



CITY OF CHARLESTON

City Council Meeting

August 13, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rick Toon at 6:30PM. Councilman Jackie Whiteside, Councilman Jason Oliver, Councilwoman Monica Goodin, City Manager, Greg Luehmann, City Attorney, Tabatha Graham, City Clerk, Ali Morris, Chief of Department of Public Safety, Robert Hearnese Jr., Public Safety Officer, Percy Owens, and Public Safety Officer, Wesley McDermott were present.

Consideration of Prior Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Councilman Oliver to approve the meeting minutes from the July 16, 2024, regular meeting and the July 22, 2024, public hearing minutes. Councilwoman Goodin seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.

Report of City Business: City Manager, Greg Luehmann began his report by mentioning that he met with some members of the Mississippi County IDA to discuss properties owned by the city that may pose as potential industrial opportunities.

The city manager said he spoke with a representative from Enterprise Fleet Management to review available vehicles and programs.

Luehmann then stated that he and David Harris met with Rich Cochran with Waters Engineering to discuss the tentative plans for drainage improvements. He mentioned that the public hearing regarding the drainage project went well.

A citizen contacted city hall asking if campers were allowed to be parked in town. Luehmann said yes, they are allowed as long as they are not parked in the street, and no one can be living in them.

Mr. Luehmann also mentioned that he met with David Harris and Darrall Hirtz with Waters Engineering to discuss the upcoming sidewalk repair grant work. The surveying of the project began late in the month of July.

A brush cutter was purchased to aid in maintaining the Byrd Walk and other areas in town. A donation was made by the Byrd Foundation to reimburse the cost of the brush cutter, and the city is very appreciative.

Luehmann said he met with David Harris to discuss final plans to install a chain link fence around the new dog kennel. The facility is now operational.

In closing, Luehmann mentioned that citizens had expressed interest in running for the city council positions in the upcoming April election.

There were no questions regarding the financial statements, the Public Works monthly report, the Code enforcement monthly report, or the Department of Public Safety monthly report.

Old Business: Last month it was discussed to present a plaque to the First Assembly of God Church for their efforts in creating a wonderful Fourth of July experience for the community. Pastor David McLucas accepted the plaque and said that it takes the entire community to have a successful event, and he was accepting it on behalf of everyone.

New Business: The first item of new business was to accept the resignation of Councilperson Cedrica Polk. City Manager Luehmann read Councilperson Polk's resignation letter aloud. The letter stated that Polk resigned as of July 16, 2024.

Mayor Toon explained that the council would go into a closed session meeting after the open session to discuss how to handle the vacant council seat and that information should be available the following day.

The second item of new business was **Bill NO. 3956 / Ordinance NO. 3097-An Ordinance of the City of Charleston, Missouri, to Establish a Procedure to Disclose Potential Conflicts of Interest and Substantial Interest for Certain Municipal Officials as Required by State Law.** City Attorney, Tabatha Graham explained that this ordinance is required to be passed every other year by the Missouri Ethics Commission as a formality. A motion was made by Councilwoman Goodin to approve Bill NO. 3956/Ordinance NO. 3097. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion carried and the ordinance was approved.

Mr. Kenny Hulshof was next on the agenda to provide an update on Charleston Historic Preservation Committee activities. Hulshof explained that Tom Graham resigned from the commission, and they appreciate Larry Smith stepping in to fill the void. Hulshof mentioned they were "inching closer" to Charleston becoming an official Certified Local Government. He went on to explain the purpose of becoming a CLG is to potentially gain access to technical funds to help promote the mission of preserving the historic business community.

Hulshof said Charleston does not currently require a demo permit for any historic property and that may need to be reconsidered.

A couple of historic buildings were discussed. Councilman Whiteside said he hopes they are preserved as they are part of our history.

Mr. Hulshof announced that the commission holds its meetings on the second Monday of each month in the council room at 5:00 PM and they are public meetings.

Hulshof also mentioned that only 65 Missouri communities have gone the extra mile to become Certified Local Governments, and we are hoping Charleston becomes one of them.

Recognition of Visitors: Talisha Mays, Cal Coleman, Tiffany Shankle, Sheila Shankle, Jayne Ellen Ray, Cedrica Polk, Raymond Ivy, Sarah Housman, Ryan Housman, Jennifer Hall, Pastor David McLucas, Barbara Cleaves, Sherry Austin, Catie Austin, Rodney Jones, Todd Clodfelter, and Michael Owens were present. Mayor Toon reiterated what he addressed last month, that if anyone has an issue, he asked that they approach the city manager first. If their issues were then unsolved, they could then approach the council with said issue. Visitors were asked to approach the table in front of the council if they wanted to speak. Talisha Mays approached and asked the city manager to repeat the date that Councilperson Cedrica Polk resigned. The city manager read the date on the document again as July 16, 2024. Mays asked if there were any prospects. Mayor Toon said no, they would discuss creating an application where prospects could attach resumes or something similar in closed session. The City Attorney explained that according to Missouri Revised Statute 79.280, the Mayor shall appoint someone to the vacant seat. Mays asked the city attorney if Charleston was a Chapter 77 or 78. The city attorney said that Charleston is a 3rd class city. Mays said the resume idea was "cute". The city attorney said the council would meet in a closed session to discuss the vacant seat and how to address it. Mays asked how long the seat would be open. The city attorney reminded Mays that they had not yet met to discuss a plan.

Raymond Ivy stood up and asked if questions could be directed at Mr. Hulshof. Ivy mentioned the Bowden Center, Lincoln School, and Helen Currin Center as being historic buildings. Mr. Hulshof explained that unfortunately if a building was torn down and replaced, that disqualifies it as historic.

Cedrica Polk approached the council and then addressed the visitors by introducing herself as a former council member and Housing Authority Board member. She explained that her decision to step down was not an easy decision but was due to the well-being of her children's livelihood. An opportunity was presented to her outside of Charleston, and she said she wanted to make it clear to the community her reason for stepping down.

Polk then read a police report regarding the property she had been moving out of in the housing authority on Carver Street. The report included a list of stolen items. Polk became emotional and stated that her privacy had been invaded. During the investigation it was discovered that the many cameras owned by the housing authority were not in operating condition and had not been for a very long time. Polk said that something needs to be done to help with security in the community.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside to adjourn the regular session meeting to go into closed session. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The regular session was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Ali Morris
City Clerk

Monica Goodin
Presiding Officer

Ali Morris
City Clerk

Monica Goodin
Mayor **Pro Tem**