

MONDAY

JUNE 21, 2021

The Governing Body of the City of Pratt met in Regular Session in the Commission Room located at City Hall.

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| PRESENT: | Gary Schmidt | Mayor |
| | Don Peters | Commissioner |
| | Zach Deeds | Commissioner |
| | Jeanette Siemens | Commissioner |
| | Kyle Farmer | Commissioner |
| ALSO PRESENT: | Bruce Pinkall | City Manager |
| | LuAnn Kramer | City Clerk |
| | Brent Carver | Finance Director |
| | Regina Goff | City Attorney |
| | Nate Humble | Chief of Police |
| | Russell Rambat | Public Works Director |
| | Jamie Huber | Director of Electric Utilities |
| | Larry Eisenhauer | Recreation Director |

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting was called to order by Mayor Schmidt. The Mayor instructed the City Clerk to note that all Commissioners were present.

Mayor Schmidt reminded the audience that this meeting may be taped and/or recorded.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Deeds led the audience and staff in the invocation and Mayor Schmidt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

- June 07, 2021 Regular Commission Meeting
- June 09, 2021 Recessed Commission Meeting

Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 07, 2021 regular Commission meeting and the June 09, 2021 recessed Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peters and the motion and second carried unanimously.

BUSINESS:

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASE OF A 100 KW GENERATOR FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT:

Public Works Director Rambat stated that this generator would replace one of three generators that were vital to the function of the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Rambat commented that he had went out with a bid request for replacement of the 100 kw natural gas generator that would include the transfer switch, removal and complete installation. Mr. Rambat explained that he sent out six bids and two were returned,

which one was from Foley Cat out of Kansas City with a bid of \$50,375 and the other was from Central Power Systems out of Wichita for \$36,775. Mr. Rambat stated that this was not a budgeted item; however, big items could not always be budgeted for.

Mr. Rambat stated that Central Power System had thrown in an option to replace the breaker box, but it was not specified in the bid, so he had taken it out. Mr. Rambat commented that it would not void any of the warranties. Mr. Rambat explained that he may look at doing that in the next year, but the cost was within the City Manager's approval capacity. Mr. Rambat stated that Wastewater Superintendent Angood had a line item for building and lands that had around \$50,000 that was not spoken for and he felt that this generator was a necessity.

Mr. Rambat made the recommendation to accept the bid from Central Power Systems in the amount of \$36,775 for the 100 kw Generator for the wastewater treatment plant. Mayor Schmidt asked if there were two active generators at the plant. Mr. Rambat stated that there was one in the front, one in the middle and one in the back. Mayor Schmidt stated that each one had a function. Mr. Rambat stated that each one was crucial. Commissioner Deeds asked how long it would be before we would get this generator. Mr. Rambat commented that it could be eleven to thirteen weeks, but there was a possibility of six to eight. Mr. Rambat explained that they would schedule the electricians and work as quickly as possible. Commissioner Peters asked if we had done work with them before. Mr. Rambat stated that we had on the sales side and maintenance side, but he had checked references.

Mr. Rambat informed the Commission that he had sent the bid requests to four local references; however, they did not respond. With no further discussion, Commissioner Siemens made a motion to approve the purchase of the 100 kw Generator for the Wastewater treatment plant from Central Power Systems out of Wichita in the amount of \$36,775. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Deeds and carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ON THE KANSAS NON-ENTITLEMENT FUNDING:

City Manager Pinkall stated that he had the application and watched the webinar that took him through the process for the non-entitlement funding. Mr. Pinkall stated that the funding was based upon the population per capita and our total was a little over \$980,000. Mr. Pinkall commented that there was quite a bit to the requirements on how it could be used and you could get more information if you wanted to write in or you could call in to see if you had qualified. Mr. Pinkall explained that we would get more information as we went along. Mr. Pinkall stated that he would get with staff and he looked forward to this process as it moved forward.

