



City of Charleston, MO

204 N. Main Street; Charleston, MO 63834
PH 573.683.3325; FX 573.683.3297

**City Council
October 11, 2022**

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Richard Toon. Also in attendance were council members Jackie Whiteside and Patrick Farmer. Interim City Manager Philip Halter, City Clerk Ali Morris, City Attorney Tabatha Thurman, Chief of the Department of Public Safety Robert Hearn Jr., and Code Enforcement Officer, Ken Stevenson were also present.

Recognition of Visitors: Sherry Austin, Catie Austin, Mike Mueller, Joyce Foster, Barbara Stovall, Jayne Ellen Ray, Lance Ray, Kenny Hulshoff, Rodney Jones, Pam Jones, and Jason Oliver were present.

Sherry Austin spoke on behalf of CHARM, informing everyone that they, along with the Baptist Church, NAACP, and Fresh Start, the nonprofit organization, will be hosting a Trunk-or-Treat event. She also let everyone know that a meeting will be held at the First Christian Church on Thursday, October 13th at 7PM to begin planning events for Christmas.

Ms. Austin then stated that she hoped everyone has had a chance to see the new park in the lot beside Dr. Petersen's dental office and said that the park has yet to be named. Mayor Toon stated that he has driven by but has not had a chance to sit on any of the benches yet. Ms. Austin then explained that the current benches are temporary as they are waiting on the ordered ones to arrive. She also said there will be more phases, and this is just the beginning.

Joyce Foster addressed the room and stated that she is "due back to the area", as she is originally from Charleston. She stated that she is a life coach and is just trying to get to know all members of the community.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Mayor Toon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 13th, 2022, meeting, and the Closed Session minutes for the September 13th, 2022, meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Farmer to approve all minutes. Councilman Whiteside seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Report of City Business / Operations: Interim City Manager, Philip Halter provided a written report as part of the meeting packet and began by stating that most of the month of September was taken up with the search for a new City Manager.

Mr. Halter then informed the council that the Public Works Department has now gone back to regular hours, which is 7AM-4PM. They work 6AM to 3PM during the hot, summer months.

He also explained that major improvements are being made at Charles Williams Park. Concrete is being poured, and everything the city was supposed to do, has been done. We are now waiting on contractors. Mr.

Halter explained that we should be receiving restrooms and pavilions there sometime in December, weather permitting.

Mr. Halter then elaborated on a meeting that he attended with MODOT regarding the improvements to be made to widen Exit 12 on I-57. Bids will be let in beginning in March of 2023, with construction estimated to begin end of May, beginning of June of 2023. Mr. Halter told everyone to expect traffic issues during this time, as the project could take up to one year to complete. He also explained that he spoke to MODOT regarding the flooding issue that occurs frequently around Deal Street, Finney, and West Marshall. They said they will look into it, and at least it is now on their radar.

Mr. Halter told the council that we have consolidated a little more money, adding that he spoke with Councilman Whiteside about union investments of up to 4-4.5% for up to one year. He explained that he is unsure if we want to invest outside of town but could possibly use these rates as leverage with local banks to draw more interest on our money.

At this time, Interim City Manager Philip Halter explained that we have yet to hear back regarding the status on the water/sewer grant, but we should be hearing from them sometime this week. He then went on to explain that we did hear back from USDA regarding the grant to buy some police vehicles. Unfortunately, they lowered the cap, which excluded our application from consideration. Chief of Police, Bobby Hearnese then spoke up and said that even though we budgeted to purchase two new vehicles, no one has any available to buy right now.

Mr. Halter acknowledged a zoom meeting that was held, which recognized our Public Works Director, David Harris as "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator of the Year". Mr. Halter asked that if anyone were to run into David, to congratulate and thank him for his hard work.

During the month of September, Mr. Halter authorized the purchase of a sand or salt spreader to be used by Public Works. Once received, David Harris mixed sand, seed, and fertilizer and spread at Whipple Park to get some grass growing. Mr. Halter explained that although the equipment was purchased primarily to use during winter conditions, this was a good start at putting it to use.

Mr. Halter then explained that he also authorized the purchase of a used trailer to haul our new excavator on. We are now accepting bids for an old trailer, which is too small to haul the equipment on. Bids will be accepted until 3PM on October 21st.

