

City of Willow Springs

Regular Council Meeting
Tuesday, April 18, 2023
City Hall Council Chambers, 5:30 pm

PUBLIC HEARING

Setback Variance for 328 E Fourth, 505 N Grand, and 507 N Grand:

Mayor Fair opened the public hearing at 5:30 pm.

No one appeared for public comment.

Mayor Fair closed the hearing at 5:31 pm.

Present: Mayor Brooke Fair, Alderman Danny Bradley, Alderman Kim Rich, Alderman David Collins, Alderman Phill Knott, City Attorney Zane Privette, City Clerk Heather Duddridge, Police Chief Wes Ellison, Building Inspector Shay Collins.

Absent: Assistant Police Chief Alan Lewis.

Guest: Dean Aye, Michael Evans, Stefanie Collins, John Martin, Kim Osborn, Amanda Mendez, Mark Snow, Matt Hobson, Kim McCormick, Josh Owens, Marty Spence.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM

City Clerk Heather Duddridge called the roll.

Mayor Brooke Fair opened the meeting of the Board of Alderman at 5:32 pm with a quorum present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

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

ELECTION RESULTS

Approval of Certified Election Results: Results for the April 4, 2023 municipal election were reviewed by Council. Election results were as follows:

Mayor		Alderman Ward I		Alderman Ward II	
Brooke Fair	88	Phill Knott	56	Danny Bradley	30
Write-In	5	Write-In	1		

Motion by Alderman Rich, second by Alderman Collins to approve the certified April 4, 2023 election results as presented by the Howell County Election Board. Motion carried 4-0.

Swear in Newly Elected Officials: City Clerk Heather Duddridge swore in the re-elected officials Brooke Fair as Mayor, Phill Knott as Alderman Ward I, and Danny Bradley as Alderman Ward II.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Knott to approve the Consent Agenda which included Approval of Minutes – (RM 3/16), Approval of Bills for Payment, Receipt of Financial Reports, and YMCA, Department Head’s & Board’s Reports. Motion carried 4-0.

VISITORS

Michael Evans – Utility Billing and Late Fees: Michael Evans appeared with concerns regarding utility bills being generated on the 30th of each month and being due by the 10th when he doesn’t receive it in the mail until the 4th or 5th, if at all. Evans also stated that this month he did not receive the initial bill, only the disconnect notice. Evans requested a policy change for the time period to pay utility bills increase to 21 days and modify the penalties from a 10% fee to either a smaller percentage or a flat rate.

City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Evans and the Council that there are multiple ways to receive and pay utility bills. Hicks stated that customers have the option of receiving their bill by mail or email, and they may also call or come by City Hall to obtain the amount or a printed copy. Hicks further stated that customers may pay utility bills by automatic bank draft on the 10th of each month, check, cash, and credit card by phone or online. Hicks added that the current policy in place has reduced the amount of bad debt that the City carries each year from approximately \$30,000.00 to \$10,000.00.

After general discussion, Council suggested that Hicks looking further into ACH options that may be initiated by the customer through the online payment portal. No further action was taken by Council at this time.

EXISTING BUSINESS

104 E Main Building Discussion: Dean Aye appeared on behalf of the Willow Springs Community Foundation (WSCF) to inform Council that WSCF took official ownership of the building earlier that day, and funding is now in place to secure the building. Aye stated that Gene Douglas with OKE-Thomas is overseeing design and engineering, along with J&M Engineering for a permanent fix to be shared with Base Construction. Aye further stated that the chain fencing around the building makes it more secure while awaiting construction to begin sometime between mid-May and the first part of June.

Council thanked Aye for the update and took no action at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Setbacks Variance Recommendation from Planning & Zoning Committee: Dean Aye with Willow Springs Community Foundation (WSCF) appeared regarding the Planning and Zoning Committee’s recommendation to grant a variance for the properties located at 328 E Fourth, 505 N Grand, and 507 N Grand. Aye informed the Council that his goal is to correct issues that

began 25 years ago with 2 houses on one plat. Aye stated that as properties begin to leave government ownership and become WSCF owned, he wants to divide those plats to reduce the difficulty in selling them and prevent issues for future owners.

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Rich to read Bill No. 91-23. Motion carried 4-0 and the clerk read Bill No. 91-23.

BILL NO. 91-23

ORDINANCE NO. 1591

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WILLOW SPRINGS
REVISING THE SETBACKS FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT
328 EAST FOURTH, 505 NORTH GRAND, AND 507 NORTH GRAND**

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Knott to read Bill No. 91-23 as Ordinance No. 1591. Motion carried 4-0 and the clerk read Ordinance No. 1591.

BILL NO. 91-23

ORDINANCE NO. 1591

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WILLOW SPRINGS
REVISING THE SETBACKS FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT
328 EAST FOURTH, 505 NORTH GRAND, AND 507 NORTH GRAND**

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Knott to adopt Ordinance No. 1591. A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Bradley, Rich, Collins, Knott

Nays: None.

Surplus Items: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that a list of items was approved for surplus in June 2022, however, the Street Department has additional items to sell.

