

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
February 4, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Ashland City Council was held at the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers on the 4th day of February, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Richard Grauerholz
City Council President Russ DeVries
City Council Member James Anderson
City Council Member Janece Mollhoff
City Council Member Kyle Vest
City Administrator Jessica Quady
City Clerk Kathleen Sliva
City Attorney Mark Fahleson

Others Present: Chuck Niemeyer and Shirley Niemeyer

Notice of meeting was advertised in the Ashland Gazette on January 28, 2016. The Mayor and all Council Members received advance notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda as shown by the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Notice. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Grauerholz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared. Mayor Grauerholz noted the Open Meetings Act that is posted on the south wall of the Council Chambers.

Motion by DeVries, seconded by Anderson to adopt the regular agenda.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Chuck Niemeyer gave public comment regarding decorative lighting on 14th Street. He said he has a business across from Casey's, the new construction is going to stop about the end of his building and the other half of the block is not going to be done. He said he understood that it is not in the original plan to have any of the decorative lighting past where it was on 14th Street. He said he would like to see it continue down to Ash Street as this is a main entrance into Ashland and it would be a great opportunity for the city to show case itself. Niemeyer said that he plans to finish his block to match the rest of the project. He suggested that this be discussed with the

other property owners in this area. Council Member Mollhoff asked the question whether it makes sense to have the decorative lighting beyond the historic district such as in front of Casey's. Niemeyer said that he can't speak for Casey's and that he just wants his side of the street to look nice and for that area coming into town to look good.

Shirley Niemeyer gave public comment regarding items from previous council meetings. In response to how trailer courts should be charged for water and sewer, she said that other people in poverty already have to pay the rates and that if it is spread out to more people maybe eventually the rates could be lowered. She said that she heard there was an excess of money coming into the sewer department and less to the water, that she felt the water and sewer are connected as they both deal with water, and that some of the money from the sewer rates could be used to help pay for the water system. She said she supports paving the unpaved streets on the east side of town. She added she is supportive of extending North 17th Avenue for safety and to get it ready for future development. She said that she would support the paving of Birch Street and the extending of the hiking and biking trail. Regarding sidewalks, she suggested that they be addressed in the revision of the zoning code, that perhaps there is a grant available to help those who can't afford to pay for the sidewalk repair, that volunteers could be utilized to identify sidewalks that are safety hazards and that letters could be sent out to property owners with unsafe sidewalks. She said she agreed with the poor conditions of the post office. She then distributed copies of pages from the International Property Code and made comments on some definitions including rubbish, garbage, inoperable motor vehicles, neglected properties, vacant structures and land, unsafe structure, weeds, historic buildings and she then related this to her experience with her work with a Healthy Homes program. She then commented on the planning document that is being worked on specifically a section on the aesthetics of Highway 6 corridor. She said she would like to see the greening of this space, adding landscaping, making sure structures are up to code and having a long term plan of how it is going to be developed. She mentioned several other items in the document including maintaining the brick streets found throughout the community. She said there may be brick all the way to the Silver Street Bridge that could be reused or saved for another project. She added that she is supportive of the decorative lighting and that she said there are two historic houses on the south side of Ash Street.

Motion by Vest, seconded by DeVries to approve Resolution – 2016-1 – To Establish and Charge Reasonable Fees for Emergency Medical and Fire Service.

City Administrator Quady reviewed a handout from EMS Billing Services showing the industry standard rate range for rescue services. She noted that the City's rates are quite a bit lower than this range. She stated EMS Billing Services helped us set

up the billing structure and the initial rates. Mayor Grauerholz said that Medicare and Medicaid put caps on what they will pay. Discussion was held about adding fees to help pay for those who go on rescue calls. City Attorney Fahleson told the Council they should be careful converting volunteers to employees. Quady said that EMS Billing Services handles all the billing for the squad, the rescue squad runs completely off what they bill and the City doesn't fund the rescue. Mayor Grauerholz said that the rescue squad needs to continue to be self supporting by assessing these kinds of fees. He continued saying that he has a problem with the fire fees as property owners are assessed for fire protection through taxes. Discussion was held regarding billing for fire calls outside of corporate limits, in the Rural Fire District and to third party payers or insurance companies. Quady said that last year the department received large payments from an accident on the interstate and from a fire at the Guard Camp. Mollhoff noted that the City needs to have rates set for situations like that and she suggested that the mileage fees be the same for rescue and fire. Grauerholz requested that two separate resolutions be written for fire and rescue fees. Council Member DeVries said that the current rates are about 15% below the low end of the industry standards and that the rates should, at a minimum, be set at the low end of the industry standard. DeVries suggested that neighboring communities be contacted to find out what they charge for their fees. Grauerholz explained the mutual aid agreement with surrounding communities.

Motion by DeVries, seconded by Mollhoff to table Resolution 2016-1.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Vest, seconded by DeVries to approve Resolution 2016-2 – To enter into Interlocal Cooperative Agreement for a Mutual Finance Organization.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Anderson, seconded by DeVries to approve pay request from JEO Consulting Group Inc. for New Well 2015 in the amount of \$11,356.75.

City Administrator Quady reported that the final plans for the well have been sent for review to the health department and the project should be bid out by April 1 with completion by the end of the fiscal year.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Mollhoff, seconded by DeVries to approve pay request from JEO Consulting Group Inc. for Highway 66 Decorative Lighting in the amount of \$1,724.50.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Discussion was held regarding decorative lighting. City Administrator Quady reviewed two proposals to replace the decorative lighting that was removed for the road project. She said the taller street lights will be put in as part of the project but the City will have to reinstall the decorative lighting. One proposal is to replace the lights that were taken out and the other is for four additional lights to be installed on 14th Street from Adams Street south to the alley. She said the state has agreed to go further north from the alley with the decorative brick. She said the Department of Roads has requested that the lights go in after the Federal Highway Administration's inspection. She said that she would like to get a bid from Todd Valley. Quady said she can get a bid for adding four lights south to Ash Street.

Motion by DeVries, seconded by Vest to authorize the Mayor to sign agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office regarding the Silver Street Bridge.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Vest, seconded by Mollhoff to approve the consent agenda which included approval of the January 21, 2016 City Council meeting minutes.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Vest, seconded by Mollhoff to approve the second half of January 2016 Claims.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried


Mayor Grauerholz reported on legislative bills LB 958, LB 940, LB 969 and LB 131. He stated that he and Council Member Vest had attended a meeting with the Department of Roads and that they were able to speak about the addition of a highway bypass west of town to reroute truck traffic and to improve economic development. He added that the ballpark concession stand is nearing completion.

City Administrator Quady reminded the Council about the upcoming league conference.

Council Member Anderson asked about a property west of town that has several cars around it. City Attorney Fahleson stated that he and Zoning Official will develop a plan of action for the property. Anderson asked for clarification of the sidewalk repair ordinance. He suggested that the Council consider acquiring property on North 15th Street to tie into the new parking lot and that a street light needs to be added on Furnas Street between North 14th and North 15th Streets.

Motion by Vest, seconded by Mollhoff to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried


Richard Grauerholz, Mayor


Kathleen Sliva, City Clerk



I, the above signed City Clerk of Ashland, Saunders County, Nebraska hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the proceedings had and done by the Council on February 4, 2016 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty four hours prior to said meeting; that said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten business days or prior to the next convened meeting of said body.