

COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, September 9, 2021

Present: Mayor Mark Petterson

Council Members: Gary Haehn, Rhonda Taylor, Johnny Hernandez & Jeanne Haas
Absent: Jim Weeks

Staff Present: Martha Newkirk – Zoning Administrator, Lana Johnson – City Clerk, Philip Wright – City Attorney
Absent: Maintenance Operator, Steven Dwight

Others Present: John Waner, Matt Dekat, Ian Dekat, Jim Schussler, Sabin Yanez, Wayne Blackburn, Bob Saueressig, Mary Davis & Tammy Petrie

Call to Order: Mayor Mark Petterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Additions and/or Amendments:

Clerk Johnson added under Mayor a. Proclamation

Haas moved, seconded by Taylor, to approve the agenda with additions. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Approval of Consent Agenda:

- Move to approve meeting minutes of August 12, 2021.
- Move to approve the Warrants dated August 11, 2021 through September 7, 2021 in the amount of \$35,228.57.
- Move to approve the August 2021 Payroll in the amount of \$9,243.81.

Taylor moved, seconded by Haas, to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion carried 4-0.**

APPOINTMENTS:

- Coffey County Library, New Strawn Branch – Tammy Petrie thanked the council for the use of the Community Building on August 24. They had 33 ladies attend the “Wine & Design”. The library would like to be able to use the Community Building monthly for public programs.

Taylor moved, seconded by Haas to allow Coffey County Library, New Strawn Branch use of the Community Building free of charge to provide a monthly public program. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- Coffey County, KS Capital Improvement Plan – Jim Schuessler gave a presentation of the Capital Improvement Plan for New Strawn. He asked for two volunteers to join a committee from other Coffey County cities and would need names by early October.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Matt Dekat introduced his son Ian. Ian presented a letter to the council asking that the tennis courts be repaired. Council Member Taylor asked Ian if he had other friends that were interested in Tennis, Ian responded "no". Mayor Petterson asked Ian if he played pickleball. Ian hadn't played pickleball. Council member Taylor thanked Ian for coming and voicing his opinion. Ian's letter is attachment A.
- Martha Newkirk presented the council with a thank you from Coffey County Cancer Support Group for supporting the 7th Annual Golf Classic.
- Mayor Petterson read aloud a letter sent to the council from Richard Croll. Attachment B.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- Additional warrants

Haas moved, seconded by Taylor to approve additional warrants of \$1,200.94. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Staff Reports:

Zoning Administrator Report:

Zoning Administrator Newkirk will be issuing a Zoning Permit to Lila Winterringer for a front porch. She also met with the council on September 8th and was able to give input on building ordinances.

Code Enforcement Officer: no report

Maintenance Operator Report:

- Line Striping update – Council Member Taylor reported the line striping was completed. She also reported that some of the dip repairs that were to be addressed this year are being pushed back.
- Mulch Quote – Clerk Johnson reported the mulch company is having major delays and we don't know when the mulch will be delivered.
- Mayer Specialty Services – Sewer clean out 9/13, 14 & 15

City Clerk Report:

- Coffey County Fall Clean up October 11th – 16th.
- New Strawn Fall Clean up October 11th – 14th.
- Community Building Calendar – rentals

September – 11th – OK Kids, 21st – IBEW, 28th New Strawn Library

October – 14th, 15th, 16th – Auction, 17th – Radiant Life Church, 19th – I.E.B.W., 23rd – Private Event

City Attorney Report: no report

Mayor's Report:

- ADDED: Home Rule Day Proclamation - Attachment C
Haas moved, seconded by Taylor to allow Mayor to sign the Home Rule Day Proclamation. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Finance and Economic Development: Jeanne Haas – no report

Community Building Report: Johnny Hernandez

Council Member Hernandez plans to meet with former Council Member Croll to get up to date on the community building process.

Utility Report: Jim Weeks - absent

Water Usage & Loss Report

Street Report: Rhonda Taylor – no report

Public Relations: Jeanne Haas

- Yard of the Month
Fall yard of the month will be judged October 22 – 24. The winners of Best Fall Decoration and Best Halloween Decoration will each receive a \$20 Casey's gift card. December judging will be December 17 – 19 and the categories have not been decided. Haas moved, seconded by Taylor for the city to participate in yard of the month. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Clerk Johnson mentioned that Maintenance Operator Dwight will be putting the flags out for Patriots Day.

Parks and Recreation Report: Gary Haehn

Council Member Haehn reported he took a diagram of the basketball courts to Charlie Whitworth for an estimate. Charlie is busy with football right now.

Council Member Taylor – if we have a young man brave enough to come to the council, we should involve him in the repairs. Council Member Haehn – one court could be for tennis and the other for pickleball. Council Member Taylor asked if pickleball and tennis courts both had the same surface. Council Member Haas asked that we not wait. Council Member Haehn is to get with Maintenance Operator Dwight.

