

## November 9, 2022

The scheduled monthly meeting of the Chapman City Council was held Wednesday, November 9, 2022, at City Hall at 7:00 pm. Mayor Howard Battishill was present. Councilmembers Tim Jury, Rick Johnson, James Bell, Christy Loy, and Mary Monasmith were present. Also in attendance were City Attorney Brad Jantz, City Administrator Bill Flanery, Police Chief Kevin Diercks, Golf Superintendent Austin Murphy, Director of Public Works Edward Wehrmeister, Director of Parks and Recreation Tori Heller, and Dusty Heller.

### **#2 Consent Agenda**

Motion by Jury to approve the consent agenda as presented, 2nd by Bell, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

### **#3 Public Comments**

None

### **#4 CMB License Renewal for Casey's**

Motion by Bell to approve the CMB License Renewal for Casey's, 2nd by Johnson, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

### **#5 CMB License Renewal for Chapman Food Mart**

Motion by Bell to approve the CMB License Renewal for Chapman Food Mart, 2nd by Johnson, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

### **#6 Resolution 11092022 – Set Date for Show Cause Hearing for Unsafe Structure at 232 E. 1st Street**

City Administrator Bill Flanery stated that the resolution was based on the emphasis on blight properties within the city. The trailer house on East 1st Street has been unoccupied for several years and does not have utilities. The siding and paneling are coming off the trailer and there are holes in it. The resolution sets a show cause hearing for the owner, Mr. Gaither, to come in and discuss why the property should not be condemned. It gives Mr. Gaither an opportunity to discuss the property with the Council. Mr. Gaither will be notified by certified mail and the resolution will be published in two consecutive editions of the Dickinson County News-Times. The resolution gets the ball rolling on taking care of this property that has looked like this for several years.

City Attorney Brad Jantz stated the Council is the fact-finding body for the hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to establish if the property is sufficiently distressed that it would take greater than 50% of the value of the property to bring it into compliance and fix it. The property owner can come in and express that he or she is willing to pay more than 50% value of the home to repair it and the council can accept that from the owner. In that case, the governing body should require the owner come back to the next meeting with a plan for remediation, a budget, a general contractor, and a time schedule. The hearing may then be continued on a 30-day basis to ensure progress is being made. This resolution starts the process. It will be published twice in the paper. After the first publication, a notice will be sent to all interested parties. All interested parties should receive notice by certified mail within three days after the first publication. The hearing must be at least 30 days after the second publication.

The resolution sets the date for the hearing on 11 January 2023. It is the date of a normal council meeting, and the hearing will start at 6:00pm. In the event the property is to be taken down, the city will take bids and have someone do the work. Those costs will be placed on the tax roles for that property.

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The property owner will still own the lot. The city will hold a lien on the property until it is sold and will be reimbursed from the sale. In many cases, the property owner does not pay property taxes and the lien from the city will be wiped off unless the city bids on the property. In these cases, it would be handy for the city to have a land bank. It is a great way for the city to hold those properties and use them for economic development.

Motion by Bell to approve Resolution 11092022 – Set Date for Show Cause Hearing for Unsafe Structure at 232 E. 1st Street, 2nd by Monasmith, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

**#7 Discussion on Cost of Living Pay Increase for City Employees**

City Administrator Bill Flanery presented the Council with a pay comparison of Chapman to other cities with a similar population and a list of what other cities were considering for cost-of-living allowances for their employees. The majority of municipalities provide a cost-of-living pay increase for their employees each year. Chapman has traditionally provided a three percent pay increase for employees. Chapman has not combined merit raises with the cost-of-living increases. A three percent pay increase was factored into the budget for 2023. Councilman Jury stated that he would prefer to go through another budget session before recommending an increase of over three percent. A previous City Administrator had established a merit system for raises but it went away when he left. Merit raises can be added to future budget discussions. Cost-of-living raises would begin in January. Inflation is currently around 8.3% and finished last year at 7%. There are no caps in place that would prevent an employee from receiving cost of living increase. The Council has the authority to direct that employees that make over a certain amount will not receive the increase based on their current pay. Councilman Jury stated that during the next budget session, he would like to find a way to provide employees with more than three percent due to high inflation. The pay comparisons in the packets include all Cities of the 3rd class in Kansas that participated in the pay survey. Cities of the 3rd class in Kansas range from a population of 2,000 and under. The pay comparison includes some cities that have a population of close to 2,000 but also include much smaller cities. The pay comparison also includes a couple of cities that have casinos. Those cities are paying signing bonuses and getting employees from other cities. Many cities are discussing pay increases in the next budget year because pay is changing, and cities have to compete for employees. The pay comparison is useful but is also somewhat dated due to everything that has happened during the past year.

