

REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEXINGTON CITY COUNCIL**February 27, 2023****7:00 P. M.**

The regular meeting of the Lexington City Council was called to order at 7:00 P. M. by Mayor Spencer Johansen in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mayor Johansen led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken to find the following physically present: Mayor Johansen, Alderman Mattingly, Alderman Little, Alderman Richard, Alderman Stover, Alderwoman Wilson and Alderman Franklin. Members of the staff and public present were: Ken Sours, Peg Reynolds with the Lexingtonian, Tom Kinsella, Tom Stinde, Rich Cooper and Chris Chambers.

It was moved by Alderman Little and seconded by Alderwoman Wilson to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2023 regular and closed session of the City Council meetings. Motion carried with 5 yes and Alderman Franklin voting present.

It was moved by Alderman Stover and seconded by Alderman Franklin to approve the Treasurer's Report and paying of the bills in the amount of \$207,655.90. It was noted that this was two groups of bills for \$26,564.14 and \$181,101.76. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Input: None

Mayor Johansen introduced Rich Cooper who is our Interim Police Chief, Chief at Colfax and Assistant Chief Chris Chambers. He wanted to comment on how these two have stepped up during this transition. He wished Officer Schultz could be here tonight. These three have really stepped up and we have a facebook page now and they are bringing a lot of items up to date. We were behind on the ECR reports and are now up to date so we are eligible for grants, etc. They have done a fantastic job.

Old Business:**Discussion Only RFP Solar Water/Sewer Plants**

Mayor Johansen was not present when the bids were open but Alderman Little and Zach from Farnsworth were present at the time of opening. There were two bids. One from Stinde Electric, \$996,213.00 plus \$49,250.00 if payment and performance bond is required, and one from William Masters, \$1,312,300.00.

It was felt that William Masters bid was a little harder to understand than Stinde Electric.

Tom Stinde of Stinde Electric was present to explain his proposal and to answer any questions. He went over his proposal which included a Financial Analysis, Energy Costs, Solar Proposal, Design and 25 Year Cash Flow Analysis for each site.

There was discussion concerning the application fee and it would be the same for both companies.

It was also noted that the Sewer Plant was on Corn Belt Electric and the Water Plant was on Ameren Electric, which will make a difference in the way they will pay for their solar power. Corn Belt is going to solar 2.0 after June 1st. They will pay 3½ cents a watt for what you don't use in a month. The Ameren application is a negotiated price. We will get a 30% tax credit for this investment. It is a complicated system to put on a spreadsheet.

There was also quite a bit of discussion about the inverters. Some were liked and others were not. Tom commented that the only inverters that they had had trouble with are out of business. He has not had any trouble with existing inverters.

It was decided that a committee of Alderman Stover, Alderman Franklin and Alderman Little along with Zach from Farnsworth would meet to discuss the solar situation further and they would also like a bid from Straight up Solar.

Alderman Mattingly commented that Tom Stinde had told him earlier that the sooner we acted on this the better as it takes 2½ months to get the system in.

Update on Police Department and Chief Search

Alderman Richard presented a copy of the Police Department All Department Kick-Off Meeting held February 1, 2023 and list of command staff responsibilities. This is a list of the department's goals for full time and part time officers.

Officer Kolat will be taking his power test on April 1st. Reported that Officer Weseloh will be starting the Police Academy March 11, 2023. The department is in the process of making a list of all current businesses and there is a new badge design for all officers.

The search for a new chief is down to three applicants. There were over 20 applicants, some from out of state. Mayor Johansen has picked an interview committee including Sheriff Lane, Paul Deters, Officer Carter along with Alderman Richard and Mayor Johansen. He would also like to give a shout out to Officer Carter. He can't say enough about these individuals and he is totally confident in the direction we are going.

Chief Cooper addressed the council with some of his observations. The structure that is in the flier that was handed out has a couple of things he thinks are awesome but there are a couple of schedule conflicts and he will recommend to the Police Committee that we need more part timers. He would like to see us going the route of a more community police department. We don't want to ruin anyone's life but will do our job when we need to. We want to be business friendly, stopping in and talking to them. School friendly, talking to the younger kids. He loves that, feels we are headed in the right direction, and wants to find a chief with the same mentality and not depend on the county so much.

He introduced Chris Chambers, Asst. Part Time Chief, and gave some background on him. He has a good background in law enforcement and currently works for State Farm helping to manage their overall security for senior staff. He is also a part time officer in Heyworth and McLean and lives in the Downs area. He will help cover basketball and volleyball games at the school.