At this time, Mr. Halter let everyone know that Public Works Director, David Harris has hired two new employees. The Public Works Department typically has ten employees, but since the last retiree left, they have been operating with nine. Robert Keener will start full-time on October 17th. Phil Rowland has been hired to work as a welder on an as needed basis. Halter explained that by hiring a part-time welder, the city will save money.

Mr. Halter then reported on the current sealcoating that has been taking place within the Winchester addition. He reported that the project is not quite finished as the contractor ran out of product, and Public Works hopes to have every street completed by Thursday of this week, weather permitting.

At this time, Mayor, Richard Toon asked what the plan was for the old playground equipment that was removed from AD Simpson Park. Mr. Halter said that it is all gone. Mayor Toon said he had someone to inquire about purchasing it. Mr. Halter told him that most of it was in bad condition, and there could have been liability issues if someone were to use it and get injured.

Mayor Toon then asked to confirm that the USDA grant that was applied for in hopes of new police vehicles was indeed lowered to \$50,000, while we asked for over \$200,000. Chief of Police, Bobby Hearnese replied yes, however USDA's fiscal year began October 1st and we are hoping they raise the cap so that we can resubmit. Hearnese then explained that we should hear back by February or March if we are eligible. Hearnese

also mentioned the memo that was provided in the council packets in which he explained that the council had previously voted that they go for a 100% grant application after the process was explained to them by Jason Hartke at a previous council meeting.

Interim City Manager asked if anyone else had any questions regarding his report. Councilman Whiteside said he had a statement. He said that he felt like it would make more sense to replace the Exit 12 overpass with a four-lane, instead of a three-lane overpass, as there is more and more traffic through that area every year. Mr. Halter stated that it would not be as functional, and there is also possibility that they will tear out the bridge going into Kentucky at some point within the next ten years, which would eliminate a lot of that traffic. Mr. Halter then stated that although that is a state project, if we made changes, the city would most likely end up paying for the cost of the changes. They both agreed that they are happy to see them doing what they plan to do.

At this time, Mr. Halter referred to the budget report provided in the council packets. He stated that we are currently running under budget.

He then referred to the monthly expenses for the month of September that were over \$5,000. He said there were no surprises there.

Mr. Halter explained that Code Enforcement Officer, Ken Stevenson was very busy during the month of September, especially working on developing a method for towing junk or abandoned vehicles. Mr. Halter then explained that after speaking with Greg Heppe, they would not charge us for the towing process, and we are looking forward to being able to have a solution to this issue soon.

Mayor Toon then spoke up and said he liked the note at the bottom of Mr. Stevenson's report which explained that he was able to refer many business owners to City Hall to obtain a business license, which ultimately lead to collecting \$825.00 in September.

Mr. Toon then explained that we require these licenses for the residents' benefit. He explained that they need to have people working on their homes or properties who have the proper paperwork, including insurance coverage incase they were to get injured on their property and then try and sue the homeowner(s).

The Animal Control Report was referred to. Mayor Toon and Councilman Whiteside both said they saw the dog catcher out and about on Sunday and were glad to see it.

Mayor Toon then stated that while he was at City Hall on Saturday, he noticed that apparently there was a rural fire nearby and he said he was very impressed at the response time in the police/fire department. Chief of Police, Bobby Hearn explained that it was a bean field fire.

Old Business: Mayor Toon moved on to the first agenda item under Old Business. Interim City Manager, Philip Halter explained that the information was provided in the council packets regarding the Planning and Zoning meeting, which was held on September 20, 2022. No one opposed the expansion of Lot 8 in the Plainview Addition at the meeting, but the council just needed to make the final decision. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the zoning plans. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Next under Old Business, was visitor Mike Mueller to give an update on the upcoming Fall Community Market. Mr. Mueller said he had passed out pamphlets to all council members and that these would be passed out among the local businesses. He then explained that they have food vendors booked for all four weekends of the Market, which will be Buzz Feed the first weekend. The second weekend will be burgers and dogs provided by the First Assembly of God Church. The third will be Wade On It Smoked Meats, and the final weekend will be fish provided by The Magnolia Campground & Store out of Bertrand. These vendors will also be taking orders for special events, including Thanksgiving and Christmas. Music and entertainment will also be provided by KYMO radio station, Joyful Noise from Sikeston, Mitch Pullen of Charleston, and

Heavenly Highway from Sikeston. Mr. Mueller then said that he is waiting on the final paperwork but will soon provide the city with proof of adequate insurance coverage for the event. Along with the pamphlet, a questionnaire was included in hopes to compile data after the Market.

