

COLDWATER CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING

Monday September 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

The governing body of the City of Coldwater met in regular session, with the following present: Mayor Joe Ceballos presiding, Council members Mike Bushnell, Makenzie Dunn, Gary Haulmark, Leasa Huck, Public Works Director Danny Shaw, Chief of Police Tanner Maas and City Clerk Kristal Sherman.

Visitors: Pete Earles, Claudia Abel, Lisa Brooks, Kati Brooks, Tracy Rollins, Jerri McKnight and Kris Logston.

Mayor Ceballos called the regular council meeting to order, City Clerk, Kristal Sherman conducted roll call, council member Britt Lenertz was absent.. Minutes from the August meeting were approved as written, motion by Gary, seconded by Mike and all voted Yes.

Pete Earles with Earles Engineering told the council he has looked at a lot of different scenarios for the water/sewer project, but not sure where the council wants to go with it. There was a grant opportunity from the Kansas Water Office, but it has now passed and KDHE has a loan fund for up to 2 million. Pete said with “all the wants” the project would total 4.4 million, he asked “what’s the priorities?”, he said the City needs to first decide how big of a project they want to go for, the project options are: the larger water line to Comanche Estates is 1.26 million; upgrade water lines on Main Street is \$550,000.00; upgrade water lines on Central Ave. is \$704,000.00; new water lines on Walnut Ave is \$300,000.00; upgrade water main on Frisco Ave is \$250,000.00; upgrade various other water lines estimated at \$400,000.00; and upgrade various sewer lines is \$500,000.00. On the discussion about funding, Pete told the council they need to discuss what they’re willing to raise water rates to and said they could count on \$30,000.00 per year for every \$5.00 increase in water rates, to qualify for a USDA water grant, the average city water bill must be over \$55 per month and currently our average bill is \$35 to \$40 per month, Pete also added, “grants are wonderful but not always available”. He also let the council know that water and sewer have to be separate projects, they can not be together as one project.

Farm Bureau Representatives Tracy Rollins and Kati Brooks presented the council with information about the Farm Bureau Health Insurance plan for city employees which is covered under United Health Care. Kati said each employee would need to fill out an authorization to release protected health information and costs would be based on their health history.

Lisa Brooks, Administrator of Comanche County Hospital, told the council she was here on behalf of the hospital-patient advisory committee and explained a new program the hospital is going to start, to try and meet the needs of the people in the community. She explained that her and Comanche County Extension Agent Cindy Snyder are working together to make freezer meals to send home with a patient once they are discharged from the hospital. She asked if the City would be interested in helping with the program either by donation or letting them use the Veteran’s Building to put the meals together. She said that \$200.00 would provide 32 microwave meals that people could take home, at no cost, after being released from the hospital. She said they are wanting to start this program in October. Mayor Ceballos told Lisa the council would discuss it toward the end of the meeting and let her know.

Claudia Abel, a Senior at South Central High School, said the SCHS Government class is proposing a City clean-up day October 19th and asked the city if they would support them having a city wide clean-up day where they would just pick up trash around the city. Mayor Ceballos told Claudia the council will discuss the proposed clean-up day toward the end of the meeting and let her know.

Jerri McKnight, Comanche County Health Nurse, told the council the Health Department is wanting to do something fun downtown on Saturday, October 26th, a Trunk or Treat event from 5:00

pm to 7:00 pm, they are inviting all Comanche County businesses and nonprofits to participate. She asked the City for permission to block off the 200 block of East Main Street and would like it barricaded on both ends for the safety of everyone involved. Mike made a motion to allow the Comanche County Health Department to utilize the 200 Block of East Main Street and have it be blocked off on both sides for the Trunk or Treat event, seconded by Makenzie and everyone voted Yes.

City Employee Rodney Keith told the council he has been an employee of the City for 22 years and after his last surgery 2 years ago, he had to get a loan from the bank to be able to pay his bills, etc. until he could return to work. Rodney said he will be out of sick/vacation leave after this next paycheck and hopes to be back to work in six weeks, Kristal reminded Rodney the doctor said on his note that he will be off for three months. Kristal told the council Rodney has 46.5 hours towards his next check on September 13th, then he will be out of sick/vacation leave. After discussion Leasa made a motion to allow Rodney to use 121.5 hours out the sick leave pool to pay him through the month of September, then they will re-evaluate at the October council meeting.

Public Works Director Danny Shaw told the council that the Comanche Estates covenants should have been changed a long time ago when they discussed not allowing rental houses to be built out there, he read the covenants recently and that clause was never added. He said there is a house out there that is advertising for someone to rent it, and he has heard of someone interested in just building a rental house out there. After discussion, the council mentioned the "Salisbury" house was one of the first houses out there, they rented it until it sold to a permanent resident recently, and agreed there were no rules against rentals at Comanche Estates. Danny also told the council that Circle C Paving wanted to come this week, but he doesn't have enough rock here yet and needs about 13 more loads.

Chief of Police Tanner Maas reported that Labor Day weekend was uneventful, and he has written 10 tickets and 4 warnings since he started on August 28th. The council asked him to "crack down" on drivers who are texting while driving or distracted drivers, telling him there is a lot of that going on. Tanner said the only thing right now he would like to purchase is a vehicle unlock kit, the council agreed.

Under Administration: Gary said he would like to change the Prairie Plaza board membership to 2 council members, 2 members of the public and 1 resident of Prairie Plaza, he said other towns have a combination of citizens and council members. After discussion, the matter was tabled to next month. Gary said he has had complaints from residents regarding the majority of the cost of the proposed water project going to Comanche Estates compared to the 500 meters in town, which brings him to the subject of the transient guest tax, Gary passed out a sheet showing how a business would sign up for the tax....he also reported the City could specifically designate the water fund to deposit the transient guest tax that is received and that would help make a loan payment for the water project. The matter was tabled until the next meeting. Gary also reported the City now qualifies for the Community Development Block Grant, and said we could look at partnering with the school and county to build two new tennis courts on city property and rehabilitate the one we currently have for \$400,000.00. Gary asked if the council agreed for him to go back to the school board and county commissioners to see if they are still interested and on board for that project, they all agreed. Leasa reported there is a good chance the SCHS football team will be playing a home playoff game the night of Halloween. Mayor Ceballos presented a cereal malt beverage license renewal application for Odell's Bar & Grill for approval. Gary made a motion to approve the CMB license application for Odell's Bar & Grill, seconded by Mike and all voted Yes

Bills in the amount of \$116,266.50 were presented for payment. Gary made a motion to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Mike and all voted Yes.

Under unfinished business, Mayor Ceballos asked the council to discuss the donation to the Hospital for the freezer meals. After discussion, Gary made a motion the City donate \$200.00 to the Hospital for the freezer meal program and to make the Veteran's Building available free of charge to them to assemble the meals, the motion was seconded by Mike and everyone voted Yes. Mayor Ceballos asked the council to discuss the senior government class City clean-up day. After discussion, Gary made a motion the City will be supportive of the SCHS Government class City clean-up day and will supply the trash bags, and then the City would take over the spring clean-up day the motion was seconded by Leasa and everyone voted Yes.

With no other business presented, Leasa made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m., seconded by Gary and everyone voted Yes