

City of Charleston, MO

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**City Council
September 13, 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, Public Works Director David Harris, Chief of the Department of Public Safety Robert Hearnese Jr., and Steve Myers from the local newspaper, were also present.

Recognition of Visitors: Tiffani Thomas, Rodney Jones, Jayne Ellen Ray, Sheila Shankle, Erica Jones, Oriice Stanback, Raymond Ivie, Debra Turner, Ella Brewer, Fred Drury, Josh Bradley, Catie Austin, Sherry Austin, Kenny Hulshoff, Yarian Rodgers, Ken Stevenson, and Fred Evans were present.

Jayne Ellen Ray addressed the council on behalf of CHARM and stated that Halloween festivities will be held on the 31st of October this year. Mayor Toon asked if they had coordinated with the First Baptist Church and The Bowden Center. Mrs. Ray said yes, they would all be in contact with each other and would work it out. Mayor Toon then asked if there would be another "Fall Festival" this year, and Mrs. Ray said that Sandy Ruff had organized and hosted that last year and they (CHARM) were not involved. Mrs. Ray then reminded everyone that Mike Mueller is planning fall festivities to be held downtown Charleston in October and November.

Tiffani Thomas then addressed the council and stated that she has attended several council meetings and has brought this issue to their attention multiple times, but the issue with stray dogs is still very much a concern. Mrs. Thomas stated that she was late for work this morning because she had to make sure her kids got on the bus to school safely, due to the presence of the stray dogs. She then asked, "If this was in your neighborhood, what would you do?" Mayor Toon then asked Chief of Police, Bobby Hearnese for an update on what is being done to handle the situation. Chief Hearnese said that because there is currently no veterinarian working in Charleston, it is difficult to impossible to get the drugs to administer into dart guns and they are also waiting on cages that are on back order. Mrs. Thomas then acknowledged that not all of the dogs are "strays".

Jayne Ellen Ray added that she sees at least three dogs running around downtown every day.

Raymond Ivie spoke up and stated that he has resorted to using wasp spray in the past and he loves dogs and doesn't want to kill them, but sometimes they are not friendly or welcome, and you just need them out of your yard.

At this time, Mrs. Thomas said that she saw some dogs chasing some young girls and the girls ran out into the street and that could have been devastating had a car been coming. Councilman Farmer asked Chief Hearnese if he could plan on having the Animal Control Officer in the bus stop area each morning. Chief Hearnese said yes.

Interim City Manager, Philip Halter explained that not too long after the last council meeting, five or six dogs were in the yard in front of City Hall one morning. He explained that he was able to pet most of them and the

Animal Control Officer took the only female dog in the group, so that the others dispersed.

Mr. Raymond Ivie explained that this is not a new issue and that he has made videos about the issue in the past. Mayor Toon then said that there is no issue in the budget for handling the situation. We are simply waiting on the cages to come in, but we could look into borrowing from other cities for the time being. Mr. Halter asked that if the residents knew who some of these dogs belong to, to please notify the police department or City Hall staff.

Mrs. Thomas added that these "are not your average dogs" and that they are very smart and know to run and hide whenever they see the Animal Control Officer vehicle.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Mayor Toon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2022 meeting, the Closed Session minutes for the August 9, 2022 meeting, and also the Public Hearing meeting minutes for August 25, 2022. 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 giving an update on the search for a City Manager. He explained that one candidate was interviewed, and a contract was sent out.

Mr. Halter then informed the council that we closed two more bank accounts during the month of August.

He also explained that the city held four condemnation hearings in August. Two of those were no shows, and we are going forward with demolishing those houses. One house was given thirty days to be sold to someone who plans to make the necessary improvements to keep it intact.

Mr. Halter informed that the city cleaned up around the Scout Cabin at Rolwing Park and that it looks tremendously better.

Mr. Halter then stated that he met with our new State Representative, Donnie Brown who he discussed the ongoing tax issue with, and explained that we did pass the tax rate set by the State Auditor at the Public Hearing held on August 25th.

He then explained that he had a discussion with an engineering firm out of Louisville, Kentucky regarding the relocation of the Highway 57 bridge over the Ohio River. They informed that the bridge could possibly be moved North of Cairo.

At the Planning & Zoning meeting held in August, it was decided to close the street and alley located behind the old Ameren building lot. Mr. Halter said that he believed Mr. Rodney Jones was happy about this, and Mr. Jones nodded in agreement. Mr. Halter then informed that the city has discovered that they own the neighboring property, and that Mr. Jones may be interested in purchasing it.

While researching this particular property, we discovered several additional properties that the city owns. The total number of these properties is 47. Some of which we knew about, including City Hall, all the lift stations, water towers, parks, etc., but some still need to be identified.

Mr. Halter then gave an update on the two grants for water meters and water and sewer line replacements and repairs. He said things are moving forward and looking good at this point. We should know something more by mid-October.

The city park project is moving towards beginning of construction. Mr. Halter informed that the Public Works Department has already removed the playground equipment, and still need to remove the pavilions. Some new playground equipment should be installed sometime in October.

Mr. Halter informed that we received our second ARPA check in August, in the amount of \$551,681.

Mr. Halter explained that he attached two flow charts to his report, showing how our sewer linings are affecting our lagoon usage. Mayor Toon asked why the flow chart shows lower flow during the months of August through December. Public Works Director, David Harris said that is due to those being drier months. Because of the lower flow, our expenses for lagoon repairs have decreased.