At this time, Mayor Toon moved to the next item on the agenda, which was to discuss selling the city owned property on West Marshall to Mr. Rodney Jones. Interim City Manager, Philip Halter stated that he believed Mr. Jones would like to delay purchasing the property at this time. Councilman Whiteside suggested we donate it. Mr. Halter proposed to sell it for one dollar to make things legal. He also explained that Mr. Rodney Jones and his wife, Pam Jones would really appreciate a donation from the city to support their nonprofit organization, Meet the Need. City Attorney, Tabatha Thurman suggested this be discussed during the closed session.

The final item under Old Business was to discuss moving on with the process of the city becoming a certified local government (CLG). An example of the amendment to the city code was included within the council packets for members to review. They all agreed it looked good, and that we should have an ordinance prepared for the November meeting to move forward with the process. A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside to approve the amendment to the code. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

New Business: Interim City Manager proposed they change the date of the November council meeting from the 8th to the 15th as it would give us little time to prepare, and he will also be out of town the week of the 8th. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the date change. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss creating a Burn Ban Order. Director of Public Safety, Bobby Hearnese then spoke up and suggested to amend the current ordinance so that he was able to enact a burn ban when necessary, without having to take drastic measures to do so. He then explained that even when the state or county has a burn ban order, agriculture and all other businesses that burn for profit are excluded. A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside to pass the order. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. Mr. Halter then suggested for an ordinance to be prepared for the next meeting for final approval. Chief Hearnese said he would have that arranged, but in the meantime, a declaration of emergency needed to be signed by the Mayor and City Clerk at the end of the meeting.

Next on the agenda was visitor Barbara Stovall who wanted to discuss hosting a Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Mrs. Stovall explained that she would like to have a community event on the city's property near the Bowden Center. She said she would like to see the coming together of the community and the comradery of the town to get into the spirit of the season. After the tree lighting, Mrs. Stovall plans to have everyone gather inside the Bowden Center to enjoy hot chocolate and cookies. She then said this is mainly an event for the children. Mrs. Stovall explained that she does not yet have a date set but wanted to come speak with the city council before she forms a committee with the churches.

Mr. Halter said he didn't think there was anything that needed to be done with the city, but suggested she coordinate with the Christmas parade.

At this time, Jayne Ellen Ray spoke up on behalf of CHARM and said she just wanted to remind everyone of the tree lighting ceremony that they have been hosting annually, which will be on December 1st in the open lot beside the post office.

Mr. Halter suggested that Mrs. Stovall also coordinate her event around CHARM's event.

Councilman Whiteside thanked Mrs. Stovall for coordinating such an event and said we need more positivity.

Next on the agenda was Bill NO. 3915/Ordinance NO. 3056 to authorize an agreement with MODOT for them to use part of a city owned right-of-way to make improvements and necessary connections to city streets under

the MODOT project to begin spring of 2023. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the ordinance. Councilman Farmer seconded. The motion passed.

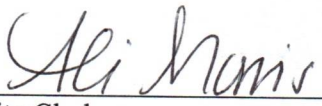
The final item on the agenda was to approve an easement between Ameren Missouri and the City of Charleston regarding 718 S Elm St. They have installed a cellular tower and need the easement recorded in order to go onto city property if needed to make any type of adjustments or repairs.

Mr. Halter explained that the new tower is supposed to provide 5G speed.

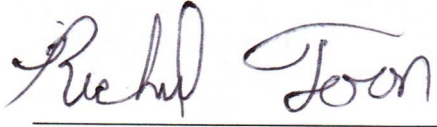
Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the easement. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Councilman Farmer to adjourn the open session meeting in order to go into closed session. Councilman Whiteside seconded the motion. The motion passed and the open session meeting was closed.

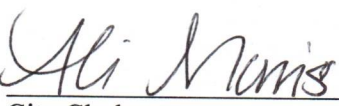
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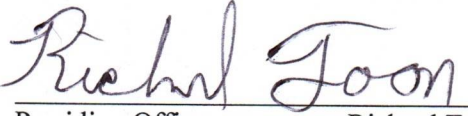
City Clerk Ali Morris



Mayor Richard Toon



City Clerk Ali Morris



Presiding Officer Richard Toon