



CITY OF CHARLESTON

**City Council Meeting
July 11, 2023**

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Mayor Patrick Farmer. Councilman Jackie Whiteside, Councilman Clark Dugan, Councilwoman Monica Goodin, City Manager Philip Halter, City Clerk Ali Morris, City Attorney Tabatha Graham, and Chief of the Department of Public Safety, Robert Hearn Jr. were present. Councilman Rick Toon was absent.

Consideration of Prior Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside to approve the June 13, 2023, meeting minutes. Councilman Dugan seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.

Report of City Business: City Manager, Philip Halter began by saying it was an overall calm month. Some valves came in for the water plant project. We are still waiting for four more. The roof and down spouts should be complete within the next couple of weeks on the water plant.

Regarding the Floodplain situation, the only issue within city limits is the pavilion at Whipple Park. We will need to update our ordinance regarding the floodplain and get it to the State by December. This information has been given to the city attorney.

The Flock Safety license plate readers should be coming soon. There will be six cameras installed throughout the city.

Mr. Halter then touched on the Ohio/Mississippi River bridge project and stated that the two groups fighting the bridge alignment with the Ohio River are farm and hunting ground owners.

At this time, the City Manager mentioned that he had attended the last Chamber of Commerce meeting to discuss the Chamber potentially supporting the city in the funding it takes to pay the Public Works Department and the Department of Public Safety for their overtime during the annual Dogwood Azalea Festival. Subsequently, the Executive Director of the Chamber resigned after that same meeting.

Regarding the search for a new City Manager, several resumes were submitted, and some interviews have been scheduled.

The city put out an RFP (Request for Proposal) to conduct lead service inventory. Horner & Shifrin submitted a proposal, and it will be discussed later, as it is on the agenda.

Mr. Halter asked if anyone had any questions and Councilwoman Goodin asked if the Chamber had been held accountable for submitting their report of funds/expenditures as requested.

Mr. Halter said yes, and the amounts do add up, but only to what we have given them for the Hotel/Motel Tax. This does not include their profits from the carnival or the rest of the Dogwood Azalea Festival.

At this time, Mr. Halter referred to the list of expenditures over \$5,000 paid during the month of June. The payment to BOK Financial was one of our two annual payments toward the police station rebuild. There was also a payment made on the loan for the fire station.

The payment to MOPERM for the city's liability insurance put the budget a little behind this month. Last year it was paid in August, this year it was due by July 1st.

Mr. Halter said the revenue is running a little behind what was expected so far, but we are only two months into the fiscal year.

The City Manager then asked for the council members to look over the included budget report and let him know if they had any questions.

He then mentioned that there was nothing out of the ordinary in the Public Works report.

A copy of a letter from a resident was included in the packets. The letter thanked the Public Works Department for their quick efforts in repairing a fire hydrant, along with a sidewalk in front of her property. Mr. Halter mentioned that the kind lady who wrote the letter was actually in attendance this evening and he thanked her for taking the time to send praise. Mr. Halter mentioned that it isn't often the city workers get recognized and praised for their efforts.

The Code Enforcement report was next. Mr. Halter said that he asked the Code Enforcement Officer to make a list of overgrown lots in town. The first list he made on June 23rd had a total of 17 properties. The process involves contacting the courthouse to find out who owns the properties and then letters have to be sent out in the mail. As of today, a total of 21 overgrown lots have been identified. Thirteen of them have been mowed since June 23rd. We hope this continues.

Finally, the Department of Public Safety report was acknowledged. Nothing unusual stood out in the report. Mr. Halter said the department was involved in a lot of training during the month.

Old Business: An updated list of city board members was included in the council packets. The individuals whose positions were up for expiration were all called and asked if they wanted to remain on the board(s). All of them agreed to fulfill another term. The mayor had to approve all board members. Once he looked it over, he said they looked fine. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the city board members. Councilman Dugan seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion carried and the board members were approved.

Next on the agenda was the consideration of **Bill NO. 3932/Ordinance NO. 3073**, An Ordinance to Approve the Contract with Charleston R-1 School District for School Resource Officer Services. The City Manager mentioned that the contract was previously signed and approved by the council at the last meeting, but we did not have the ordinance at that time.

Mr. Halter also mentioned that he had spoken to the Superintendent, Jamarcus Williams, and they discussed the contract, but nothing changed.

Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve Bill NO. 3932/Ordinance NO. 3073.

Councilman Dugan seconded the motion. All were in favor. The ordinance was approved.

Next on the agenda, was the re-consideration of an amended proposal from "Make My Move".

Mr. Halter explained that he had previously brought this program proposal to the council in March. At that time, the proposal was for the company to recruit five individuals who would move to Charleston. The original cost to the city would be \$24,000 for the company to find individuals with remote jobs, willing to move. They expressed that the idea was for the city to earn its money back in tax dollars over time. The council did not feel that it was a good idea in March.

Mr. Halter spoke to the company again, and they re-proposed that they could find five individuals within a three-month period of time and the cost to the city would be \$6,000, which would be refunded if they were unsuccessful.

Councilwoman Goodin asked what the benefit would be and if we really need assistance when people seem to be moving here left and right anyway.

Mr. Halter explained that the individuals would be required to live here for a minimum of two years and the hope would be that they would choose to stay, maybe bring in business with them, and their tax dollars would be of benefit. He also said that the company encourages cities to throw in incentives such as a country club membership.

Councilwoman Goodin said she did not see the point unless they would be willing to buy land and build a house. The city attorney, Tabatha Graham, asked if Mr. Halter had seen a contract from the company. He replied, not yet, he just wanted to repropose the idea to the council. He asked if they wanted him to further investigate or drop the topic. All agreed to further investigate.

