**MINUTES OF THE PONCA CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD**

**10.30.23**

**Mayor DJ Smith** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on October 30th, 2023, 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, Andy Stark, and Dillon Rickett were present for Roll Call. 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**

Mayor Smith stated that the Elms Nursing Home posted that they would be closing their doors. He is exploring options on what the city can do to help to reopen.

**Consent Agenda**

Mayor Smith stated to the Governing Body that the City Clerk-Finance Directors September Claims & Accounts Payable Report, Fund Balance/Treasurers Report were included in the Council Meeting Scan Package sent out. There was not a City Budget Cash Report presented due to the earlier separation of the former City Clerk/Treasurer. Motion by Councilmember Rickett and a second by Councilmember Mahler to approve the Consent Agenda. The following Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Stark, Rickett, Bevelhymer. The following Councilmembers voted “NAY”: None. Motion passed 6-0.

**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 17 calls this October, Year to Date for 2023 there have been 195. That is up from this time last year at 148 calls. Joe continues to work on nuisance properties and dogs at large.

Travis Olander gave an update on both the Street department. The East Street Project is underway and close to completion. There is a manhole on the highway that needs a manhole replaced that is under the ARPA funds that we received. That will take place in spring. City crew has been working on closing parks, the cemetery, and getting ready for winter. Removed the broken garage door on the east side of City Hall and replaced it with a wall. Travis has reached out to council members about having a workshop and discussing the 1- and 6-year plans for the streets.

Steve Brinkmann updated the council on the water/sewer department. He has been winterizing the buildings, and moving equipment, informed the council that we have been meeting with representatives for meters to get the water project ready for bid before the end of the year.

No library update.

Jim Litchfield from Wakefield, NE spoke on behalf of the projects that he has been working on with the city. He is our project coordinator and help with keeping everything moving with the steps needed to start the water project. Talked about having the mayor and council meet for a “retreat” at the state park to discuss plans and strategies for upcoming projects.

Motion was made by Blatchford and a second by Stark to Accept the updates and report. The following councilmembers voted “YEA”: Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

**City Attorney’s Report**

Matt Munderloh stated that it was business as usual for the city. He did help city staff on 3 ordinances that will be introduced later in the meeting. He also appeared in county court for violations.

**Public Hearings**

At 7:26PM Mayor Smith called to order the public hearing concerning the Lot Split/Subdivision of approximately 3.33 acres of Lot 28, Rosehill Addition, Section 15, Township 30 North, Range 6 East of the 6th PM- Bob Lux purchased the land and will be putting up a duplex. Public Hearing closed at 7:30 PM.

**Unfinished Business**

Mayor Smith spoke about the Dixon County Courthouse. There was a workshop on October 19th with the Dixon County Board of Supervisors, City Council, City Staff, and Prochaska. They are estimating a 20-million-dollar bond and hoping to have it on the ballot in May 2024.

No new updates on Community Center

**New Business**

Bob Lux and council discussed the Planning Commission notes on the Lot Split/Subdivision of approximately 3.33 acres of Lot 28, Rosehill Addition, Section 15, Township 30 North, Range 6 East of the 6th PM. The notes include that the building will not alter the waterway that runs through the property and any utilities added are at the cost of the landowner. The following councilmembers voted “YEA” Lowe, Mahler, Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Johansen spoke on behalf of the Ponca Volunteer Fire and Rescue to approve applicant Miguel Balvantin as a member of the Ponca Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. His application was approved by Rural Fire and the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. Lowe made a motion to approve the application for Miguel Balvantin to become a member of the Ponca Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. A second was made by Blatchford. Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Mahler, Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Smith presented a quote from Rural Water Impact and Municipal Impact on creating a website for the city. The initial cost was minimal compared to other website builders. After the initial set up then there is an annual fee. Motin made by Mahler to accept the bid for a website builder and a second by Stark. Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Smith presented Ordinance 468, Establishing a Clothing Allowance. The allowance will run during the fiscal year and the dollar amount is 360.00. it does not roll over, must be used during the current fiscal year. A motion was made to waive the 3 (three) reading rule by Blatchford and a second by Rickett. Voting “YEA” to waive 3 (three) reading rule: Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0. A motion was made by Blatchford to approve Ordinance 468, Establishing a Clothing Allowance and a second by Lowe. Voting “YEA”: Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett, Stark. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0

Brinkmann and Olander continued the discussion on the possible vacation/abandonment of the alley on parcel #22057. Munderloh presented Ordinance 469 with the updated verbiage that if the ground was not broken by November 1st, 2024, then the Ordinance is reversed. The council opted not to waive the 3(three) reading rule. Motion made by Rickett with a second by Blatchford to approve Ordinance 469. Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Lowe, Mahler, Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford. Voting “NAY”: none. First motion passes 6-0.

Olander presented Ordinance 470, Establishing a Master Fee Schedule. Discussion was had on how the community center would be rented out, along with property valuation building permits. Those changes were made and read in the reading. Motion was made to waive the 3 (three) reading rule by Stark and a second by Bevelhymer. Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe. Voting “NAY”: Mahler. Motion passed 5-1. Motion made to approve Ordinance 470, Establishing a Master Fee Schedule with the discussed changes by Blatchford with a second by Lowe. Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Rickett, Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe. Mahler. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Olander and Schweers presented Resolution 2023-12, signing year end certification of city street superintendent 2023. Motion made by Rickett with a second by Bevelhymer to approve Resolution 2023-12. Councilmembers voting “YEA”: Stark, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Brinkmann and Olander presented to the council about the ongoing issue with yard hydrants. To obtain consistency, they recommended putting in meter pits and meter all of the yard hydrant water. The council asked for quotes on placing those meter pits. Brinkmann stated that he will get those and present them at the next meeting. No action taken.

Olander presented a bid to drill holes to start construction on the Shelter House. Upon looking at the bid, Bevelhymer volunteered his time if the city would supply the drill bit and the materials. That would cost the city less than what it would to agree to the bid presented. Stark and Blatchford also agreed to volunteer their time to help Bevelhymer. No action taken.

**Interim City Administrators Report**

Olander gave an update on the city. The city had their yearly audit on October 24th and will get the auditors notes within a couple of weeks. They are working on unpaid utilities. The new Bobcat is in and we will be prorated for the usage of the old and receive a new bill.

**Governing Body Comments and Correspondence**

Mayor Smith asked if there were any future agenda requests for consideration or administrative action and suggested that the December 18th council meeting be moved to Tuesday December 19th. The council will consider and decide at the next council meeting. Next Ponca City Governing Body Meeting scheduled for Monday, November 27th, 2023, at 7:00pm.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Lowe and a second by Bevelhymer to adjourn the meeting at 8:31pm. The following councilmembers voting “YEA”: Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Lowe, Mahler, Rickett. Stark. Voting “NAY”: none. Motion passed 6-0.

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Mayor; DJ Smith

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City Clerk- Finance Director; Jaime Schweers