



City of Charleston, MO

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**City Council
April 11th, 2023**

Meeting Minutes

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

Resolution NO. 1107: A motion was made by Councilman Jackie Whiteside to approve the resolution accepting and approving the certified results of the General Election held on April 4th, 2023. Chairman Pro-Tem, Patrick Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed and the election results were accepted as official.

Oath of Offices: City Attorney, Tabatha Graham administered the oaths of office to re-elected council member Richard (Rick) Toon who was elected to fulfill a three-year term, and to Monica Goodin, who was newly elected to fulfill a two-year term on the city council.

Election of Mayor: A motion was made by Councilman Toon to appoint Patrick Farmer to the Mayor position for the term of April 11th, 2023, through April 9th, 2024. Councilwoman Goodin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Election of Chairman Pro-Tem: A motion was made by Councilman Toon to appoint Jackie Whiteside as the Chairman Pro-Tem for the term of April 11th, 2023, through April 9th, 2024. Councilwoman Goodin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Recognition of Visitors: Raymond Ivy, Mr. Ivy's daughter, Kenny Hulshof, Talisha Mays, Jayne Ellen Ray, Catie Austin, Quender Jackson, and Jenay Goodin were present, along with an individual who asked to remain anonymous.

Raymond Ivy asked the council how long it should take for a report to be made once a complaint is made to the police. He then stated that he had spoken to the City Manager in early February regarding an incident that occurred in December and that the City Manager never followed up with him as promised. Mr. Ivy explained that just last week, a threat was made against his daughter, where someone threatened to go to her workplace and kill her, but that the report that was made regarding that incident was described as "peace disturbance" and that he does not understand why it would be called such. Mayor Farmer asked the Chief of Police where we stood in regard to the

complaint, and he responded that it could take up to sixty (60) days to complete a report and that juveniles must be protected and employees, including police officers should not be referred to by name, and that is why this should not be discussed during an open meeting. City Manager Halter spoke up and stated that he did meet with Mr. Ivy after he came to him in February, and he explained that he followed up with the Chief of Police regarding the incident and explained to Mr. Ivy what he had found out. Mr. Ivy then stood up and called them all liars. Before he began speaking, Mr. Ivy said he was well aware that he only had three minutes to talk, but when he went beyond the three minutes, Chief Hearnese told him his time was up and he continued to speak loudly. Mr. Ivy was asked to leave.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Councilman Toon to approve the minutes from the March 13th, 2023, meeting. Councilman Whiteside seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Report of City Business: City Manager, Philip Halter, began his report by saying that after our newly formatted water bills were sent out in paper form, inside an envelope, it has been unbelievable how many people had not previously paid attention to their rates on the postcards. A lot of customers have called asking why they have received “a letter” and are not realizing these are simply the new statements.

On March 3rd, a large tree fell down due to the high winds, which was on a city easement. The tree did do some damage to the home it fell into, but as far as we have heard so far, the insurance company will not be covering the damage as it was a natural disaster.

Mr. Halter explained that the lowest bid to demolish the three previously condemned houses was in the amount of \$14,900. Councilman Whiteside said he was not familiar with the bidder. Mr. Halter explained that they had only previously done FEMA work to help clean up after natural disasters, but they did a good job on the project. Mr. Halter also stated that the highest project bid was \$69,000+.

Mr. Halter mentioned that the used state patrol car that was recently purchased, along with the Tahoe that was purchased before the beginning of the year, still need to be outfitted with the proper equipment, but manufacturers are behind, and it could be a few more months before they are ready to use.

The restrooms that are to be installed at Charles Williams Park have now been pushed back to be delivered by April 18th. Mr. Halter said he spoke to Lee Hess, who is the architect who designed the park projects and then also spoke to Hudson Byrd and Reggie Young about more funding for additional plans at Hillhouse Park, including turning the old railroad track into a walking trail. It is possible that other projects may also take place at Hequembourg Park and in Plainview.

It was reported that the city’s Code Enforcement Officer had a minor accident while making a right turn onto West Marshall Street from South Main Street, but the damage was slight.

Mr. Halter noted that it was mentioned in his report that a special meeting with Rich Cochran from Waters Engineering was to be set up, but that actually occurred right before this council meeting so he did not go into detail on the subject.

After a discussion with MODOT, Mr. Halter said that construction at Exit 12 is planned to begin at the end of April or beginning of May. This will be to turn the overpass into three lanes, and to widen

the road at both ends. Councilman Whiteside asked if it could possibly be turned into four lanes and Mr. Halter said that would not happen, and that eventually the bridge from Missouri into Illinois may be closed completely and there will not be as much traffic through there.

Mr. Halter then mentioned that he had spoken with State Representative, Jason Smith and two State Senators during a recent MORCEA meeting, about relocating the bridge to Barlow, Kentucky and there would be more discussion on this soon.

Public Works Director, David Harris had to remove the fencing on the East side of the water plant to allow the county to be able to clean the ditch that ran alongside that fence. Mr. Halter explained that the fence was not in good condition anyway and would need to be replaced.

