

October 12, 2022

The scheduled monthly meeting of the Chapman City Council was held Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at City Hall at 7:00 pm. Mayor Howard Battishill was present. Councilmembers Tim Jury, 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, Matthew Hutzenbiler of the American Legion, and Carl Maxwell.

#2 Consent Agenda

Motion by Jury to approve the consent agenda as presented, 2nd by Bell, vote: yes, unanimous (4-0). Motion carried.

#3 Public Comments

Carl Maxwell stated he had been a mayor and a member of the city council and understands how difficult the job can be. Mr. Maxwell asked if the City of Chapman was a homeowner's association and if the city paid for an individual's liability insurance in case someone was injured on their property. The City of Chapman is not a homeowner's association, and the city does not provide liability insurance to homeowners. Mr. Maxwell asked if the alleyways between houses were considered a public route of transportation. City Attorney, Brad Jantz, stated the alleyways provide an easement and can be used for ingress/egress which allows vehicles to pass through them, but they are primarily platted for use as an easement for utilities. There are alleys that are platted as a public roadway. It would depend on the location and how it is actually platted. Mr. Maxwell asked how far onto an individual's property is considered public domain. Mr. Jantz stated that if there is a utility easement on the front of the property, franchise holders and utilities have access to the entire easement. If there is a sidewalk, the public has the right to use the sidewalk. It is still private property for the purpose of maintenance and ownership. Mr. Maxwell thanked the Council for their time. He stated that he is proud to be a U.S. Citizen and a veteran. Mr. Maxwell stated that he is now a reverend.

Matthew Hutzenbiler with the American Legion stated the archery event for the weekend was moving forward. The American Legion is working with Astra Insurance for insurance coverage for the event and there should not be an issue with coverage for the event. Mr. Jantz stated the City is insured with EMC, but the archery event would not be covered by the normal policy. If the American Legion has any difficulty with getting coverage for the event, EMC could provide special event coverage.

#4 Resolution 10122022 – Approval of Name Change for Kansas Power Pool (KPP)

City Administrator Bill Flanery stated the City of Chapman has been a member of the Kansas Power Pool since 2004. However, the City does not receive any services from the Kansas Power Pool and has never entered a contract for services from Kansas Power Pool. The Kansas Power Pool is a municipal energy agency, and the City of Chapman is considered a member of the KPP. The KPP is seeking approval to change their name from "The Kansas Power Pool (KPP), a Municipal Energy Agency" to "KPP Energy, a Municipal Energy Agency."

Motion by Bell to approve Resolution 10122022 – Approval of Name Change for Kansas Power Pool (KPP), 2nd by Jury, vote: yes, unanimous (4-0). Motion carried.

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#5 Resolution 10122022B – Road Closure for Trunk or Treat (400-500 Block of North Marshall from 3:00pm to 8:00pm on 31 October 2022)

Motion by Jury to approve Resolution 10122022B – Road Closure for Trunk or Treat (400-500 Block or North Marshall from 3:00pm to 8:00pm on 31 October 2022), 2nd by Bell, vote: yes, unanimous (4-0). Motion carried.

#6 Discussion on Blight Notices

Councilwoman Monasmith stated that blight properties are becoming a big problem. There are some residents that have physical limitations that prevent them from cleaning their yards but the majority of them are people that just do not care. Councilwoman Monasmith stated that when she sold her last house, the appraiser took pictures of the house across the street and said it was going to hurt the property value. City Administrator Bill Flanery stated that no residents had been fined for blight this year. The City has issued thirty-three blight notices so far this year. Those have been for a variety of reasons ranging from abandoned/inoperable vehicles to rubbish/garbage in yards to weeds and grass in excess of twelve inches. Most people that receive a blight notice do at least some cleaning to take care of the problem. The City has issued two citations for blight. One of them was primarily for inoperable vehicles and the other was for excessive rubbish and garbage. Those citations were issued in May and July. The recipients of those citations have been to court, but their cases are still open. They have received continuations each month from the judge. Until there are consequences for failing to clean up their properties, the residents are going to continue to disregard the notices. City Attorney Brad Jantz stated that he could ask Judge Barker for more strident enforcement for blight citations. Judge Barker normally gives the residents some time. The City can increase the fees for each offense and lien the property for all the costs. The junk and old cars in yards are far worse than the tall grass. City Administrator Bill Flanery stated that he could write more citations but does not want to write citations if the city is never going to follow through with it. The administrative fee for mowing someone's grass is \$140.00. The city has done that twice in the past couple of years. However, people will generally mow their yard before it comes to that. The fine for rubbish and garbage can range up to \$500.00. Residents are first given a blight notice that provides ten calendar days to correct the problem. If they do not correct the problem after 10 days, they are issued a citation and given a court date. Court is only held once a month and that slows the process. The Judge will also normally give at least one extension that adds another 30 days to the process. Councilman Jury asked if any changes to the city code were necessary. City Attorney Brad Jantz stated the code could be modified to establish a minimum fine for each offense. The Council agreed to revisit the issue in 90 days. The City Administrator will issue additional citations for offenses and the City Attorney will ask the Judge to act on the citations.