Mr. Pinkall stated that we had done our due diligence and there was a lot of paperwork that went into the State. Mr. Pinkall stated that we would be able to improve our water, electric and wastewater infrastructures. Mayor Schmidt asked if we had to go through the County or if this was just the City's. Mr. Pinkall stated that this would come directly to the City and it was projected that the first half should be here in two weeks and the second half by the end of the year. Mayor Schmidt asked if we got the money before it was spent. Mr. Pinkall stated that we did and it was going to every incorporated City in the State. Commissioner Peters asked if the generator would be qualified. Mr. Pinkall stated that it could be a possible utilization of the funds. Commissioner Peters asked if it was spelled out clearly. Mr. Pinkall answered that it was pretty generalized. Commissioner Peters questioned if it could be used for things previously purchased. Mr. Pinkall stated that it was from here forward or something we were planning on doing. Commissioner Peters asked if we had all the t's crossed and the i's dotted. Mr. Pinkall stated that he was confident that we were at that point.

City Attorney Goff added that the funding had to be allocated by December 2024 and paid by December 2026. Ms. Goff stated that this could replace the loss of revenue; however, she did not feel that we lost revenue. Ms. Goff clarified that the Federal Government did clarify that the only utilities would be water, wastewater and broadband. Commissioner Farmers asked if that could be used to pay off part of our loan. Ms. Goff stated that it could not be and it could not be used to match funds for other Federal grant monies. Mr. Pinkall stated that with the initial infrastructure of our dark fiber, we did have some broadband options that could expand to our other departments. Mr. Pinkall commented that the wastewater plant has a totally separate internet provider and it might be good to get into our network. Mr. Pinkall explained that Ideatek was in town working and they would look and see if that would work at a cost that would be beneficial. Mr. Pinkall stated that that would help with the positive piece on the reliability of broadband.

OPEN AGENDA:

No one wished to address the Commission.

REPORTS:

City Manager:

- **Recognition:**

City Manager Pinkall stated that he wanted to recognize Finance Director Carver for his diligence for coming into what he did. Mr. Pinkall commented that he had a positive understanding of the budget and how it would be moving forward.

- **2020 Close-out:**

Mr. Pinkall commented that we had closed out 2020; however, we had not made the manual close-outs that needed to be made so Mr. Carver was working backwards on getting all of that done. Mr. Pinkall stated that we were behind on the budget by three or four weeks, but Mr. Carver would be getting the budget sheet to the departments this week. Mr. Pinkall explained that the department heads would then meet with Mr. Carver and himself and then they would meet with the Commissioners.

- **Audit:**

Commissioner Peters asked about the audit. Mr. Carver stated that the audit had been moved to the third week in July. Mr. Pinkall stated that they had reached out to us to see what he needed to get ready for that. Mr. Carver stated that he was working with them and would contact them if he got done sooner, so that they could do the audit sooner.

- **Time off:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that he was going to take a few days off in July, but that he would not miss any meetings.

- **Soccer/Track meetings:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that they had been having regular soccer/track meetings and they were going well. Mr. Pinkall commented that they were going in a very good direction and should be wrapping up and moving forward soon.

- **ED meeting:**

Mr. Pinkall thanked the Commission for taking the time to meet with the ED Board and adding the new matrixes. Commissioner Farmer asked if they were still working on that. Mr. Pinkall stated that he was not working on that with them and that Ms. Kim DeClue always did that. Mr. Pinkall commented that Ms. Goff was working on it now and would get things moving.

- **Pool Committee:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that the pool committee was meeting regularly and Mr. Kyle McCawley had gotten back to them with a potential planning time line. Mr. Pinkall commented that they would need to get bids in through August for a potential opening in 2022, but Mr. McCawley was very proactive. Mr. Pinkall stated that they reviewed the survey that had the community's thoughts. Commissioner Peters asked if the committee had thought about the pool size and about splash pads. Mr. Pinkall stated that they thought of a design with zero entry on the end, water park features, lanes, pool house on the south end. Commissioner Peters questioned the costs. Mr. Pinkall stated that new construction costs had gone up.

Mr. Pinkall stated that they were looking at seating for swim meets and doing maintenance on the slope and adding splash pads. Commissioner Peters asked if there were two or three companies that did this kind of thing. Public Works Director Rambat stated that there were three good ones and they were mostly in northwest Kansas. Commissioner Peters commented that Mr. McCawley would know when to get started to have one by 2022. Mr. Pinkall stated that the middle of August would get us done by the summer of 2022 and that included a couple of winter delays. Mr. Pinkall added that we needed to get through a few other processes. Mr. Rambat stated that it comes down to contractors and a construction manager, so we can use their strength and cut the red tape. Mr. Rambat added that we would use their strength to be ready to go and use basic building plans, which might contain ways to save time. Mr. Rambat commented that materials could be a hamstring with COVID and we needed to look at getting these people selected. Mr. Rambat stated that there may still be a delayed start, but it would be a shame to dump a bunch of money in this dinosaur.

