

**CITY OF NEW STRAWN
COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, November 9, 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 Jeanne Haas
 Council Member Kraig Kirchner
 Council Member Gary Haehn arrived at 7:30 p.m.

Absent: Council Member Bobby Bryant

Others present were:
 City Superintendent Ron Parkey City Clerk Kerry Templeton
 Rhonda Taylor Alisa James
 County Commissioner Bob Saueressig Glenda Perkins
 Marc Chester Liz Alford

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

Agenda Additions:

Community Building Report:

- a. **ADDED:** Reservation Form/Rental Agreement
- b. **ADDED:** Partial Reimbursement for Ducks Unlimited

Public Safety Report:

- a. **ADDED:** Parking Lot East Side of Arrowhead Drive

New Business:

- f. **ADDED:** Executive Session for Non-Elected Personnel Exception

Correspondence:

- b. **ADDED:** TrustPoint Insurance Endorsement
- c. **ADDED:** KRWA Membership Confirmation

Consent Agenda Additions:

None

Consent Agenda:

- Move to approve the October 18, 2017 regular council meeting minutes
- Move to approve the October 2017 warrants in the amount of \$50,757.45
- Move to approve the October 2017 payroll in the amount of \$12,865.11
- Move to approve 2018 Plumbing License for Shoemaker Construction
- Move to approve 2018 Contractor License for Kansas Fencing, Inc.

- Move to approve 2018 CMB License for Casey's Retail Company to sell cereal malt beverages in original and unopened containers and not for consumption on the licensed premises

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

Public Comments:

Marc Chester congratulated the newly elected council members and stated that it was a hard job and that, hopefully, the City could get some things done. Mr. Chester stated he basically had a question and a suggestion for Council. Mr. Chester asked what the advantage to the City and the residents of New Strawn the Comprehensive Plan will be. He also asked what the advantage of the extraterritorial area is when the City will not gain anything and no new taxes will be collected. Mr. Chester wondered why New Strawn would want the added responsibilities of the extraterritorial area when it seems to him that the City has problems now enforcing the responsibilities we have within our city limits. Mayor Petterson noted that by New Strawn exercising its extraterritorial jurisdiction it will allow the City to help control what some of the future land use will be in those areas and he stated the Comprehensive Plan is comparable to a 'blueprint' for New Strawn and future growth and improvements for the City – a guide to follow and update as needed.

Mr. Chester suggested that either the new council or present council revisit New Strawn's Charter Ordinance regarding the City's election process and include a nepotism clause. Mr. Chester was of the opinion that allowing two council members from the same household or family to serve on the city council at the same time would create a very biased opinion that could throw a vote in either direction.

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

Financial Report:

Council member Haas moved to approve additional warrants in the amount of \$5,322.17. Weeks seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Haas spoke about the issue of the City's end-of-month cash balance by funds report not necessarily reflecting all of the City's expenditures between council meetings. She explained this was because additional warrants are presented to Council for approval at the council meeting after the previous month has been closed out and noted that this results in adjustments needing to be made at the end of the fiscal year as well as creating the appearance, in her opinion, of non-transparency by the City. Clerk Templeton will visit with the City's auditors to see if there is a solution to this issue.

Staff Reports:

City Superintendent Parkey reported that the City's street project for 2017, including crack sealing, had been completed. He and Dwight had hauled some rock to the Foreman property at 114 W. Choctaw to help alleviate a drainage issue still occurring. Parkey noted that the reseeded grass along the drainage ditch near Shawnee and 2nd Street looks good. Parkey and Dwight had trimmed some brush near the intersection of Neosho and 3rd Street for traffic safety reasons. The

annual sewer cleaning, which encompassed Industrial Drive and the south third of New Strawn this year, had gone well and the report had been received.

City Clerk Templeton reported that the sign in front of City Hall had been backed over and destroyed by the Flint Hills Beverage beer delivery truck the previous week. Templeton had been in contact with Flint Hills Beverage in regards to replacing the sign and they would prefer to pay for the damage/replacement of sign out of pocket rather than submitting the claim to insurance. An estimate for replacement had been received from Great Plains Design Center in the amount of \$1,800. The proposed new sign would be vinyl, as opposed to untreated wood like the old sign, and should never rot or need to be painted. Templeton had not submitted the estimate to Flint Hills Beverage yet because she wanted to ensure Council was agreeable to the proposed new sign first. Council instructed the clerk to submit the estimate to Flint Hills Beverage as presented.