Motion by Bell to approve a three percent (3%) cost of living increase for city employees, 2nd by Jury, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

**#8 Appointment of Mikey Whitefoot and Erin Tilton to the Library Board**

Motion by Jury to appoint Mikey Whitefoot and Erin Tilton to the Library Board, 2nd by Bell, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

**#9 Employee Gift Certificates**

Each year, full-time city employees normally receive \$60.00 in Chapman Bucks and part-time employees receive \$30.00. Part-time employees include volunteer fire department and EMS responders. Chapman Bucks can only be used at local businesses.

Motion by Bell to approve providing full-time city employees with \$60.00 in Chapman Bucks and part-time city employees with \$30.00 in Chapman Bucks, 2nd by Monasmith, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

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**#10 Chapman Bucks for Holiday Lighting Ceremony**

Motion by Jury to approve donating \$400.00 in Chapman Bucks for the drawing at the Senior Center following the Holiday Lighting Ceremony on Friday, 25 November 2022, 2nd by Bell, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

**#11 Security Deposits for Utilities**

Residents are currently charged a \$150.00 deposit when they establish utilities. There is no procedure in place to return the deposits to residents if they never move. If a resident moves, the deposit is applied to their final bill and any unused portion of the deposit is refunded. If a resident never moves, they never receive their deposit back. Many municipalities have a policy in place that would refund the deposit after 12 or 24 months if the resident did not have any late payments. The City Attorney, Brad Jantz, will draft a policy that will provide for refunding resident's deposit after 12 consecutive months of on-time payments. The issue will be addressed at the next city council meeting on 14 December 2022.

**#12 Discussion on Golf Course Budget**

The council packets include the budget for the golf course and the expenditures for this year. Austin Murphy stated that in the past, he would submit a recommended budget, but the City Administrator would ultimately change the budget for the golf course when bringing it to the council for approval.

Austin Murphy stated some new irrigation was recently added between some rough between holes 4 and 6. The banquet room has been busy with reservations for parties. There is one spot available for member's golf cart storage. Austin recommended building a new maintenance shop which would allow the back half of the current maintenance shop to be used for member storage. The front half would be used to store the golf carts owned by the golf course. The back half of the maintenance shop would provide an additional 16-18 spots for member storage. The new shop would be to the southwest of the current shop. It will probably be a two-year project. The budget for next year would probably pay for half of the project and we would finish the project the following year. The new maintenance shop would not interfere with the Butterfield Trail. Councilman Jury mentioned that a steel building may be a good alternative and recommended Austin compare the pricing for a wood structure and one made of steel. The new maintenance shop should have a bathroom. The new maintenance shop would be approximately 30 x 75. The city could budget for the project and have it completed in a couple of years.

**#13 Reports**

**Director of Public Works – Ed Wehrmeister**

The public works team is in the process of putting up the Christmas lights. Everything has been winterized for the winter. The street sweeper has been running frequently to pick up leaves that have come down. The school requested a light at the north crosswalk on Marshall Street to the middle school. The light has been delivered but we have not received the pole.

**Police Chief Kevin Diercks**

Trunk or Treat was a big success, and a lot of people came out for it. There was a fire that night on 5th Street. The camera has been installed in the Durango and the graphics are on order. The east bound entrance to I-70 is now open again.

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**Superintendent of the Golf Course – Austin Murphy**

The Abilene High School golf coach is looking for a place for his team to practice. He wants to bring them over to the golf course once a week to practice. He is considering bringing them on Wednesdays. There are about 15 to 20 kids that would participate. They would be walking and not using golf carts. Chapman has about 10 kids on the golf team. The team from Abilene would use the putting greens and play three holes. Golf season usually starts in March and runs through late May. The Abilene team would not use the golf course for tournaments, just practice. Austin will present the council with a draft of charges for the Abilene team to use the golf course.