After going over his report, Interim City Manager, Philip Halter then referred to the list included in the council packet, that listed all expenses paid during the month of August, exceeding \$5,000. The largest expense was our liability insurance. Mayor Toon mentioned the monthly Ameren payment that was listed and asked if we could add some streetlights around Lafayette Street. David Harris said he was sure it was possible; the city would just have to pay for them.

At this time, Mr. Halter referred to the budget report and said we are still running on schedule but are spending more money because we are now about four months into the fiscal year.

The Public Works report was referenced, and it was mentioned again that the scout cabin was cleaned up and was looking really bad beforehand.

The monthly Police Department summary was referred to. Mr. Halter mentioned that one new police officer was recently hired, Patrick Smith, along with a part-time fireman, Tracy Oliver.

The Code Enforcement report was brought to attention. Mr. Halter stated that Mr. Ken Stevenson, who is our Code Enforcement Officer, stays busy and getting the lots and abandoned car situations handled is a never-ending battle.

Old Business: Mayor Toon moved on to the first agenda item under Old Business. Interim City Manager, Philip Halter explained that we previously approved the minutes from the Planning and Zoning meeting held in August, but they were included in the council packets, along with the plans for rezoning 511 West Commercial Street from residential to commercial in order for the council to make the final decision. Mr. Halter stated that the zoning board approved the rezoning for the new business, but it was now up to the council. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the rezoning. Councilman Farmer seconded. The motion carried.

Also under Old Business, was Bill NO. 3911, Ordinance NO. 3052, authorizing the purchase of a new John Deere Excavator. Mr. Halter explained that this was initially discussed at the last meeting/public hearing, and because the city has to rent an excavator so often, it was decided it would be best to look into purchasing the equipment. Mr. Halter also mentioned that at the last meeting, Councilman Dugan said that the price looked really good and will probably go up in the near future. Supply issues were also discussed and if we do not act quickly, we may lose that price. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the purchase and ordinance. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

At this time, Mayor Toon asked Mr. Kenny Hulshoff to give an update on the status of the City of Charleston becoming a CLG (Certified Local Government).

Mr. Hulshoff stood up and explained that there is a lot of federal money that goes through this process and that the ultimate goal, is historic preservation. What has to happen is that we must "check the boxes" and show that we are serious about this process. Mr. Hulshoff explained that different cities have different requirements for who can serve on the commission, so we will have to decide, but that it would be best if we picked a variety of people from different backgrounds, with different strengths and knowledge in a multitude of areas. The more diverse, the better. Mr. Hulshoff recommended a minimum of five members who shall be chosen and appointed by the City Council. Councilman Whiteside pointed out that he feels if you have too many members, it is sometimes hard to have quorum to hold a meeting. Interim City Manager, Philip Halter noted that we will put this on next month's council meeting agenda so that everyone has enough time to read over the ordinance that Mr. Hulshoff and the City Attorney, Tabatha Thurman provided.

New Business: Within the council packet was a letter to reappoint someone to take Mr. Preston Moore's place on the Charleston Housing Authority Board. Mr. Brad Garland offered to fill the remaining term until the appointment expires August 11, 2023.

Mr. Halter explained that nothing needs to be done other than the council needs to give their approval for the change. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the change. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was Bill NO. 3912, Ordinance NO. 3053 to discuss the potential purchase of a new leaf vacuum. Mr. Halter explained that even if we order now, we will not receive this piece of equipment until Spring. He also explained that our existing leaf vacuum is in poor condition, and we have had it for over twenty years. Councilman Whiteside mentioned that the residents really take advantage of the leaf collection and made a motion to pass the ordinance. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The following item on the agenda, Bill NO. 3913, Ordinance NO. 3054 authorizing execution of a contract with B&K Asphalt for seal coating was discussed. Interim City Manager, Philip Halter explained that this project was budgeted for last year, but we did not end up working on this project then. This process will be a hassle since many streets and driveways will have to be blocked off. A schedule will have to be made and delivered to the affected residents. We will have to let them know where to park, etc. Councilman Whiteside asked if this particular seal coating is a better product than what was used in the past. Public Works Director, David Harris replied yes, it is, and should allow for about 10 years more life out of the streets before repairs are needed again. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the ordinance for the contract. Councilman Farmer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

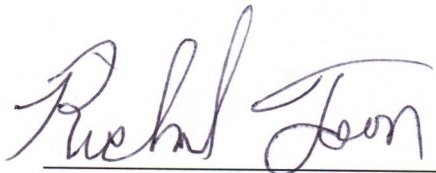
The final item on the agenda was Bill NO. 3914, Ordinance NO. 3055 to establish a procedure to disclose potential conflicts of interest and substantial interest for certain municipal officials as required by section 105.450 RSMo. Mayor Toon asked the City Attorney, Tabatha Thurman if there was even a choice on this matter. The reply was no, we do not. It is required every two years by the Missouri Ethics Commission. Councilman Farmer made a motion to approve said ordinance. Councilman Whiteside seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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

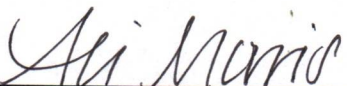
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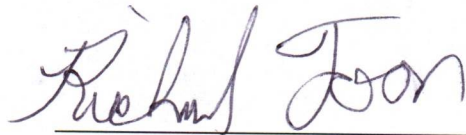
City Clerk Ali Morris



Mayor Richard Toon



City Clerk Ali Morris



Presiding Officer Richard Toon