



MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS - HUTCHINSON, KANSAS
July 6, 2021
9:00 a.m.

1. The Governing Body of the City of Hutchinson, Kansas met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 6, 2021 in the City Council Chambers with Mayor Garza presiding. Councilmembers Piros de Carvalho, Daveline, Soldner and Bagwell were present.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

3. The prayer was given by Pastor Tonya Wenger of First Mennonite Church.

4. Proclamations

a. A Proclamation for Parks and Recreation Month was accepted by Amy Conkling with the Hutchinson Recreation Commission and Justin Combs, Director of Parks and Facilities. Mr. Combs said any month could be Parks and Rec month; and there are a tremendous number of opportunities in the community. He said he is most proud of the relationship that has been built with Hutch Rec; and they have done great things for the community. Mr. Combs said the two are moving together with the same goals; and this has produced a lot of great outcomes. He thanked the Hutch Rec Board and the City Council for supporting him over the past seven years.

Amy Conkling, Director of Marketing with the Recreation Commission said parks and recreation makes an impact on every single person in the community, saying it's all encompassing from cradle to grave. She thanked the council for recognizing Parks and Rec Month.

5. Petitions, Remonstrances and Communications

a. Oral communications from the audience. (Please limit your remarks to five (5) minutes and to items NOT on the agenda.)

James Lowe, 624 East Avenue F, said for the last two summers there is a group of individuals who have been setting up before sunset or right after sunrise in the cemetery, hitting golf balls at prison walls, at people in the community gardens and at nearby homes. He said these individuals then go around and pick up the golf balls from people's yards, etc. Mr. Lowe said these individuals live back behind the trees in the cemetery as this is how they always leave the area; and said he has called the police on several occasions. Mr. Lowe said they are now hitting the golf balls into windows of nearby homes, breaking and cracking the windows. He said he wanted

to bring this to the council's attention, as he doesn't like having to always call the police since they have better things to do than chasing these individuals out of the graveyard. Jeff Cantrell, City Manager, said we are aware of this matter; and it has been discussed.

Justin Combs, Director of Parks and Facilities, said there is not a caretaker that lives in the cemetery, but the cemetery sexton has tried to run them off multiple times. He said they are working on putting up signage, but this probably won't stop them. Mr. Combs said they will continue to contact the police department about this issue. Councilmember Soldner asked how old these individuals are. Mr. Lowe said they are not kids, that they are in their 30's to 40's. Additional discussion ensued.

Jeff Hooper, Police Chief, said he has heard about this problem but didn't realize it was this extensive. He said if this is occurring on a regular basis there is no reason they can't post an officer in that location during those times. Chief Hooper said they can do some selective patrolling and enforcement.

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes of June 15, 2021 City Council meeting.
- b. Approval of appointments to the Hutchinson Tree Board of the following:
 - Jacob Love, 4005 S. Whiteside Road, Hutchinson, KS, for appointment to a first full three-year term beginning 4/19/2021 to 4/19/2024.
 - Joel Andrew, 3200 N. Lorraine, Hutchinson, KS, for reappointment to a second three-year term beginning 4/19/2021 to 4/19/2024.
 - Laura Frickey, 804 West 24th, Hutchinson, KS, for reappointment to a second three-year term beginning 4/19/2021 to 4/19/2024.
- c. Approval of appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$2,145,071.45.

Motion by Councilmember Soldner, second by Councilmember Bagwell, to approve the Consent Agenda; and authorize the Mayor to sign. The motion passed unanimously.

7. New Business

a. Consider Tenant Protection Voucher Program with Newton Housing Authority. Ryan Hvitløk, Director of Planning and Development, spoke about the request. He said this is currently handled under the Cowley County Housing Authority, but due to staffing issues, etc. they are unable to handle this matter. Mr. Hvitløk said they reached out to Newton to handle this program; and Newton agreed to do so.