**Director of Parks and Recreation – Tori Heller**

The youth co-ed basketball program has started. The city partnered with the school and Coach Gruver is running it as a 3-on-3 basketball league. Around 87 kids are participating in the program. They meet on Sundays at the High School or Middle School. They conduct skills and coaching for about an hour and then they break up into three 16-minute games. The teams rotate so they are never on the same team. Each kid has a running total for his/her points for the whole 4-week season. If you are on the winning team, you receive an additional 10 points. At the end of the season, an MVP will be selected for the boys' and girls' group. There was a good turn out for the clean-up of the ballfields. We took down all the canvases and overhead nets and everything has been put away. The recreation department received a generous donation from a community member, and they want the funds to be used on the ball parks. The recreation board is revamping the advertisement and sponsorship programs. This will allow businesses to place ads at the golf course, tennis courts, and the ballfields. There will be an option to advertise at the ball fields and to have the logo of the business on the T-shirts that the kids wear. There will an option for just a sign at the ballfields and an option for a sign and the logo on the t-shirts. The goal is to have the new advertising policy in place before the end of November.

**Fire Chief – Cecil Thrush**

The city needs a new fire station. The city owns the property south of DK Sports and it is an optimal area for a new fire station. There is plenty of room and the city could build a full training center over time. There are grants available. The building would be a public safety building with police on one side, a common area in the middle with three shower rooms and a large meeting room, and the fire department on the other side with five or six apparatus bays. The water hole behind the fitness center could be used for a water training grounds. The facility would be a fixed training facility for regional training. We also need a new fire truck, a brush truck, and a couple of new engines. The second-out engine is getting old and is starting to need a lot of maintenance. It is a small truck that carries two guys. When we back the engine into the fire department, it is almost touching the wall and there is barely enough room to walk sideways between the truck and the wall. All the bunker gear is two feet from the trucks and the exhaust. The fire department has an annual budget of only \$40,000. The trucks are all certified for the year. The trucks are pumped every year for an annual pump test. There was a large fire on Halloween night. Three other fire departments were on scene as mutual aid. The public safety building would probably be \$150,000 to \$200,000 for just the building. The new fire department in Herington is about 1.1 million dollars but it is turn key and fully ready to go. The grants will pay for a portion of it, but it depends on which grants are available. BRIC grants will fully fund shelters and we may be able to do something in conjunction with that. The project would be multiple steps and take several years.

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**City Administrator – Bill Flanery**

The City Clerk, Bill Flanery, will be out of the office the following week for training. Ninety-five people have signed up for the Nixle-Everbridge emergency notification system. The city has used the notification system one time for the water leak near the municipal pool. The door to the fitness center has been repaired by Ed Kozlowski. The abatement project for the old grocery store has been approved and the State will pay 100% of the cost. We are waiting for a start date for the project. A citation was issued to the gentleman at 622 Stone Lane for a blight violation. He was issued a blight notice and failed to correct the problem. The City Attorney had a conversation with the Municipal Judge and let him know the Council wants to place an emphasis on blight properties. We have been in contact with Matthew Scott from ChargePoint about charging stations for electric vehicles. He is collecting information on possible grant opportunities on the I-70 corridor. KMEA is also looking into charging stations. The Holiday Lighting Ceremony is on Friday, 25 November, from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. The city will have a luncheon for all city employees on Wednesday, 23 November. All council members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Council**

Councilmember Monasmith –

Asked if the lights donated by the Root family had been installed. The lights and poles have been delivered and they will be installed at the City Park as soon as possible.

Asked if there were any plans to repair the outside of City Hall. There have not been any discussions or plans to repair the stucco outside of City Hall. The repairs can be part of the budget discussions next year.

Councilmember Jury – Thanked the department heads for their reports. It is much nicer to hear the reports for each department from the actual department heads.

Mayor Battishill – Thanked everyone for their hard work. The reports from the department heads keep everyone on top of their toes in case someone asks about a particular project or issue.

**#14 Adjournment**

Motion by Bell to adjourn, 2nd by Jury, vote: yes, unanimous (5-0). Motion carried.

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Howard Battishill, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Bill Flanery, City Clerk