Wrapping up his report, Mr. Halter noted that the "Meet the Candidates" event at the High School auditorium went very well, and he estimated there were approximately 50-75 attendees. He also made sure to mention that all of those who ran for council were there and participated in the event.

Mr. Halter then touched on the Public Works Report for March, noting that a contractor installed some valves at the water plant, but they are still waiting on about twelve more to come in and they will also begin work on replacing the roof at the water plant next week.

There was also a leak that was discovered in the middle of a field off of 10th Street and Gilmore. Apparently a main cracked and water was forming where someone noticed and reported it. There is no explanation as to why this happened.

Visitor Talisha Mays asked if any work was planned to be done to Lincoln Park and Mayor Famer stated that would be a question for Paul Page from the Housing Authority, as the City does not own that particular park.

At this time, Mr. Halter jumped ahead on the agenda to discuss the first item under New Business. He explained that Country Mart and Charleston Plaza are private properties that are being auctioned off by Harris Auction, on Tuesday April 25th. Councilwoman Goodin asked if we had contacted any potential buyers and Mr. Halter said no. Jayne Ellen Ray from the audience stated that she has spoken to some potential buyers in St. Louis, and they have questioned what the city would require them to do with it according to the ordinances. Mr. Halter explained that if it is just going to be purchased for real estate purposes, it will have to be torn down as it is not fit to house any businesses. Mrs. Ray then asked how long they would be given to tear it down. Mr. Halter said he would like to first get ideas from the buyers on their plans and figure out what they want to do with the property as it is an eyesore and needs to be cleaned up.

Mr. Halter pointed out the bills paid in March and mentioned that there would need to be a special call meeting set up to amend the current fiscal years' budget as we have gone over budget within the Transportation Fund since so many large purchases were paid off within the year. The meeting was then set for Monday, April 24th at 5:30 PM.

In regard to the Code Enforcement Officer's report, Mr. Halter mentioned that as there are many new things that come up each month, it is always an ongoing process with each one as it sometimes takes 6-7 months due to letters being sent and hearings being scheduled.

Talisha Mays spoke up from the audience and asked who is responsible for the upkeep on properties where the structure is demolished by the city. Mr. Halter explained that we are not technically allowed to go onto private property and that it remains the property owner's responsibility to keep the

grass mowed. The City Attorney, Tabatha Graham clarified that if the property remains unkept after the city condemns and tears down a house, the city will continue to send letters to the property owner regarding the nuisance. A gentleman from the audience who did not want to provide his name, asked about liens and said we should create an ordinance to find a way around going on private property to control these issues. Councilman Toon said that it is not just city ordinances and that we have to abide by the State and Federal laws, and it is unlawful to go on private property.

Councilwoman Goodin asked if there was any update from the Chief of Police in regard to the tornado sirens that were potentially available in Louisiana. Mr. Halter said they would have to first be offered to the nuclear power plant there in Louisiana, then if they do not take them, it is possible they would be up for bid. Goodin then asked if our sirens were working. Chief Hearnese said they work intermittently and are over 20 years old. He then stated that people question whether it is worth spending the money on replacing them since siren technology is getting outdated due to smart phones and alerts.

Old Business: The Flock Safety budget quote was the only item under old business. At this time, Chief Hearnese said that one of the intended locations for this technology was to be on the overpass at Exit 12 where MODOT is about to begin construction. The bid included in the council packets includes six cameras. After the initial implementation fee and the platform, it would be \$3,000 per camera, per year. Chief Hearnese described it as “handy technology that is good for police work”. He then explained that this is just a quote and he wanted to get a starting point to see what the council would be comfortable with before proceeding. The license plate readers provide tracking capability and could be used for a myriad of reasons. Cape, Sikeston, and Jackson all already use the technology. Councilman Whiteside asked if we could back out of it if we feel it is not beneficial after a year. Chief Hearnese said yes, we could. Councilwoman Goodin made a motion to move forward with the process. Councilman Toon seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

New Business: The Charleston Plaza and Country Mart auction was discussed within the City Business Report given by City Manager, Philip Halter, earlier in the meeting.

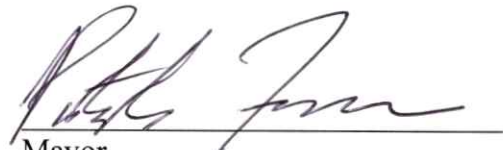
Mayor Farmer moved on to the final item on the agenda, **Bill NO. 3925/Ordinance NO. 3066-** Ordinance Adopting Budget for City Funds for Fiscal Year May 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024. Mr. Halter said the total budget is \$5 million. Councilman Whiteside made a motion to approve the ordinance. Councilman Dugan seconded the motion. The motion carried and the ordinance was passed.

Adjourn: Before he made a motion to adjourn, Councilman Whiteside said he wanted to say that Mr. Toon did a great job as the mayor for the last year. A plaque will be presented to him at the next council meeting. Councilman Whiteside then made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Toon seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:



City Clerk



Mayor

Ali Morris
City Clerk

Robert Z...
Presiding Officer