Public Safety Report: - no report

New Business:

Old Business:

- Zoning Ordinances

Mayor Petterson met with Council Members Taylor, Haas and Hernandez along with Zoning Administrator Newkirk to continue reviewing city ordinances. Council Members Jim Weeks and Gary Haehn were absent from that meeting. Mayor Petterson reported they should be able to have one more meeting, adapt a county form, fix an ordinance and pass on to the City Attorney for review. Clerk Johnson said she would work on getting the zoning regulations on the city website in a searchable format.

Haas moved, seconded by Taylor to have a work session to review City Ordinances and Zoning Application on September 22, 2021 at 6:30 pm. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Council Member Haas asked if they were going to select the people to work on the CIP Study. She did like the idea of the stormwater study but thought a community meeting was needed before anything goes forward for overhead lights. Council Member Hernandez volunteered with the CIP study and the BRC group for the New Strawn Sports Complex.

Correspondence: N/A

Mayor Petterson adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Dear, Mr. Mayor

August 20 ,2021

I have been bored ever since Covid-19 and I have started to take an interest in tennis. Now I have known for a while that the tennis courts are not very well maintained. I was thinking that we could repair the tennis courts. Now if you want to play tennis you have to got to Emporia or Kansas City to get tennis lessons. If we repaired the tennis courts adults that have played tennis before could provide tennis lessons. This would also provide an activity for kids that live in New Strawn. It would help people stay more active because tennis is a very active sport. Unlike football, soccer, and baseball in these sports you tend to sit on the bench for a while. In tennis you run around the whole game. In addition, the tennis courts could be used for pickle ball too. These are the reasons we should repair the tennis courts.

Sincerely, Ian Dekat

September 7, 2021

City Council:

I would rather have been with you tonight, but my duties as County Treasurer have taken me away for the week.

Let me start with an apology to Rhonda for not speaking up for you with Gary at last month's meeting. Gary there is no excuse for your behavior. Disagreements happen, but your behavior put you on a scale with small children on the playground. The same thing you were unhappy with is the same thing you did to the rest of the council. Why is Rhonda "full of XXit" when I had the same issue with the community building in dealing with Mike, yet I was never spoken to like you did with Rhonda. It has been at least 3 council meetings and possibly four, and you can't get information to the council on a simple pickleball court? Please stop the bullying and act civilized at council meetings.

I feel my time on the council was marked with progress; a working plan for the streets, a new kitchen in the community center, a new playground area, a wonderful city celebration, and city employees who care, but the thing the public asks me about when they hear I was a council member is did the City really get sued by some of its own council members? How can the two of you, and another who is running for a spot on the council, still sit as council members? Personal feelings are to be put aside and the good of the City is the goal of the council, and yet that's not what is happening. Precedent has been set, but council members' opinions still reign.

The good of the City should be the council's main goal, but over and over some council members wait until a citizen does something wrong so they can pounce. I felt this first hand with my shop. And if a citizen wants to build something that doesn't conform to a council member's opinion or tastes, that council member(s) take action on their own even to the detriment of the City. The council is here to help people but sadly some council members are putting the city in a precarious position. Personal agendas rule, and the community is put on the back burner.

I wish I had an answer, but all I can say is that some of you keep up the good work, and the rest of you need to change for the better.

With hope for the Future...

Richard Croll

Proclamation

WHEREAS, on November 8, 1960, the voters of Kansas approved a constitutional amendment granting cities home rule authority. The Home Rule Amendment took effect in Kansas on July 1, 1961. Home Rule gives local government, specifically cities, the power to make decisions at the local level based on the unique needs and values of their residents; and

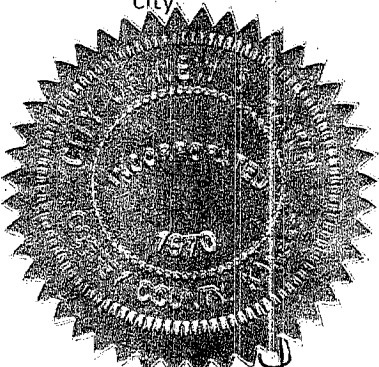
WHEREAS, cities across our great State manage differing opinions and views on issues ranging from zoning to funding for local services and programs. Home Rule keeps control of the community in the hands of local residents; and

WHEREAS, the Home Rule Amendment empowers cities to determine local affairs and government actions including the levying of taxes, fees, charges and other exaction; and

WHEREAS, the City of New Strawn and the League of Kansas Municipalities cities continually work to educate and engage municipal officials, the legislature, and the general public about the importance of Home Rule and local decision making; and

WHEREAS, the 60th anniversary of the passage of constitutional Home Rule is a fitting time for all municipalities to engage their residents to about the Kansas Constitution and local laws, so that all Kansans may continue to receive the many benefits of Home Rule.

NOW THEREFORE I, Mayor Mark A. Petterson, have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of New Strawn to be affixed this 11th day of October, 2021 and proclaim "Home Rule Day" in our city.



CITY OF NEW STRAWN, KANSAS

By: Mark A. Petterson
Mark A. Petterson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lana Johnson
Lana Johnson, City Clerk