



CITY OF CHARLESTON

City Council Meeting

May 14, 2024

Meeting Minutes

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

Consideration of Prior Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Councilman Oliver to approve the minutes from both the April 9, 2024, Regular Meeting and the April 24, 2024, Special Call Meeting. Councilwoman Polk seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The minutes were approved.

Report of City Business: City Manager, Greg Luehmann began his monthly report by stating he met with Mr. Reginald Young about purchasing additional trash cans for the walking trail and parks. Four have already been installed and we are waiting for the other four to be placed.

Luehmann said he met with Paul Page from the Housing Authority who is retiring. Stephanie Thompson is replacing him, and Page said he no longer wanted to serve on the Land Clearance Development Board. Luehmann said he thought they needed to appoint a whole new board. City Attorney, Tabatha Graham agreed that was the plan.

A copy of a letter from a resident expressing gratitude for addressing dog issues on Cypress Street was included in the council packets and Mr. Luehmann pointed out that.

Mr. Luehmann then explained that he spoke with a concerned citizen who brought him videos of vandalism which occurred at Charles Williams Park in relation to four wheelers.

Luehmann also spoke with KFVS-12 on their interest in a story on the Byrd Foundation's contribution to the city's parks and the new walking trail.

The city manager then mentioned that Mr. Mike Mueller of Day 3 Seeds informed him that eight pallet planters were placed in the parks prior to the Dogwood-Azalea Festival. Mr. Luehmann also mentioned that the annual festival turned out to be a successful event with over 8,000 visitors according to Placer AI, which is a location intelligence and foot traffic data software.

The dog kennel is about 79-80% complete at this time. It was recently inspected by the Department of Agriculture with hardly any recommendations. Mr. Luehmann explained that he believes it will be usable within 30-45 days depending on how fast David Harris and his crew are able to work.

To conclude his report, Mr. Luehmann said that he, David Harris, and Chief Hearnese met with Gerald Walton with Wireless USA to discuss storm siren locations and pricing with the possibility of adding a 4th siren.

Councilwoman Goodin asked if this would be replacing the current sirens that do not work or adding to them. Luehmann said it would be to replace the current sirens and possibly add a fourth. Councilman Whiteside asked about a warranty. Chief Hearnese said he believed they were under warranty for at least 10 years. Mr. Luehmann explained that the city would be responsible for approximately \$45,000 with a grant paying the additional \$55,000 it would cost for the sirens and there may be a donor willing to contribute the city's portion.

The budget report was included in the council packets. The city manager explained that it showed more money in the Park Fund than normal because we received reimbursement on some of the park expenses. We also received two years' worth of the school park use agreement payments which put the fund in good standing.

There were no questions regarding the major bills paid in April.

There were no questions regarding the Public Works, Code Enforcement, or Public Safety monthly reports.

Old Business: Consideration of **Bill NO. 3952 / Ordinance NO. 3093-An Ordinance Re-Establishing the Name for the City Park Located in the Plainview Addition** was the only item of old business. Because the park improvements have been donated by the Byrd Foundation, the family requested the park to be named the "James L. Byrd III Memorial Park". Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the name of the park and the ordinance to establish the new name. Councilwoman Goodin seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion carried and the ordinance passed.

New Business: Copies of the "Land and Lot Delinquent List" were given to each council member prior to the beginning of the meeting. Each year there is a resolution to approve the list and to direct the County Collector to proceed with collection of the delinquent taxes.

Councilman Oliver made a motion to approve **Resolution NO. 1113-A Resolution Approving the "Land and Lot Delinquent List" and Directing the Mississippi County Collector to Proceed with Collection of Delinquent Real Estate Taxes According to Law on the Behalf of the City of Charleston, Missouri.**

Councilman Whiteside seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion carried and Resolution NO. 1113 was approved. All copies of the land and lot delinquent list were then given back to the city clerk.

The last item of new business was to discuss the age limitation of fishing at Hequembourg Pond. The current sign states that fishing is limited to persons 16 years of age and younger, and persons 60 years of age and older. Mayor Toon asked why that was established and Councilman Whiteside said it was decided in the 50s or 60s. All of the council agreed that it did not seem necessary to have age limits.

Councilwoman Polk asked how often the pond is filled. The city manager said he had spoken to the conservation about stocking it depending on the depth. There is no age limit on fishing at Whipple Park. The city attorney advised either voting to remove the sign and simply follow state regulations or creating an ordinance to change the age limitations.

Councilman Whiteside made a motion to remove the age limitation sign. Councilwoman Goodin seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed.

Cal Coleman from the visitors' section spoke up and stated that the new white rock that was placed around the pond inhibits a lot of people over the age of 60 from fishing in the pond and that he often takes people in wheelchairs there to fish.

Recognition of Visitors: Cal Coleman, Talisha Mays, Sheila Shankle, Tiffany Shankle, Jayne Ellen Ray, Kenny Hulshof, Raymond Ivy, Hudson Byrd, Catie Austin, Sherry Austin, Todd Clodfelter, and Ann Riggins were present.

At this time Mr. Coleman continued to speak about the white rocks around Hequembourg Pond inhibiting handicapped people from accessing the pond and also stated that the rocks draw snakes for sunbathing. Coleman also added that the pond is already stocked pretty well. He asked that it be considered to remove the rocks and implement a ramp for better access. Councilman Whiteside said they would contact the conservation. The city manager said there may be some funding available to install a ramp or walkway for better access to the pond.

Mr. Coleman also commented that while the new Byrd Walking Trail is nice to have and he enjoys riding his bike there, a lot of states have trails that connect multiple cities and states, and he would love to be able to ride from one end of Charleston to the other on a trail. Mayor Toon said that he is also a cyclist and has looked into routes, but that Charleston may not be able to install such a trail due to not being able to go through anyone's property. Coleman stated that Wappapello has a nice trail and that there is very little to do in this town and it would be nice to be able to have a trail.

Mr. Raymond Ivy stood up and addressed the council. He began by stating that two individuals that used to be squatters, their dog caused permanent damage to his wrist, elbow, and glasses after attacking him. Ivy stated the squatters' names and said they went to court and told the judge they were moving to a different city, but he saw them on Swank Street with the dogs running loose again. Ivy said that the police officers are doing their job, but that the city is not.

Mayor Toon interjected and told Mr. Ivy that if he has a complaint, he needs to see the city manager.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Councilwoman Goodin to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Polk seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Ali Namit
City Clerk

Richard Don
Presiding Officer

Ali Namit
City Clerk

Richard Don
Mayor