Next was consideration of **Bill NO. 3933/Ordinance NO. 3074**, An Ordinance to Execute a Contract with Horner & Shifrin for Lead Service Inventory Services. Mr. Halter began by stating that we have been awarded a \$200,000 grant to get this project going. We have been mandated to conduct lead inventory at every location within the city limits of Charleston. Every city in Missouri has to do the same. This involves looking at every pipe going into houses and businesses. Horner & Shifrin have put together a proposal to help us with this project. They will be working alongside the Public Works Department. The maximum expected cost is \$247,000. If establishments were built in 1988 or after, they may not have to be inspected. We are estimating to inspect 1,400 locations. Horner & Shifrin have done this work before and will help inform residents of the situation and identify all probable locations. Mr. Halter explained that the Public Works Director, David Harris, had said that the biggest concern would be gooseneck pipes. Councilman Dugan said those pipes are fine until they are disturbed and that's when you have issues. The City Manager explained that we do not intend to disturb any at this time, we

simply have to identify the issues first, and report them to the State.

Councilman Dugan made a motion to approve Bill NO. 3933/Ordinance NO. 3074 to approve executing a contract with Horner & Shifrin for lead inventory services. Councilwoman Goodin seconded the motion. All were in favor and the ordinance was approved.

New Business: The first item under new business was to discuss potential dog pound improvements. The City Manager included a copy of a recent newspaper article from Dunklin County where employees were actually fired due to dog pound conditions. We definitely do not want to allow our facility to get in that condition. He then stated he has spoken with the Chief of Police, and they are trying to figure out what size facility we will need and what amenities are necessary. The Chief has started gathering information and is looking into grants to fund such projects.

Councilwoman Goodin stated that she is still consistently hearing complaints from people all over town about the loose dogs. Women are scared and are having to carry weapons with them just to walk on the sidewalks in town. Goodin then mentioned that she felt like we needed to revisit the idea of accepting assistance from the veterinary clinics that the council once turned down. The offer was to collect a fee for a dog tag on behalf of the city whenever dogs are brought into the clinic. This would also ensure that these animals are vaccinated. Goodin said this makes perfect sense to her and that the city should reconsider.

Next on the agenda was to review a memorandum of understanding of an independent contract agreement for municipal court clerk services between the City of Charleston and the City of Wyatt. Mr. Halter explained that our court clerk currently has contracts with East Prairie and Bertrand, and now Wyatt has reached out for help as well. There is no set date of when she will begin the work, the attorney explained that this is just the first step in the process.

Councilman Whiteside made a motion to go ahead and approve the next item on the agenda, which was **Bill NO. 3931/Ordinance NO. 3072**, an ordinance approving a Memorandum of Understanding of Independent Contracting Agreement for Municipal Court Clerk Services Between the City of Charleston and the City of Wyatt. Councilman Dugan seconded the motion. All were in favor. The ordinance passed.

The last item to discuss on the agenda was redistributing the hotel/motel tax funds between the Chamber of Commerce and CHARM. Currently the agreement is to give the Chamber 60% and CHARM 40%. Mr. Halter stated that he would like to see the Chamber and CHARM work together and feels that it is fair to split the money 50/50 from now on. However, because the Chamber has yet to report all of their expenditures, the council agreed the city should hold their portion until the full report is received.

Councilwoman Goodin made a motion to approve the redistribution of hotel/motel tax funds between the Chamber of Commerce and CHARM., with the exception of holding the Chamber's portion. Councilman Whiteside seconded the motion. All were in favor.

At this time, the City Manager stated he wanted to recognize Ali Morris, the City Clerk for all her efforts.

Recognition of Visitors: Quender Jackson, Sherry Austin, Cati Austin, Hudson Byrd, Jayne Ellen Ray, Sheila Shankle, Talisha Mays, Jason Oliver, Officer Tyler Babb, Officer Curtis Arnold, and Mississippi County Sheriff Department, Captain, Barry Morgan were all in attendance.

Jayne Ellen Ray spoke up on behalf of CHARM and thanked the council for evenly distributing the hotel/motel tax. The City Manager mentioned that CHARM has been upfront with the city on how they are spending the money and he would like to continue to see those reports. Ray said they still have several things on their agenda and will share them as they come about. She also said that CHARM is working closely with Mike Mueller on his Watermelon and Gospel Music Festival. Mr. Halter said he would have liked to have seen the Chamber of Commerce do the same and be more involved.

Talisha Mays asked if there is a copy of the city boards and their members. The City Manager said that she could get a copy from the Clerk. She asked how people go about getting on the boards. Mr. Halter explained that the positions are all voluntary and not paid positions. The mayor has always appointed the members and then we typically just call the same people each time their term is up to see if they want to remain on the board. The Planning and Zoning Board is the most active. The CLG (Certified Local Government) Board is the newest and has been meeting frequently. Mr. Halter then told Mays that if she would like to be on a board, we could take her information and create a list of potential members from now on that would like to be considered.

Mays then wanted to clarify that she understood correctly that the Chamber of Commerce really has nothing to do with the City Hall, they are more of an informational entity and good to be a part of if you are a business owner. The City Manager said yes, that is correct. He also mentioned that the Chamber meetings are open to the public.

Adjourn: A motion was made to adjourn the regular meeting to go into closed session to discuss personnel, by Councilman Whiteside. Councilman Dugan seconded the motion, and the regular meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

ATTEST:



City Clerk



Presiding Officer



City Clerk



Mayor