- **LEC Committee:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that the LEC Committee was moving forward in a positive manner. Mr. Pinkall commented that they had met with the County on 911 issues that should benefit all of us.

- **Chamber Director:**

Commissioner Farmer asked if the Chamber Board had hired a new director. Mr. Pinkall stated that he knew they had a handful of applications and they were trying to move forward, but he was not sure if they had taken that next step.

City Attorney:

- **911 Funds:**

City Attorney Goff stated that the 911 funds had always been allocated to the County even though the City had dispatch. Ms. Goff commented that there was an ordinance for the Commission to review for the joint City/County meeting next Monday and she had also given them a revised LEC Agreement. Ms. Goff explained that the entity that had the dispatch services was to receive the funds. Mayor Schmidt asked if the intention was that both the City and County would adopt their parts of this. Ms. Goff stated that the intention was to do it at the same meeting. Ms. Goff stated that the ordinance was creating a Division of Emergency Communications and An Emergency Combinations Board that would include the Sheriff, Supervisor of Dispatch, EMS, County Fire Chief, City Fire Chief and City Police Chief. Ms. Goff stated that this would be good for the community.

Public Works:

- **Nitrates in Drinking Water:**

Public Works Director Rambat stated that he needed to talk about nitrates in our drinking water. Mr. Rambat commented that one of our appropriated right wells hit the level last week and the State confirmed it. Mr. Rambat explained that the typical protocol would be that they would send out notifications and have us do another sample and see where it falls. Mr. Rambat stated that, if it was at that level again or about at it, they would probably shut it down. Mr. Rambat commented that there were several wells that were creeping up.

Mr. Rambat stated that we probably needed to sit down with EBH in the next couple of weeks to see what our options were to deal with this. Mr. Rambat commented that we were not the only community in Kansas dealing with this. Mr. Rambat explained that our water rates were too low to get any funding or loan forgiveness previous to this point; however, now that we had crossed that threshold, we were available to get loan forgiveness. Mr. Rambat added that treating nitrates would take that type of dollars to deal with it whether it be an onsite reverse osmosis or a strategically placed ion treatment plant between a few choice wells. Mr. Rambat repeated that we need to get dialogue started with EBH.

Mr. Rambat commented that they had been looking east of the Business Park north of the college at the potential well #17 and so far it had been pretty encouraging running at 6.0 to 6.5, but the well west of that has been running in the 4's. Mr. Rambat explained that, even if that well came on line, it would not just be about the source but about the source that would be coming into our system. Mr. Rambat stated that it would allow us to keep pressure up on the west side of town to have wells in the center of town.

Mr. Rambat stated that he needed to get with Water Superintendent Clay and list out what our issues were, such as the storage tank that needed to be taken off line and some work done on the inside. Mr. Rambat commented that it happens about every ten to fifteen years that a utility has a large expenditure, whether it was man-made by the State and you have to prove your process or its aging infrastructure. Mr. Rambat stated that, in this case, it was a natural nitrate issue and it would not be going away, so we needed to start coming up with a plan on top of perfecting our water rights in the next few years. Mr. Rambat explained that maybe we should do that more quickly and get it out of the way. Mr. Rambat commented that there was always the thinking that we need to set that bar real high, so that when they cut us off, we have plenty around. Mr. Rambat commented that it would not do us any good to bring in a big water industry, because they would use that water and we would be in the same situation.

Mayor Schmidt asked what State department we were working with. Mr. Rambat stated that it was KDHE and that was who we had worked with on the airport waterline project. Mr. Rambat added that they had forgiven forty or sixty percent of that. Mr. Rambat stated that we hit the mark for following the guidelines and there was nothing unsafe about our drinking water. Mr. Rambat explained that, even

though that well was close to that mark, it was put into the system where it blended all over the system. Mr. Rambat stated that that was the way it worked all over the system.