Councilmember Daveline asked about the history of the Hutchinson Housing Authority. Mr. Hvitløk said in 2014 the Hutchinson Housing Authority approached the City saying because of costs they were looking to hand the administration off to the Cowley County Housing Authority. He said an agreement was entered into, but

they do still maintain an office in Hutchinson at 17th & Lorraine. Mr. Hvitløk said from what he has heard, they are not responsive to the needs to the community. He said they are to provide annual updates, but it is incredibly difficult for staff to contact them and to have them follow up. Mr. Hvitløk said this is a discussion that needs to be had, as he doesn't know about the status of the housing voucher program, etc.; and the Housing Commission doesn't know anything either. Discussion ensued regarding funding of the program, vouchers, accountability, etc.

Councilmember Daveline asked what course of action the City could take. Paul Brown, City Attorney, said he didn't even know the Housing Authority existed for several years after he became employed by the City. He said the City basically signed an agreement with Cowley County so it could continue the program. Mr. Hvitløk said the Housing Authority is supposed to have an ex-officio seat on the Housing Commission; and said staff has reached out numerous times but very seldom receives a response. He said staff is giving out Cowley County's phone number as the Hutchinson office is not responsive. Mr. Hvitløk said this is the catalyst that we need to have this conversation. Additional discussion ensued regarding Section 8 housing, etc.

Jolynn Colberg, Executive Director of the Newton Housing Authority said she has the applications in her car; and is going to deliver them to start the process. She said HUD would like to see this completed by July 31, but it will take a lot of work to meet that date. Ms. Colberg said they are not going to force the tenants to come to them, but instead, they will come to Hutchinson to meet with each one of the tenants. She further talked about Section 8 housing, how an individual can graduate from the program, etc. Ms. Colberg said this is very complicated; and she has spent the past five years studying the program.

Councilmember Daveline said it appears they have a very functioning housing authority; and asked what happened here. Ms. Colberg said she really doesn't know the answer to that, but said they couldn't get the Hutchinson office to answer phone calls, do landlord references, etc. She said small housing authorities are struggling to find staff, as it's a very detailed job with long hours, etc; and it is hard to find anyone to take the Executive Director positions. Ms. Colberg said she has seen this all over the State of Kansas; and a lot of cities have had to take back the housing authorities and operate it themselves. Additional discussion ensued regarding funding levels, contact information, etc.

Motion by Councilmember Piros de Carvalho, second by Councilmember Soldner, to approve the Cooperative Agreement between the City of Hutchinson and the City of Newton Housing Authority; and authorize the Mayor to sign. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Report of City Officials

a. Council

- Councilmember Bagwell had no comments.

- Councilmember Piros de Carvalho reminded everyone about the budget meeting tonight at 5:30 p.m. She said you can either attend in person or watch the meeting on YouTube.
- Councilmember Soldner had no comments.
- Councilmember Daveline asked the City Manager how we plan to bring some organizational structure to tonight's budget session. Mr. Cantrell said an agenda was put together for the meeting, but it's largely up to the governing body in how rigid they want to be, etc. Councilmember Daveline asked if there is any other information that will be presented. Mr. Cantrell said that it would be part of the presentation.
- Mayor Garza had no comments.

b. City Manager

Mr. Cantrell said he has had a lot of inquiries relating to code enforcement actions on properties. He said some have a long history; and as we transition to new department heads, there is a new mindset on how to handle these issues. He said it is always unique; and requirements are sometimes cumbersome.

Mr. Cantrell said the fireworks display was a success; and there was good attendance for the event.

The Mayor asked the City Manager if there were any reports of fires during the 4th of July holiday. Mr. Cantrell said there were, the departments responded well; and the activity doesn't relate to the proper use of fireworks.

8, Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Bagwell, second by Councilmember Piros de Carvalho, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Upcoming Meetings

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| July 6, 2021 | 5:30 p.m. | Budget meeting |
| July 20, 2021 | 9:00 a.m. | City Council meeting |
| August 3, 2021 | 9:00 a.m. | City Council meeting |