

City of Willow Springs

Regular Council Meeting **Thursday, February 16, 2023** **City Hall Council Chambers, 5:30 pm**

Present: Alderman Danny Bradley, Alderman Kim Rich, Alderman David Collins, Alderman Phill Knott, City Administrator Beverly Hicks, City Clerk Heather Duddridge, Police Chief Wes Ellison, Assistant Police Chief Alan Lewis.

Guest: Dean Aye, Mary Jones, Hanna Borchard, Amanda Mendez, Kim Langston.

Absent: Mayor Brooke Fair, City Attorney Zane Privette.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM

City Clerk Heather Duddridge called the roll.

Mayor Pro Tem Kim Rich opened the meeting of the Board of Aldermen at 5:33 pm with a quorum present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Bradley to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Collins to approve the Consent Agenda which included Approval of Minutes – (RM 1/18), Approval of Bills for Payment, Receipt of Financial Reports, and YMCA, Department Head’s & Board’s Reports. Motion carried 4-0.

EXISTING BUSINESS

Main Street Willow Springs’ Building Discussion: Mary Jones appeared on behalf of Main Street Willow Springs (MSWS) and informed the Council that there was nothing new to report.

Jones stated that MSWS was still in the process of trying to obtain funding through financial institutions, fundraising, and grants. MSWS is currently looking to borrow \$350,000.00 plus 10% fluctuation to make the current repairs of securing the wall and replacing the roof, while the total project budget is estimated at \$1.8 Million. Some of the smaller banks have already denied MSWS for financial backing and, according to Jones, the larger banks are unable to provide a timeline as to when a decision will be reached. Jones further informed the Council that Base Construction is scheduled to begin work around the first of April 2023 to secure the wall and replace the roof.

General discussion was held among Council regarding the dangerous building declaration in December 2022, next steps to take pursuant to City Ordinance, and general concerns pertaining to the building.

Jones added that MSWS is researching other ideas outside of the box to secure funding, such as selling portions of the building for apartments and office space.

Motion by Alderman Collins, second by Alderman Knott to start proceedings for hearing on March 16, 2023 at 5:30 pm. Motion carried 4-0.

Aye: Bradley, Rich, Collins, Knott

Nay: None.

NEW BUSINESS

Record Destruction: City Clerk Heather Duddridge presented a list City records ready for destruction based on the State Statute Record Retention schedule, which was not included in the list approved for destruction in January.

- Safety Records – 2017 and older

Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Collins to approve the destruction of City Records as presented based on the record retention schedule. Motion carried 4-0.

Willow Springs Police Department Highway Safety Grant: Police Chief Wes Ellison informed Council that the Missouri Highway Safety Grant is provided through MoDOT and is 100% funded. Grant funding will reimburse the City for officers' overtime hours and fringe benefits. The purpose of the Highway Safety Program is to look for and address various hazardous moving violations. This is a grant the Police Department applies for each year.

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Knott for the Willow Springs Police Department to participate in the Missouri Highway Safety Program. Motion carried 4-0.

Parks Department Lawn Mower Bids: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that the Parks Department obtained bids from Hawkins Home and Lawn, S&H Farm Supply, and Waggoner True Value Home Center. Hicks stated that the mower at Hawkins and S&H are similar in that they are both commercial grade and have a 5 year warranty, however, the mower at Waggoner is not commercial grade. Hicks added that Hawkins keeps all parts in stock for their mowers and it was the recommendation of the Parks Department to purchase the Gravely from Hawkins Home and Lawn.

General discussion was held among Council comparing each of the mowers.

Motion by Alderman Collins, second by Alderman Bradley to purchase the Gravely mower from Hawkins Home and Lawn. Motion carried 4-0.

MoDOT Boiler/Chiller: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed the Council that the boiler/chiller is failing and provided them with information from Johnson Controls regarding parts replacement and controls updates.

Hicks stated that she has been visiting with Gene Douglas of OKE-Thomas, along with Marty Spence and Josh Owens with the Willow Springs School District about the future of the North

Building. Regardless of whether the building is used by the City or the School District, MoDOT still wants it to be used in a good way that benefits the community.

Hicks provided the Council with further information regarding specific issues with the boiler/chiller system, and general discussion took place regarding system assessments and portions of the system that are still in working order.

Motion by Alderman Collins, second by Alderman Bradley to purchase the coil replacement and condenser motor. Motion carried 4-0.

Meter Reading Neptune 360 Upgrade: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that the process to read meters is now outdated. The City currently uses a hand-held device and a laptop to pick up readings for some water meters by radio frequency, while manually reading other water meters and all electric meters. Hicks stated that due to the age of the hand-held device, tech support is no longer offered.

Hicks discussed past issues with meter readings not being picked up and readings being entered manually into the system. According to Hicks, the upgrade to Neptune 360 will allow readings to be entered into a tablet or a smartphone and transmit those readings to the cloud for upload into the City's utility billing software. Hicks added that this upgrade will allow the City to eventually upgrade to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), which would provide the City with real-time, on-demand information for each meter and eliminate the need for a person to read the meters.

Hicks provided the Council with a quote from Schulte Supply in the amount of \$14,983.50 and further stated that an additional \$3,000.00 will be paid to the City's utility billing software company gWorks to adjustment to the software for accommodation to the Neptune 360 upgrade.

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Collins to proceed with the Neptune 360 upgrade. Motion carried 4-0.

Recreational Marijuana: City Administrator Beverly Hicks provided the Council with written information from the Missouri Municipal League (MML) regarding recreational marijuana, which included sample ordinances to impose a 3% sales tax on marijuana sales and the restrictions of public smoking. Hicks stated that the City will be amending its smoking ordinance to include the definition of marijuana.

With regard to the 3% sales tax, Hicks informed Council that it must be placed on the ballot for the voters to decide, which can be placed on the general election ballot any time. Hicks added that if the voters choose to ban marijuana sales, the City would be forced to forego any related local tax as noted in the State Statute, and that must be presented to voters on the general election ballot during a Presidential election year only.

General discussion was held regarding zoning districts for recreational marijuana facilities and the minimum distance required between schools and churches, which is defined by State Statute as the shortest navigable distance. Police Chief Wes Ellison and Assistant Chief Alan Lewis also discussed concerns regarding increased accidents, calls for service, overdoses, and the training aspects for each of those situations.

Hicks concluded that she would bring additional information to the Council in March. No action was taken.

Public and Media Questions: Kim Langston from West Plains Daily Quill was present with questions, which were answered by City Administrator Beverly Hicks.

Amanda Mendez from Howell County News was present with questions, which were answered by Council and City Administrator Beverly Hicks. One question posed by Mendez pertained to the building owned by Main Street Willow Springs (MSWS) and clarification regarding the public hearing in March. Hicks informed Mendez that the City's attorney will be present and MSWS can bring their own attorney, if they choose. Hicks also stated that both the City and MSWS will provide information for discussion and decision by Council, which is also the Building Commission as set forth in Section 505.060 of City Ordinance, however, there will be no opportunity for public comment. Hicks further added that a Court reporter will be present to transcribe the hearing and provide a copy of the transcript to both parties.


There were no questions from the public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that there were no topics of discussion for closed session.

Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Bradley to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 pm. Motion carried 4-0.

CITY OF WILLOW SPRINGS



Brooke Fair, Mayor

ATTEST:



Heather Duddridge, City Clerk