#7 Discussion on Police Department Budget

City Administrator Bill Flanery stated the council packets include the current Police Department budget and a breakdown of spending for the Police Department through August. Salaries makes up a big portion of the Police Department budget. The Police Department sent someone through the Police Academy this year for 14 weeks. The officer is paid for the time they are in the Academy, but they are not here to provide service to the community. This results in paying two officers for that timeframe. Police Chief Kevin Diercks stated that the Police Department shops based on needs, and they have had to delay purchasing some equipment. The Police Department budget for salaries in 2023 is almost \$100,000 higher than 2022 but half of that is to provide funding for a School Resource Officer. The School Board has not voted or acted on the School Resource Officer position. The City has entered a contract with Everbridge for an emergency notification system. The system is being created now and should be in

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place in a few weeks. Once the system is ready, a notification will be sent out to residents allowing them the opportunity to participate and receive emergency notifications. The cost of the emergency notification system will be shared by each department. The new patrol car will be taken to Andover on Friday for the installation of a new camera system. The camera system is a refurbished system and will be about half the cost of a new system. The Police Department has received about \$30,000 worth of radios for free just by making some calls to other departments.

#8 Discussion on Cost of Living Pay Increase for City Employees

City Administrator stated the City of Chapman normally gives city employees a 3% cost of living pay increase each year. The inflation rate is over 8% this year and finished at over 7% at the end of last year. The Council asked if other cities were giving cost of living increases. The League of Municipalities creates a survey each year that outlines pay ranges for municipalities. The City of Chapman looked at the pay range for the Director or Public Works but has not done an analysis for every position in the city. The Council asked for a comparison and analysis for the salary range of each position within the city.

#9 Reports

Police Chief Kevin Diercks

An alert tree trimming crew reported that someone was cutting locks at the storage units by Casey's. The report resulted in the apprehension of the individual. The subject is in jail and the Police Department is working with Abilene and Dickinson County on some other burglaries.

There was a 2022 Faith and Blue Concert in Abilene last week. It involved all the law enforcement agencies in the county. There were booths, vendors, and numerous activities for children. There was a good turnout, and it seems like everyone is on the same team.

Director of Parks and Recreation – Tori Heller

About sixty-five girls signed up for volleyball. Basketball will start on November 6th. There are about twenty-two children signed up at this time. The adult co-ed softball league will finish this weekend. There will be one more tournament the following weekend and that will conclude softball for the season. We will have a community clean-up after the last tournament to clean up the fields.

Superintendent of the Golf Course – Austin Murphy

There was a golf tournament last week for Abilene baseball. It was packed and all thirty golf carts were used. The leagues are closing down for the year.

Director of Public Works – Ed Wehrmeister

The public works crew have been working on several water leaks. There was an electric issue at the Butterfield Apartments. The City contacted Gerry Bieker with KMEA and they sent a lineman to assist with the issues. Public Works will schedule a leaf pickup during November. Public Works has budgeted for sand.

City Administrator – Bill Flanery

There have been a lot of complaints about the increase in the sewer surcharge. Municipal Clerk training is scheduled for 14-16 November in Wichita.

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Council

Councilmember Jury – Asked if there has been any progress in charging stations. Charging stations can be figured into the budget for next year. The money received from FEMA could be spent to produce some revenue. City Attorney Brad Jantz stated that Herington is working with a company to provide charging stations. Mr. Jantz will provide the contact information to the City Administrator.

#10 Adjournment

Motion by Bell to adjourn, 2nd by Monasmith, vote: yes, unanimous (4-0). Motion carried.

Howard Battishill, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bill Flanery, City Clerk