Motion by Alderman Rich, second by Alderman Bradley to approve the sale of additional items from the Street Department by surplus. Motion carried 4-0.

Past Due Business Licenses: City Clerk Heather Duddridge informed Council that there are 7 brick and mortar businesses, along with 3 mobile vendor and home-based businesses that have not renewed their business licenses for the 2023 calendar year. Duddridge stated that there is 1 brick and mortar business that has changed ownership and contacted her last week regarding the updated documentation of such. Duddridge further stated that Council voted last year to have businesses formally served by the Police Department, giving them 10 days to obtain the license or a citation would be issued. Council unanimously agreed to move that direction again this year.

Motion by Alderman Knott, second by Alderman Collins to formally serve businesses with past due business licenses with a 10-day letter prior to a citation being issued. Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Appointments to East Main CID Board of Directors: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that at the time of the East Main Community Improvement

District (CID) being formed where the Family Dollar/Dollar Tree is located, a board a directors was appointed and some of those directors are up for re-appointment.

Motion by Alderman Rich, second by Alderman Bradley to approve the reappointment of Steve Rollins and Wade Guffey to the East Main CID Board of Directors with a term expiring April 15, 2027. Motion carried 4-0.

Pool Fees: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that the discussion of increasing pool fees was not discussed at budget time because there were questions as to whether the waterpark would be open in the 2023 season due to issues that have now been resolved. Hicks informed Council that the daily entry fee has been \$3.00 per person and an individual season pass has been \$65.00. Hicks suggested an increase of the daily entry fee to \$4.00 per person with \$3.00 Tuesdays per person and \$2.00 night sessions per person when offered. Hicks also suggested an increase to the individual season pass to \$75.00. Hicks further stated that minimum wage has increased on three separate occasions without the pool entry fees increasing.

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Collins to increase pool entry fees and individual season pass fees as suggested by City Administrator Hicks. Motion carried 4-0.

Court Fees: City Administrator Beverly Hicks informed Council that Judge William T Hass is the municipal judge that has served the City of Willow Springs Municipal Court since 2005 without a significant increase during that time. Hicks provided Council with a letter from Judge Hass requesting an increase from \$650.00 to \$1200.00 monthly, which would mirror the pay he receives from the City of Mountain View and the City of West Plains. Hicks further stated that the knowledge, service, and availability Judge Hass brings to the Municipal Court is valuable to the City of Willow Springs.

Motion by Alderman Bradley, second by Alderman Rich to approve an increase in fees paid to Judge Hass to \$1200.00 monthly. Motion carried 4-0.

Distracted Driving Ordinance Discussion: Police Chief Wes Ellison expressed concern regarding distracted drivers and provided Council with statistics regarding distracted driving. Combined stats from MODOT, NITSA, NHTSA, and ZEBRA state:

- Missouri ranks among the top 10 of the most distracted driving states.
- Nearly 70% of drivers in Missouri traffic crashes were 22 years of age or older.
- Since 2014, cell phone related crashes in Missouri have increased by 31%.
- 74% of distracted drivers in fatal crashes were older than 21.
- Distractions include eyes off the road, hands off the wheel, and mind off of driving.
- In 2021, there were 3522 people killed by distracted drivers in the United States. That's 9 people per day.

Chief Ellison worked with Alderman Kim Rich and City Attorney Zane Privette to prepare the draft Ordinance. General discussion was held among Chief Ellison, Attorney Privette, and Council. All agreed to see how the public responds and table this matter to the May meeting for further discussion and a vote on passage.

No further action was taken by Council at this time.

Public and Media Questions: Resident Stefanie Collins requested clarification on the language in the proposed distracted driving ordinance, which was addressed by City Attorney Zane Privette.

Amanda Mendez with Howell County News was present with questions, which were addressed by Council and City Administrator Beverly Hicks. One question inquired on the revenue for delinquent utility payments, the reason for the 10% late fee, and when payments for electric usage are made to Missouri Public Utility Alliance (MPUA) each month. Hicks stated the City receives \$7,000.00 per year on delinquent fees alone, the 10% late fee was set in the early 2000s, and payments to MPUA are drafted directly from the City's account on the 17th of each month.

Mendez also inquired about whether pool staffing is anticipated to be an issue again this year. Hicks stated that numerous applications have been received and staffing should not be an issue until late summer when school activities begin.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

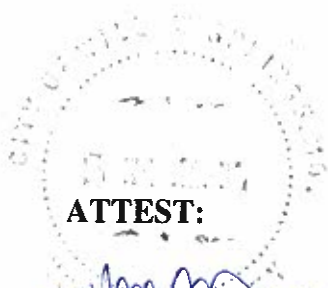
Motion by Alderman Collins, second by Alderman Knott to move to executive session for (2) Real Estate pursuant to §610.021. A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Rich, Collins, Knott, Bradley

Nays: None.

The meeting moved into Executive Session at 6:46 pm and adjourned at 7:06 pm with no action taken.

Motion by Alderman Rich, second by Alderman Collins to adjourn open session at 7:06 pm. Motion carried 4-0.



ATTEST:

Heather Duddridge, City Clerk

CITY OF WILLOW SPRINGS

Brooke Fair, Mayor