

REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEXINGTON CITY COUNCIL
November 23, 2015

The regular meeting of the Lexington City Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor John Mohr in the City Council Chambers at Lexington City Hall.

Mayor led the council in the pledge of allegiance.

Roll call was taken to find the following physically present: Mayor Mohr, Alderman Miller, Alderman Phelps, Alderman Cole, Alderman Johansen, Alderman Stover, and Alderman Richard. Members of the staff and public present were: Melanie Kunkel, David Belvery, and Don Cavallini.

It was moved by Alderman Johansen and seconded by Alderman Cole to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2015 council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Alderman Stover and seconded by Alderman Phelps to approve the treasurer's report and pay bills in the amount of \$33,548.42 Motion carried unanimously.

Public Input: None

Old Business:

Garbage and Recycling Contract: Alderman Johansen has negotiated a new three year contract with Republic, the city's garbage and recycling provider. The rate beginning January 1, 2016 will be \$14.53, the second year \$14.97 and the third year \$15.42 which seems to be in line with previous contract's increases. Alderman Cole voiced frustration with the amount of times the trucks go up and down the same streets. He would like to have a meeting with Republic to discuss truck routes before the council approves the contract. Alderman Johansen will ask a representative of Republic to attend the next council meeting. This item will be forwarded to the next meeting.

Ordinance Amending Water Billing Practices: The due date for water and sewer payments will change to the 25th of the month, rather than the 30th. Which will give City Collector, Starlette Torkelson, a few days to collect late payments, enter them and close out the month. Changing the due date will also allow for the yearly auditing process to be cleaner. Motion by Alderman Johansen and second by Alderman Phelps to approve Ordinance 2015-11 amending Sections 159-10 and 251-14 of the Code for the purpose of changing the due dates for water and sewer bills. Motion carries unanimously.

New Business:

Ordinance Approving Property Tax Levy: Mayor recommends no increase to the property tax levy for this coming year. Motion by Alderman Phelps and second by Alderman Johansen to approve Ordinance 2015-12 the property tax levy. Motion carries unanimously. This decision means the City Council has only raised property taxes 3 times in the last 11 years.

Ordinance Abating Tax for Bonds: The City issued bonds, in the amount of \$1,000,000 in 2013, to help fund projects such as the new Kemps Upper Tap, Trail Ridge Subdivision, and

construction of Wirtz Way. The city has enough revenue in the General Fund and TIF Fund to meet the bond payment obligations without imposing an additional levy. This ordinance tells the County they don't have to collect property taxes for the bond payments. Motion by Alderman Miller and second by Alderman Phelps to approve Ordinance 2015-13 abating the property tax for bonds. Motion carries unanimously.

New Business Start-Up Grant or Loan: Mayor noted that he has been following Alderman Phelps' progress on building his business on Main Street, Christos Café. Mayor noted that Alderman Phelps has taken great care to restore his building with period time pieces and to create a nice atmosphere for coffee and sandwiches. Alderman Phelps has paid for the building and restoration without taking loans and is about \$10,000 short in his ability to start up his business on December 5th for Christmas on the Prairie. Mayor noted that Aldermen are prohibited from receiving any TIF funds so this loan would come from general fund. Alderman Miller questioned whether there are any repercussions for him sitting on the council. Alderman Johansen does not want to see Alderman Phelps penalized for being on the council as he is bringing a new business to town. Alderman Cole and Alderman Johansen would rather see a loan that is forgiven over a period of time the business is owned/operated by Alderman Phelps rather than him making payments back to city. Motion by Alderman Johansen and seconded by Alderman Miller to provide a loan in the amount of \$10,000 to Christo's Java Café and Dining, with 25% principal forgiveness per year for four years at zero interest. Alderman Phelps will abstain from voting on this motion. Motion carries with a vote of 5 yes and 1 abstain.

Uptown Parking and Accessibility Plan: The post office has asked for two reserved parking spaces in front of their office. Because parking is limited, Mayor is proposing designating one space. Alderman Miller suggested reserving the spot but limiting the hours for during post office business hours. Alderman Johansen feels there should just be a 15 minute time limit for that space as the lobby of the office is open 24 hours for those who have P.O. Boxes. Motion by Alderman Johansen and second by Alderman Miller to designate a parking spot for the post office with a sign indicating 15 minute parking only from 6 am to 5 pm. Motion carries with a vote of 5 yes and 1 no.

Annual Employee Bonus Discussion: Mayor circulated notes taken by former city collector, Margaret Quinley, on her formula for figuring the annual employee bonus. Motion by Alderman Johansen and second by Alderman Phelps to provide full time staff a \$400 bonus grossed up so they receive the full amount of the bonus after taxes. Skip Schottt and Sue Noland will be recognized the same as the full time employees for all of their volunteer work, and a \$25 gift certificate to Kemp's Upper Tap will be provided for part time staff and Zach Mason. Motion carries unanimously.

New City Hall Phone System Proposal: Chief did some research for a new phone system for city hall. The information was circulated to council members. After hours, the new phone system will allow callers to select the person they are looking for and leave them messages directly. It will also allow callers calling the police department to be transferred directly to METCOM for non-emergency calls. Motion by Alderman Phelps and second by Alderman Stover to approve the bid from Tekease for a new phone system in the amount of \$6,578.95. Motion carries with a vote of 5 yes and 1 no.

Committee Reports:

Mayor: Mayor noted that city hall was closed on Veteran's Day and that that is not a holiday listed in the city code. He will work to have the code modified to add that Federal holiday.

Police: None

Building/Insurance: Alderman Richard noted that the insurance company would like to have a meeting with the Mayor and Star regarding the 3rd party administrator. Alderman Richard spoke with Dave Thomas' family about the sign lighting. They prefer to have Stinde work on the lights because he has lived in Lexington and that is who they would prefer. They are not interested in having anything installed on the signs but would rather two individual solar lights and they will take care of snow removal and are not concerned if the lights will only work up to 10 hours a night. Stinde had previously provided the city with a quote of \$1,200. The question will be forwarded to a future meeting.

Finance/TIF: None

Water: None

Sanitation: None

Streets/Alleys: None

There being no further business, it was moved by Alderman Miller and seconded by Alderman Phelps to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Kunkel, City Clerk

Approved: 12/14/2015