Clerk Templeton had made some inquiries with other cities in regards to amounts donated to the Coffey County Council for the Arts. Waverly & LeRoy had both donated \$100 and Lebo's city clerk had indicated they would possibly be donating \$250. Council member Haas moved to donate \$100 to Coffey County Council for the Arts, funds to be taken from the General Fund. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Templeton reported that the winner of the October Lawn of the Month Contest was the Robert Foster family on 6th Street and that the December winner will be judged on Dec. 15.

Zoning Administrator Carl Ware reported that one sign permit had been issued, Permit 2017-S-02 to Jeff Chandler to erect a sign at 110 W. Decker St.

Mr. Ware also reported that the New Strawn Planning Commission did not have a quorum present on November 7 so no meeting was held.

Council member Haas asked if it would be possible for Mr. Ware to present a 'pending' building permit report at council meetings. Ware was agreeable to the request.

Council member Weeks requested that Bickley Foster be asked to provide the necessary forms for the process of adopting the Comprehensive Plan and new zoning/subdivision regulations, as well as any other pertinent forms the City will require after the process has been completed. Templeton will request the information from Mr. Foster.

Mayor's Report:

After brief discussion, Council member Weeks moved to approve Ordinance No. 2017-06, an ordinance amending Chapter VII, Article 2, of the Code of the City of New Strawn, Kansas regarding fire prevention in the City of New Strawn, Kansas. Kirchner seconded. Motion carried 3-0 by a show of hands.

Mayor Petterson briefly discussed the possibility of attaining partial funding from the Coffey County Commission for improvements needed to the City's community building. The mayor stated that the commissioners had recently granted \$30,000 to the city of Lebo for their community building project and it was his understanding that money might also be granted to other cities within Coffey County for the same purpose.

Finance and Economic Development:

Council member Haas moved to give a \$75 net Christmas bonus to full-time city employees with two additional paid days off for the holidays, and to give a \$50 net Christmas bonus to part-time city employees. Haehn seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Community Building Report:

Amendments to the community building reservation form and rental agreement were reviewed. The biggest change in the City's rental policy is that rental fees must be paid to hold a reservation and cancellation of a reservation less than ten (10) days from the reserved date will result in forfeiture of all rental fees. The rental fees will remain the same. There was brief discussion and Council member Haehn was of the opinion that a 50% discount for non-profit rentals of the community building is too much. Haehn was in favor of a discounted rental fee for non-profits, but not half the rental cost. Council member Haas moved to approve amendments as presented to the community building rental agreement and reservation form. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 3-1 with Haehn opposing.

Council member Haas moved to reimburse \$50 in community building rental fees to Ducks Unlimited. Kirchner seconded. Motion passed 4-0. The reimbursement of half the rental fees was granted due to the building not being cleaned after the previous rental.

Utility Report:

The City of Burlington water rate increase was discussed. Effective January 15, 2018 the wholesale cost of water purchased from Burlington will increase by ten (10) cents per 1,000 gallons, raising the cost from \$4.59 to \$4.69 for the City of New Strawn. The Council discussed New Strawn's waning Water Fund and whether a more substantial rate increase was in order for the City, or if an increase of ten (10) cents to match Burlington's was enough at this time. The issue was tabled and will be revisited at the December meeting.

Clerk Templeton reported that the maintenance contract monthly fee for New Strawn's water tower had increased. The contract, which is with Utility Service Co., is set up on a five year cycle and the last increase/adjustment had occurred in 2012. Templeton stated that the latest adjustment had been 15% resulting in the City's monthly contractual fee increasing from \$477.25 to \$548.84.

Street Report:

None

Public Relations Report:

Strawnfest 2018 was discussed. Council member Haehn was of the opinion that perhaps the City should donate "X" amount of dollars to the event and allow a Strawnfest Committee to plan the festivities, with Council's final approval, and hold fundraisers if more funding is needed. Haehn also wondered if Strawnfest should maybe be scaled back to a half-day or evening event if there is a lack of volunteers for a committee. The city clerk noted that she has had two volunteer for the committee so far. She put an item in the newsletter regarding the need for volunteers for a Strawnfest Committee and there will be a meeting on Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. Council member Haas suggested the City wait until after Dec. 5th to see how many volunteers show up for the meeting and then revisit Strawnfest plans again at the January meeting.

