CITY OF LA HARPE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

JUNE 12, 2024

REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT OTHERS PRESENT

Danny Ware Jr Mayor, Ella Mae Crowell

Sharlyn Thompson City Clerk, Michelle Altis

Cynthia Carr City Attorney, Fred Works

Ron Knavel Water Rep, Roy Caler

Code & Animal Control, Penny Miller

Police Chief, Joe Stotler

City Maintenance, Larry Laird

**Call to order**

Mayor Crowell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance with 4 members present.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Crowell requested mosquito pellets be added under new business, demo bids be added under Penny, and an executive session on non-elected personnel under discussion on agenda items. Danny Ware Jr requested the back doors be added under unfinished business. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**Approval of Minutes**

Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on May 8, 2024, the special meeting on May 20, 2024, and May 30, 2024 as presented. The special meeting on May 22, 2024 had a discrepancy on the count for the final motion, Michelle stated she would correct that. Danny Ware Jr

seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**PUBLIC HEARING – SEWER IMPROVEMENTS**

Mayor Crowell opened the public hearing at 7:00pm. Wes Weishaar with BG Consultants was present; he presented the CCTV inspection that included the defects in the sewer system. He stated the defects are coded; with 5 being the most severe and 1 being less severe. Most of the manholes looked to be in decent shape, those that are downstream from the lift stations had corrosion but nothing critical that needs replaced now. He stated the blue spots on the map showed I&I, assuming to be ground water getting in the system, once again nothing seemed critical to repair at this time. He shared the report is showing about 30-40 spots that would need to be opened up and repaired before a liner could be used. Overall, about 40% of the system has deteriorated, some worse than others. The lift stations have reached their life expectancy, we are running into issues with trying to find replacement parts. Wes also shared an updated user rate analysis, stating the first two columns may be the better fit for the city and it shows the city needs to increase either $24.00 or $16.00 per user per month. Wes reminded the council; we can do nothing at this time and wait for potential funding, we can move forward with the design; get it shovel ready and apply for grants, the city has the KDHE loan in place and interest would not accrue until 1 year after first distribution, or we can move forward with design and loan only project. Carey Spoon, with CDBG, was present to answer any questions and stated CDBG was an option as well. Danny Ware Jr asked how much money was available and Carey stated there is $650,000.00 available with a 25% required match but if the city wanted to be competitive, they would need to match 50%. Mayor Crowell asked when the city needs to move forward on this, Wes stated an answer does not need to be decided tonight. He mentioned the Kansas Water Office (KWO) can grant o0n top of the USDA funding and if the city wanted the route, we would need to be KWO ready for this winter. Citizen, Harry Lee asked if the correct size of pipe was available to purchase and could the city start these repairs so they are ready for the liner. Wes stated, that is definitely an option but the city would have to budget for the project to do so because that would not qualify for a grant or loan. Mayor Crowell stated, we need sometime to review the CCTV so that we know what we have out there. Wes also stated he could supply a link that has a video of the system as well. Harry Lee suggested the city has a chart showing this is where we are and this is where we need to be. Wes stated, the city has a workflow chart but right now the funding is questionable. Harry Lee asked the total cost of the project, Mayor Crowell stated 1.5 million to do the lift stations and 5.2 million to do the entire system. Wes stated he will update the PER to include the CCTV results and the new rate analysis numbers. He also mentioned the map is now showing each manhole has a number showing which lift station it feeds in to. Mayor Crowell requested that Wes get us one more large map. Mayor Crowell asked for any other comments, no comments or questions we noted so she closed the p[public hearing.