Commissioner Farmer asked if we could use the Kansas non-entitlement funding for this. Mr. Pinkall stated that there were some things that would fit in there. Mr. Rambat commented that he did not want to spend money before we got it; however, there were a lot of things they could use that money for. Mr. Rambat stated that Mr. Clay did not have that much money sitting in his budget. City Attorney Goff clarified that you could not use the Federal Government's funding for matching funds. Mr. Rambat commented that we may have to rework things and try to pay off existing loans.

- **Highway 54:**

Mr. Rambat stated that the Highway 54 project from New Street to Mound Street should start the first week in July. Mr. Rambat explained that it had gotten moved back due to having trouble getting their hands on materials. Mr. Rambat commented that New Street was a busy street during school, so it may not be assessable and they would be getting the word out to the school.

Inspection Department:

- **Comprehensive Plan:**

Building Inspector Blankenship stated that he had contacted EBH about the Comprehensive Plan and they would be having a meeting next week. Mr. Blankenship commented that they had the money budgeted and the meetings stopped happening due to COVID.

Recreation Department:

- **Summer Activities:**

Recreation Director Eisenhower stated that the parking lots were done and the summer activities had started. Mr. Eisenhower commented that the Miss Kansas activities would be the same weekend as the 12 and under State tournament, which would have 40 to 45 teams.

Police Department:

- **911 funds:**

Police Chief Humble stated that the City would have full control of the 911 funds with the LEC Agreement that would be adopted at the City/County meeting next Monday and there would also be a Board created that would help keep communication open.

- **2 Chases:**

Chief Humble stated that there had been two chases and one was stopped at Country Club Road. Chief Humble commented that the officers had been doing in-house training with stop sticks and those were deployed and done very well.

- **Accommodation:**

7 – June 21, 2021 (Regular Commission meeting)

Chief Humble stated that Sgt. Ferbert responded to a non-responsive male about a month ago and, without the efforts of Sgt. Ferbert giving him CPR, doctors said that he would have lost his life. Chief Humble stated that he was going to give a referral to the Kansas Peace Officers for a lifesaving award.

- **Staffing:**

Chief Humble stated that he had two new hires starting on June 28th, but they were not certified so they would have to attend the academy. Chief Humble commented that the police department would be fully staffed; however, they were down 2 dispatchers.

Finance Department:

- **Preparing for audit and budget:**

Finance Director Carver stated that he had been working hard to prepare for the audit and get the budget worksheets out. Mr. Carver commented that he had been working with people one on one and he would get more in line as time goes on.

City Clerk/Utility Billing Department:

- **Retirement:**

City Clerk Kramer informed the Commission that Utility Billing Clerk Stecklein would be retiring at the end of September. Ms. Kramer stated that they were going out for applications because this was not going to be an easy job to fill and the new employee would need to work with Mr. Stecklein at least two months before he retires.

Mayor and Commission:

- **Staffing:**

Commissioner Peters asked how staffing was going for other departments other than Ms. Kramer losing her billing clerk. Mr. Rambat stated that the street department had been short two for about the last couple of years. Commissioner Peters asked how dispatch does it with being short two all the time unless it was a lot of over time. Commissioner Peters questioned if Chief Humble had it in his budget to do sign on bonuses. Chief Humble stated that the reason most had been leaving was money. Chief Humble commented that we had been ahead of the game on wages, but we were behind again. Chief Humble explained that overtime creates burnout.

Chief Humble stated that he starts dispatch around \$17.76 and then they get bumped to \$18 and some change. Commissioner Peters asked if he had any authority to raise that. Mr. Rambat commented that it was not just about being competitive, but you have to take from someone else from another town and they do the same to us. Chief Humble stated that only one exit interview had not been related to pay, but all the others were.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mayor Schmidt made a motion to go into executive session to discuss attorney/client privilege to return at 6:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farmer and carried unanimously.

8 – June 21, 2021 (Regular Commission meeting)

Mayor Schmidt made a motion to return from executive session at 6:26 p.m. with nothing to report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peters and carried unanimously.

RECESS:

Mayor Schmidt made a motion to recess until Monday, June 28, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. for the City/County Joint meeting at City Hall. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Deeds and carried unanimously.

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR:

GARY A. SCHMIDT, Mayor



ATTEST:

LUANN KRAMER, City Clerk