeting. Weeks seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Finance and Economic Development:

None

Community Building Report:

Council member Haas moved to purchase twenty one (21) 8' tables for the community building from Competitive Edge Products at a cost not to exceed \$1,759.99, funds to be taken from the General Fund. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Utility Report:

None

Street Report:

Superintendent Parkey had obtained a cost estimate for street repairs needed this year from Killough Construction, Inc. Parkey noted it was only an estimate and not an actual bid and was intended only to aid Council in deciding which streets and what work they wanted to include in the actual bid solicitations. The proposed street work for 2017 included asphalt patching on Third Street and Seneca Circle as well as crackfill on Main Street, Arrowhead Drive and 1st Terrace. He had also received a cost estimate for the community building parking lot but was of the opinion that such an expense should not be taken from the City's Street Fund.

There was discussion and Council instructed Parkey to solicit bids for asphalt patching and some additional work on Third Street, Seneca Circle and Choctaw as well as crackfill on Main Street, Arrowhead Drive and 1st Terrace. The community building parking lot, which had an estimated cost of \$30,385.00, will be considered for 2018.

Public Relations Report:

Plans for Strawnfest were discussed. Donations for the event from area businesses have begun to be received. The city-wide garage sale will be held on the same day as Strawnfest, June 24. Maps will be provided, as well as advertising for the event, and the cost to have a yard sale included on the map will be \$1.00 (one dollar).

Park & Recreation Report:

None

Public Safety Report:

None

New Business:

None

Old Business:

The possibility of a city sales tax referendum on the November ballot was revisited. Council member Kirchner stated he is not convinced that adding additional taxes to New Strawn residents, who are already so heavily taxed, is the best way to raise money for the City. Mayor Petterson stated that he had received feedback from a few residents who were opposed to a city sales tax. Council member Haas felt a city sales tax would add an additional burden to city businesses in regards to paperwork involved with the collection and submittal of such a tax. Council member Weeks stated that if the City has any hope of being able to make community improvements, such as our parks, we need additional revenue from 'somewhere'.

Mayor Petterson noted that if Council decides to move forward with the referendum, a resolution would need to be passed by no later than the September meeting, August would be better.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.