Council member Haas reminded everyone of the tree lighting event to be held on December 1 in front of City Hall. The decorating and tree lighting will commence at 5:30 p.m. and then there will be hayrack rides and caroling around town at 5:45 p.m. followed by snacks and story time at the library at 7:00 p.m. Santa arrives at 7:15 p.m.

Park & Recreation Report:

There were no updates to report on the Jones Trust grant for a new playground.

Public Safety Report:

Clerk Templeton stated that a citizen had discussed a concern with her about the parking lot area on the east side of Arrowhead Drive in front of Prairie Winds Golf Course. The citizen felt there were times when vehicles were being parked too close to the corner near the utility poles and it was obstructing the view for motorists turning off of Highway 75. There was brief discussion by Council but it was not felt it was a common occurrence and did not merit further review at this time.

New Business:

There was discussion about the Code of the City of New Strawn. Council member Haas had two particular codes she felt required review: Chapter XIII, Article 3, Section 13-306 regarding dangerous, dead or diseased trees on private property and the requirement that there shall be a clear space of 14 feet above the surface of the street or right-of-way; Chapter II, Article 1, Section 2-111 regarding Nuisance animal activities prohibited. Haas stated that she had noted several trees on 3rd, 4th and Cherokee Street that were hanging lower than 14 feet and wondered if letters needed to be sent to the owners about trimming them. Haas also said that she had heard concerns from citizens regarding bushes jutting out into the street making it difficult for two vehicles, especially large vehicles, to pass without the need for one to get over into the easement area which could potentially cause damage to a vehicle. Mayor Petterson suggested that if Haas had already compiled a list of properties with these types of issues she could provide them to the city clerk and the City can send letters to the owners asking them to abate the problems. Council member Haas noted that current City Code does not address the issue of shrubs/bushes jutting out into city streets so it may be an item to consider adding by amendment.

Council member Haas discussed nuisance animal activities occurring in town and several complaints she had received regarding dogs-at-large scattering trash as well as stray cats. Haas inquired as to whether the City still had an Animal Control Officer. Mayor Petterson stated that Superintendent Parkey and Dwight will continue to handle animal complaints received during normal working hours.

Haas discussed City Code in general and how various violations are to be investigated and handled by the City.

Council member Haehn discussed the unsightly appearance of several properties in town including 345 N. 1st Street, 238 N. 3rd Street and the apartment complex at 325 N. 1st Street. Haehn asked what could be done about the issue. There was discussion. Council was in agreement to send a letter to the owner of the apartments politely requesting the property be cleaned up.

Haehn discussed the large amount of vehicles recently parked outside the fenced area at Jeff's Towing & Recovery Service. A possible zoning violation will be investigated.

Council member Weeks proposed that agendas for council meetings be posted on the City's website one week prior to regular and special council meetings.

Council member Haas moved to enter into an executive session at 8:31 p.m. for ten minutes to discuss non-elected personnel pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception under KOMA, open meeting to resume at 8:41 p.m. Weeks seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Open meeting resumed at 8:41 p.m.

Old Business:

There was discussion about code enforcement and who will be appointed or hired to fill that role. Mayor Petterson again suggested hiring a part-time law enforcement officer. Council also discussed city employee job descriptions and city clerk was instructed to provide copies of all employee job descriptions to Council. Both items will be revisited at the December meeting. Annual employee evaluations will be conducted at the December meeting, as well.

Separate building and zoning permits were discussed. Council member Weeks had composed an example of a building permit application which he submitted to Council for review. Weeks' proposed application would strictly be for structures such as houses and accessory buildings. Mayor Petterson suggested Council review the application and revisit the item at the December meeting. The mayor also suggested that Council may want to wait until the Comprehensive Plan and new zoning/subdivision regulations are approved and adopted before approving a new zoning permit application to ensure all pertinent information is included.

Council member Haas moved that until separate building and zoning permit application forms are approved by Council, the City continue to use the current application. Haehn seconded. Motion passed 4-0. The item will be revisited at the December meeting.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.