

Present: Mayor – Joyce Hudson
Council members Jeff Kennedy
Jim Aden
Roger Dudley
Jeff Whiting
City Administrator Bruce Clymer
City Clerk Connie L. Dalrymple
City Attorney Mike Bacon
Police Chief Randy Olson

Press: Gothenburg Times - Beth Barrett

Also present: Shane Gruber, Eppie Sisneros, Ken Christensen, Doug Block, Ron Bishop, Anne Anderson, Brittney Worrell, Vanessa Walker, Jonathon Clark

Mayor Hudson opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Advance notice and a copy of the agenda were given to the Council and members of the press. City Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, a copy of which is available for public inspection on the north wall of the Council Chambers.

Aden moved, Kennedy seconded, to approve the consent agenda that included:

- City Council minutes – December 4
- Police Report – November
- Treasurer's Report – November
- Planning & Zoning Commission minutes- December 11

Roll call vote: Yea – Whiting, Dudley, Kennedy, Aden. Nay - none.

Kennedy moved, Whiting seconded, allowing payment of the claims against the City, \$49,370.94, except #1047; Public Works Division \$236,861.61; and the December 13 payroll of \$29,612.06. Roll call vote: Yea – Whiting, Dudley, Kennedy, Aden. Nay - none.

Kennedy moved, Aden seconded, allowing payment of claim #1047 to the Animal Hospital. Roll call vote: Yea – Whiting, Aden, Kennedy. Nay – none.

OPEN FORUM:

- The Council room is nearing completion, with the sound system and carpet remaining.

Dudley moved, Whiting seconded, to advance Ordinance 822 regarding Chapter 9 Building Regulations to third reading. Roll call vote: Yea – Kennedy, Aden, Whiting, Dudley. Nay – none.

As proposed, Ordinance 823 increases electrical rates an average of 10.9%. Although the rate consultant designed the rates based on NPPD's rate increases and other factors available to him, Administrator Clymer has reviewed Public Works Division finances and current and projected needs of the City and feels an increase averaging 9% is sufficient. If the increase is not adequate, deficiencies will reduce the cash reserve and adjustments can be made next year. According to NPPD officials, the company has had a good year with off-system sales and is now ahead of their projected position. Atty. Bacon prepared a revised ordinance reflecting the lower rate that is now on file with the City Clerk and can be passed as amended at the next meeting if the Council chooses. The amendment also removes the second year proposed increase.

Dudley moved, Aden seconded, to advance Ordinance 823 to third and final reading. Roll call vote: Yea – Whiting, Kennedy, Aden, Dudley. Nay – none.

The Post Office is planning sidewalk renovations to provide handicap access in the spring. There are currently several commemorative bricks that can be placed at the site in a 4-foot by 4-foot square. Brief discussion was had and there were no objections to the bricks at the post office site.

Ron Bishop of Central Platte Natural Resources District explained to the Council the results of the Platte River Habitat Program. LB962 requires the State of Nebraska to look at all river basins in Nebraska and determine appropriate supply vs. use. Dawson, Buffalo and Lincoln Counties are over-appropriated and required to move water use from the river back to 1997 consumption levels. There are three options to reduce use from 'over-appropriated' status to 'fully-appropriated' status:

- Import water. There is nowhere to import it from as other basins are worse off than the Platte.
- Acquire water rights from a willing seller, such as Doug Block
- Regulate water usage.

Doug Block is willing to transfer his water right to property in the area of West 7th Street extended. The property is outside corporate limits but within our zoning jurisdiction, currently zoned Agriculture. Transfer is made via a Conservation Transfer Easement and is permanent. Block will not be able to plant crops that sub-irrigate, however, an industry or other use may use the property with NRD approval if it has a low water consumption.

According to Atty. Bacon, the Council's job is to see that the transfer conforms to the Comprehensive Plan, which it does, because the area is zoned for agriculture, and to determine if the easement is for or against the best interests of the public. In this case it is a good thing.

Aden moved, Dudley seconded, to pass and approve Resolution 2007-18 approving the Deed of Conservation Easement between Douglas and Stephanie Block and the Central Platte Natural Resources District. Roll call vote: Yea – Whiting, Kennedy, Dudley, Aden. Nay – none.

Discussion was had on a proposal from Ken Christensen for access to the northerly part of Lot 21, Country Acres Addition. Several versions of the agreement have been offered but none that satisfy both Ken and the City. No action was taken.

The City has received a grant of \$8000 for playground equipment in Ehmen Park from Peter Kiewit Foundation. We are required to provide a minimum \$2000 match funds. Pamida's \$2000 donation for playground equipment meets the match requirement.

Dudley moved, Whiting seconded, to accept the Peter Kiewit Foundation grant of \$8000 for playground equipment. Roll call vote: Yea – Dudley, Whiting, Kennedy, Aden. Nay – none.

Whiting moved, Aden seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Roll call vote: Yea – Dudley, Whiting, Kennedy, Aden. Nay – none. The next regular meeting will be January 8, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Joyce Hudson, Mayor

Connie L. Dalrymple, City Clerk