

MINUTES OF THE PONCA CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD

1.29.24

Mayor DJ Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on January 29th, 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, Kari Lowe, Ron Mahler, Eric Bevelhymer, and Dillon Rickett were present for Roll Call. Excused was Andy Stark. 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

A thank you was made to City Crew and the extra help that was provided for snow removal in January.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Smith stated to the Governing Body that the City Clerk-Finance Directors November Claims & Accounts Payable Report, Fund Balance/Treasurers Report, City Budget Cash Report, and a General Journal Entry Report were included in the Council Meeting Scan Package sent out. Motion by Councilmember Bevelhymer and a second by Councilmember Mahler to approve the Consent Agenda. The following Councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Bevelhymer, Rickett. The following Councilmembers voted "NAY": None. Motion passed 5-0.

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 13 calls so far in January. 1 of the candidates for the part time police position has just completed some testing and is in queue for the next step.

Travis Olander gave an update on both the Street department. The month consisted of snow removal. The city rented an extra bobcat for 3 days to get caught up.

Steve Brinkmann updated the council on the water/sewer department. Snow removal was the bulk of his month. The well house had also lost power this month, a transformer burned out. It will be replaced, and the quote will be on the next agenda.

The library submitted their monthly report.

Jim Litchfield from Wakefield, NE updated council that there was a bid opening on January 25th and 3 bids were received. The engineer will have the results by the February meeting. Also, stated that Travis Olander and Josh Blatchford would be attending the Mid-Winter Conference in February.

Motion was made by Lowe and a second by Blatchford to Accept the updates and report. The following councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Rickett, Lowe, Mahler, Bevelhymer. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

City Attorney's Report

Matt Munderloh stated that most of his month was spent on utility issues and revising Ordinance 471.

Public Hearings

A Public Hearing was called to order at 7:10 PM addressing the 1- & 6-year plan for 2024. The hearing was closed at 7:11PM.

A Public Hearing was called to at 7:20 PM addressing the Conditional Use Permit from USCOC Nebraska/Kansas LLC; at the following real estate property located within the one-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City of Ponca legally described as 16 30 6 TL 30 & 31 Section 16-30-6 26.04 Acres. There were a few questions that were addressed, and the projected end date is August 2024. Hearing was closed at 7:27 PM

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.

The Community Center Committee is working on final paperwork for a grant, and they will be talking fundraising opportunities.

New Business

Olander presented Resolution 2024-01; 2024 1- & 6-year plan. A motion was made by Blatchford and seconded by Mahler to approve the 2024 1- & 6-year plan. Council members voting "YEA": Lowe, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymmer, Blatchford. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

Olander presented Resolution 2024-02; the 2024 Black Hills Energy Contract. A motion was made by Blatchford and seconded by Rickett to approve the 2024 Black Hills Energy Contract. Council members voting "YEA": Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe. Voting "NAY": Motion passed 5-0.

Olander presented Resolution 2024-03; Conditional use Permit for USCOC Kansas/Nebraska LLC, US Cellular. A motion was made by Bevelhymmer and seconded by Rickett. Council members voting "YEA": Rickett, Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

Munderloh, Schweers, and Olander presented a revised ordinance after last month's public hearing and meeting. First Reading of Ordinance 471; Establishing Rules and Regulations Governing City Utility Services. A motion was made by Blatchford and seconded by Bevelhymmer to approve Ordinance 471; Establishing Rules and Regulations Governing City Utility Services. Council members voting "YEA": Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0

Olander directed the council to approve the City Engineer to send out information for sealed bid on the 2024 North Street Improvement Project. A motion was made by Rickett and seconded by Mahler to approve the City Engineer to advertise for sealed bid on the 2024 North Street Project. Council members voting "YEA": Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

Yocum presented the Policy and Procedure Manual for the Ponca Police Department. No action taken.

Schweers presented 3 of the 4 costs of health insurance costs. Health insurance is renewed every March. Schweers has reached out and is waiting for more in-depth information about the plans. Will be presented again and voted on at the February meeting. No action taken.

Mayor Smith presented his appointments for 2024. A motion was made by Blatchford and seconded by Bevelhymmer to approve 2024 Mayor appointments. Council members voting "YEA": Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

At 8:10PM a motion was made by Blatchford to enter into executive session for agenda items I and J, and to keep the City's Utility Clerk, Administrator, Water Commissioner, and City Consultant present, for no longer than 20 minutes. Seconded by Rickett. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

At 8:30PM a motion was made by Blatchford to end the executive session and was seconded by Bevelhymmer. Voting "YEA": Lowe, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymmer, Blatchford. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion was had about placing liens on property due to past due utility bills. There were 3 (three) locations that were discussed. A motion was made by Blatchford to approve the City Clerk to place liens on three said properties and seconded by Bevelhymmer. Council members voting "YEA": Bevelhymmer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion was had about a business opportunity that was presented to the City of Ponca. No action taken.

Interim City Administrators Report

Olander gave an update on the city. There was a gas leak at the shop. He has been working with he State of Nebraska and Matt on updating the flood plain ordinance.

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 Tuesday, February 20th, at 7:00PM.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mahler and a second by Blatchford to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. The following councilmembers voting "YEA": Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor; DJ Smith

City Clerk- Finance Director; Jaime Schweers