

MINUTES OF THE PONCA CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD 2.20.24

Mayor DJ Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on February 20th, 2024, and referenced the meeting recording process, optional sign-in sheet and Open Meetings Law posting. All those present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers Josh Blatchford, Ron Mahler, Eric Bevelhymmer, and Dillon Rickett were present for Roll Call. Excused was Andy Stark and Kari Lowe. Prior notice of the meeting and agenda were provided to the Mayor and all Members of the Governing Body. Notice of the meeting was distributed and posted at the Ponca City Hall, US Post Office-Ponca, Ponca City Library, Bank of Dixon County, Keller's Pharmacy, and the Dixon County Courthouse.

Mayor Communications

Kari Lowe is planning to resign from council. She will stay on until a replacement is found.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Smith stated to the Governing Body that the City Clerk-Finance Directors January Claims & Accounts Payable Report, Fund Balance/Treasurers Report, City Budget Cash Report, and a General Journal Entry Report, and Check Register Report were included in the Council Meeting Scan Package sent out. Motion by Councilmember Mahler and a second by Councilmember Blatchford to approve the Consent Agenda. The following Councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Mahler, Bevelhymmer, Rickett. The following Councilmembers voted "NAY": None. Motion passed 4-0.

Proclamations, Presentations, Appointments, Affirmations & Introductions

No proclamations, presentations, appointments, affirmations, or introductions at this meeting.

Reports & Updates

Joe Yocum gave a Police update. There have been 10 calls so far in February. The candidate for the part time police position has just completed some testing and is in queue for the next step. Councilmember Blatchford stated that the Sheriff's office has new hires do the pre-test here and would be willing to help Joe with that before paying and sending him to Grand Island.

Travis Olander gave an update on both the Street department. There was minimal snow removal compared to last month. If the weather continues to stay warm, they can start on the shelter house again and other outdoor activities. One of our part-time workers will be out for a few weeks due to health concerns.

Steve Brinkmann updated the council on the water/sewer department. He will be in Kearney March 11-13 for continuing education hours. Transformer in well house will be installed on 2.21.24

Travis Olander gave his City Administrator's Update on the city. He has been working on Flood Plain Ordinance, getting the Planning Commission ready for an upcoming meeting, and working on federal gas reports. Him and Josh Blatchford will be attending the Mid-Winter Conference in Lincoln on Feb 26- Feb 27.

The library had nothing to report.

Volunteer Fire and Rescue submitted their report.

Motion was made by Blatchford and a second by Bevelhymmer to Accept the updates and report. The following councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Rickett, Mahler, Bevelhymmer. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 4-0.

City Attorney's Report

Matt Munderloh stated that the updated Flood Plain Ordinance that will be presented at the next meeting will need to have a Public Hearing that night, he has been helping with the final utility lien clean ups. He also stated that he will be out of the country from 3.21.24- 4.1.24.

Public Hearings

None.

Unfinished Business

No updates on Dixon County Courthouse. There will be town hall meetings throughout the month of March in each of the towns within Dixon County. The Bond Vote is scheduled be on the May 2024 ballot. Ponca's town hall meeting will be held at 7PM on March 5th.

The Community Center Committee is working on final paperwork for a grant, and they will be talking fundraising opportunities. There will be a meeting at the Community Center on March 11th at 7PM for the public to see the design and hear about fundraising opportunities.

New Business

Second Reading for Ordinance 471, Establishing Rules and Regulations Governing City Utility Services. Motion was made by Rickett and a second by Mahler to approve Second Reading of Ordinance 471. Council members voting "YEA": Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer, Blatchford. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 4-0.

Olander and our City Engineer Chad Kehrt presented the bid results from the water meter bid opening that was held on January 25th, 2024. Metering Technologies was the lowest bid, pending NDEE approval, and their meter brand is Badger which has been proven and in service for over 40 years. A motion was made by Blatchford and seconded by Mahler to approve the bid submitted by Metering Technologies for the Badger Meters. Council members voting "YEA": Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer, Blatchford. Voting "NAY": Motion passed 4-0.

Olander and City Engineer Chad Kehrt spoke about setting another bid opening for North Street since no bids were received due to miscommunication. Bid date is set for Thursday March 21st at 10AM.

Discussion was had on a bid for spraying service for the city properties. The city did not formally go out for bid, the current provider of that service dropped off his new rates. Council suggested that the city call around for other bids and costs before deciding. No action taken.

Yocum presented the Policy and Procedure Manual for the Ponca Police Department. Matt Munderloh had some corrections for him to make. Council opted to revisit at the next meeting after corrections were made. No action taken.

Schweers presented all 4 health insurance costs and coverages. Discussion was had on cost to the city and coverage for city employees. A motion was made by Bevelhymer to accept the LIGHT coverage for city employees and a second by Mahler. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 4-0.

Schweers and Olander presented bids for iPads for council member use instead of them using phones during the meeting. This would also include each council member having a city email for city business instead of them using their personal emails. Council wanted more options for cost. No action taken.

Discussion was had on the issue with Nebraska Department of Labor hearing. Discussion was also had with the ongoing personnel matter at hand. No action taken.

Governing Body Comments and Correspondence

Mayor Smith asked if there were any future agenda requests for consideration or administrative action. Next Ponca City Governing Body Meeting scheduled for Monday March 25th, at 7:00PM.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Blatchford and a second by Rickett to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 PM. The following councilmembers voting "YEA": Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 4-0.

Mayor; DJ Smith

City Clerk- Finance Director; Jaime Schweers