**CITIZENS CALL FOR BUSINESS**

1. Diana Mullins, requested the council allow her to have her horses back. She stated we have always had horses but we had to move them out because of the COVID pandemic, but would like to bring them back. Fred Works suggested they get with Penny and a file a variance, share their story on that variance and bring it back to council next month.
2. Ray Maloney, expressed concerns with a water meter he was gifted when the city changed the outside water users, he is concerned because it has over 2 million gallons on the meter and worried that it’s going to quit working. He wants the city to replace it for him. Ron Knavel suggested the city could sale you the meter but you will have to replace it. Danny Ware Jr suggested he reach out to the other users for help replacing the meter. Mayor Crowell said the city will not be doing anything with that meter, it is now yours.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Gym Floors – Danny Ware Jr asked where we were at finding a grant to replace the floors. The guy I have been talking to is willing to give a quote but I told him to wait until I find out about funding. Mayor Crowell stated she is still looking into options.
2. Back Doors – Danny Ware Jr was asking why they weren’t done yet. Mayor Crowell stated they will be here next week to finish them.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Pempkes Tree Service – Tabled until July
2. Old Sewer Plant – Table until July
3. Cold Patch – Mayor Crowell stated we are low on cold patch but Whitaker is not making it yet, probably 2-3 weeks out, but would like a motion to allow the crew to get some once they do. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to get the cold patch when it’s available but not to exceed $3,000.00 and take it out of special highway. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
4. Water Operator – Mayor Crowell stated she was talking with Gas City’s Mayor and got the idea of making Michelle our water operator. I would like to send Michelle to the water operator school in July and have her test when she is ready. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to send Michelle to school in Lawrence in July. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
5. Employee Handbook – Mayor Crowell stated, I wanted this item on the agenda for you to review, make notes of any changes you see needs to happen and we can get together later to discuss those changes.
6. Online Banking – Michelle stated our city treasurer is not getting the bank statement in time to get her reports done and the Bank of Commerce offers online banking, we just need the council to allow permission for Audra Riggins to have online access only to balance the books and the mayor, myself and Teresa still listed as signers. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to allow access to online banking as requested. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
7. #5 lift station pump – pricing was shared from JCI to rebuild the old pump would cost $9,901.00, a new pump would cost $15,430.00 and installation is $6,573.00. Danny Ware Jr stated since we will be replacing our lift stations soon, I don’t see any reason to get the new pump when it may not fit the new lift station. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to rebuild the old pump and take funds out of the sewer lagoon reserves. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
8. Mosquito pellets – Michelle shared pricing on pellets: 220 pellets that will last 150 days are $842.60, pellets that will last 30 days are $536.00 through Van Diest. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to get the case for $536.00. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
9. 1% Sales Tax – Mayor Crowell stated the 1% sales tax for the streets will be expiring in March of next year. If you want to keep the sales tax then it has to go on the November ballot. Fred Works shared resolution #2024-4 to get the 1% sales on the November 5th ballot. Danny Ware Jr suggested the city change that to 1.50% because the cost of getting the roads done is costing more than what we are taking in. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to change the sales tax to 1.50% instead of the 1%. Danny Ware Jr seconded. Motion carried 3-1 with Cynthia Carr opposing.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

1. Fred Works, City Attorney – Shared a quit claim deed for Dustin Sinclair stating that corner piece is being gifted to Dustin. Mayor Crowell requested a motion to allow her to sign the quit claim deed. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion for the mayor to sign the quit claim deed. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
2. Roy Caler, Water Representative – Nothing to report.
3. Joe Stotler, Police Chief – Shared his monthly time cards and report.
4. Penny Miller, Code/Animal Control –Shared her monthly reports. There were 2 bids for demolition of 2 properties; 310 W. 5th and 409 S. Jefferson. Ray’s Metal Depot was the only bids submitted; 310 W. 5th was $2,800.00 and409 S. Jefferson was $1,900.00. Cynthia Carr made a motion to accept both bids. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
5. Marc Waggoner, Fire Chief- Absent from meeting. Fire meeting minutes were shared: The La Harpe Volunteer Fire Department met for the monthly meeting. Present: Josh Sparks, Marc Waggoner Sr., Ronald Splector, Kiefer Endicott, Bill Gay, Matthew Waggoner, and Meghan Sparks. Absent were, Pamela Waggoner, Dennis Sidebottom and Justin Pritchard. La Harpe firefighters had meeting, discussed who would volunteer for the La Harpe Day activities, then ended the meeting.
6. Maintenance Department - The workorders were shared. Mayor Crowell stated she didn’t want to do anything with the CDL class at this time but asked the council their thoughts on sending Joe to the instructor class in September. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to send Joe to the CDL instructor class in September. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
7. Michelle Altis, City Clerk – Nothing to report.

**DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS –**

Mayor Crowell requested a motion to go into executive session on non-elected personnel for 15 minutes. Cynthia Carr made a motion to go into executive session for 15 minutes on non-elected personnel and resume at 9:08pm. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

After returning to regular session Ron Knavel made the motion to give Larry Laird and Penny Miller a $1.00 per hour raise effective June 10, 2024. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**TREASURER’S REPORT –** File for audit.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS**

Cynthia Carr asked about drywall screws, Penny explained they were for lift station #5. Danny Ware Jr asked about the electric upgrade account and the invoices to KMEA and Border States, wondering why the council never sees these invoices. Michelle was under the impression, if it had anything to do with the electric upgrade we were to pay them from that fund. He wanted to know why KMEA charged the city almost $10,000.00 to replace 4 poles. Mayor Crowell stated those poles had transformers and a lot of hardware on them. Danny Ware Jr thought being a KMEA member we got a discount for them helping us. Then the border states invoices, we have spent an insane amount of money and not seen any invoice. He stated the council should be seeing these and approving them before spending. Mayor Crowell reminded Danny that the council did approve them at one time or another. Michelle stated she will put those invoices in a separate folder to review each month before paying.

Sharlyn Thompson made a motion to approve bills as presented. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Danny Ware Jr made the motion to adjourn. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Adjourned at 9:30 pm.

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City ClerkMayor