Officer Kolot has been doing his field training with Chenoa and will be done mid-April.

We have signed a mutual aid agreement with the county at \$85 an hour. We have been doing 40 hours but are going to reduce that to 20 hours. That will lift the financial burden.

So far, for the part timers, we have not spent any money. They are wearing used uniforms, etc. Scheduling has been a nightmare, but we will be ahead of the game if we can find a couple more part timers. When we have a chief and a full time officer the burden will be a lot better.

Alderman Richard has had residents contact him that are thrilled to see the improvements in the Police Department.

Discussion/Vote Ordinance 2023-1: Approving the Purchase of Detention Basin Property in The Meadow Ridge Subdivision

Alderman Franklin led this discussion. This is the detention basin in Meadow Ridge Subdivision that should have been transferred to us originally. No one paid the taxes on it. One of the neighbors bought it for back taxes and now he wants to sell it for \$1,500. We need to get this cleared up. We have been maintaining this property although we do not own it.

Motion was made by Alderman Mattingly and seconded by Alderman Richard to approve Ordinance 2023-1: Approving the Purchase of Detention Basin Property in The Meadow Ridge Subdivision. Motion carried unanimously.

Update on Century Oaks Subdivision

Mayor Johansen shared information that he had passed on to the developers. They are ready to start moving forward between the attorneys and the engineers. They will start assigning plat numbers for the first phase of apartment complex and then the duplexes. There is a meeting scheduled with Charley Farney later in the week. He is interested in the apartment complex. They hope to break ground in early spring. We need housing. If the new police chief wanted to move to town there is no housing.

New Business:

Discuss Sewer Superintendent Position Opening

Alderwoman Wilson sent a posting that will be in the Pantagraph.

It was noted that you cannot get your sewer license until you have been on the job for six months, then you need to apply, then take the test.

Billie DuBois would like compensation to use his license.

Mike Beard will stay on to use his license but not come in everyday. He will come in and sign off on paperwork.

LeRoy recently had an ad in the Pantagraph and theirs was about a paragraph long while Alderwoman Wilson's was much longer. At the Pantagraph they can create their own resumes.

She will get with Star to write an abbreviated ad to get published in the Pantagraph.

Discussion/Vote Hilltop Mobile Home Sewer Connection

There was a letter written to the trailer court August 15, 2012, giving them 10 years to remain on their septic system and not hook onto the city's sewer system. The 10 years are up and it is time for them to hook on to the city's system. They have bought some land off of Wicks for this purpose.

Their water service has one main going in and each lot has their own meter. We charge the mobile home owner a water bill and he passes that onto them along with a sewer fee.

Mayor Johansen wanted the council's approval before we moved any farther with this. Whatever the cost is to hook up the sewer, he feels the owner will pass on to the residents of the trailer court. He doesn't think it will affect the streets, but down the road, during the middle of winter if there is a septic tank issue the people in the court may have major issues.

The question was asked if we have talked to the health department? They can have the rest of the year to hook onto the sewer. They have been paying the infrastructure fee all along. He can charge what he wants for water and we need to get that cleaned up and move forward.

Motion was made by Alderman Richard and seconded by Alderman Mattingly to move forward with Hilltop Mobile Home Sewer Connection. Motion carried with 5 yes and Alderman Little voting no.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Johansen reported on the following items:

He, Alderman Stover, Alderman Franklin and Donnie Bounds met to discuss a TIF grant to redo the other side of Josh Smith's building at 427 W Main Street. Donnie Bounds will be in it and will bring other businesses to the spot.

He has interest from a couple of other businesses but he has no location for them.

He feels it is a good thing to not be able to find a place to park on Main Street on Thursday, Friday or Saturday night.

Police: Alderman Richard reported that they need more part time officers. They have some really good officers but not enough. All the officers are working together and he is letting them find the ones they want.

Building/Insurance None

Finance /TIF Mayor Johansen wants committee meetings to start on the budget. Committee heads should get started in March. The hardest will be the police adjustments.

Water/Sewer/Sanitation Alderwoman Wilson reported that Billie DuBois says his budget will need to go up due to the increase in salt.

Mayor Johansen is working on a letter to LaHood's office on the amount of overtime we have in locating for the fiber optics. These companies are getting grants to put the fiber optics in and they do not account it as a burden on the smaller communities that have to pay someone to go out. They work Saturday and Sunday and the company holds back 20% of his hours. Where do we get reimbursements?

Street/Alley None

There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Mattingly to adjourn at 7:56 P.M. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Pati Pease

City Clerk

Approved: March 27, 2023