

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Edna City Council met in regular session Thursday, March 20, 2014 in council chambers at 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Joe D. Hermes, Councilmember William Selders, Maxine Price, Jean Sorensen and Johnny Vasquez. Councilmember Justin Bonnot was absent. City Manager Ken Knight, City Secretary Becky Miska, Finance Director Olga Salomon, Director of Public Works Brad Ryan, Chief of Police Clinton Wooldridge and Street Superintendent Steve Sample were also present.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD MARCH 6, 2014:

Councilmember Price made the motion to approve minutes of the city council meeting held March 6, 2014. Councilmember Vasquez seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

VISITORS: Frankie Palacios, Velma Vasquez, Tommy Srp, Audrey Tones, Mary Ann Jones, David Webel, Rufus Diggs, Anthony Wayne Callis, John Jarratt, Joyce Jarratt and Chris Lundstrom-Jackson County Herald Tribune.

HEARING OF VISITORS:

“At this time, comments will be heard from the audience on any subject matter that is not on the agenda. In accordance, with the Open Meeting Act, City Council may not discuss or take action on any item which has not been posted on the agenda.”

PUBLIC HEARING:

a) DISCUSS AND CONSIDER REQUEST FOR A SPECIFIC USE PERMIT FROM JOYCE JARRATT TO OWN AND OPERATE A REAL ESTATE OFFICE FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1101 N. WELLS, NORTHWAY, LOT 1, ACRES 0.29:

Johnny Jarratt addressed council stating their intentions to move Jarratt Realty to a new location at 1101 N. Wells. Mr. Jarratt answered questions as presented by council.

APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION’S RECOMMENDATION:

a) SPECIFIC USE PERMIT – JOYCE JARRATT

City Manager Ken Knight reported the Planning & Zoning Commission met on March 11, 2014 at which time they voted to approve the request for a specific use permit to own and operate a real estate office for the property located on 1101 N. Wells. Councilmember Selders made the motion to approve the request for a specific use permit to own and operate a real estate office for the property located at 1101 N. Wells. Councilmember Price seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER PETITION FOR REPAIRS TO ALLEYWAYS:

City Manager Ken Knight reported to council that a petition had been received requesting that repairs and paving be done to the alleyways. Knight went on to say that funds that were allotted for streets and drainage. Director of Public Works Brad Ryan noted that he has spoken to Polly R. Grudzieski/Total Body Gym & Tan and explained that some of the mess that is being tracked into her business is from the recent limestone and base that she had filled in her parking area with. Mayor Hermes stated that the policy needs to change in order for the city to maintain the alleyways. Councilmember Selders agreed. Councilmember Price made the motion to have City Manager Knight look into changing the policy of no paving and amend it to having the city maintain the alleyways. Councilmember Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

DISCUSS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON KSA ENGINEERS REPORT REGARDING STREETS AND DRAINAGE:

City Manager Ken Knight reported that the KSA Engineers bid of \$29,700.00 was for nine out of more than 30 of the problem areas KSA identified in the city. Knight told council he wanted approval to get a revised work order for the projects that required engineering since there was enough experience in house to do the work on some of the projects without engineering. If the city doesn't do some engineering, we are basically putting a band-aid on the problem before we go ahead and pave those roads. Knight went onto say that he was trying to first address the areas identified in the study to be classified two-year events which have drainage issues anytime there is a measurable rainfall. The remaining areas would be fixed as the city has the funds. Councilmember Sorensen made the motion to table this agenda item and approve City Manager Knight to negotiate limited services for streets and drainage. Councilmember Selders seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

DISCUSS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON PROPOSAL FOR THE PURCHASE OF FLAG POLES:

City Manager Ken Knight reported a proposal for UnCommon USA for the purchase of flag poles would be for: one - 80 ft. flag poles \$12,900.00 and two - 40 ft. flag poles \$8,800.00 totaling \$21,700.00. Mayor Hermes asked who would install the flag poles. City Manager Knight stated contractors would be pouring the cement and setting the poles. Councilmember Selders made the motion to approve the proposal for the purchase of flag poles in the amount of \$21,700.00. Councilmember Vasquez seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR SPECIAL PROJECT:

City Manager Knight reported an additional \$12,250.00 has been received since the last city council meeting making the total donations \$76,210.00. The generosity of an approximately sixteen (16) members of the Class of 1959 will be used toward the special project. Councilmember Vasquez made the motion to accept the additional \$12,250.00 in donations for the special project. Councilmember Selders seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

DISCUSS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AT CARVER SCHOOL:

Rufus Diggs, Executive Director of the George Washington Carver Elementary Community Center thanked the fire fighters for the exceptional job of putting out the recent fires at Carver School on March 13th. Diggs went onto say the George Washington Carver Elementary Committee had plans to clean up the debris but does not have funds to do so nor secure the property or pay the back taxes owed. He also noted they had recently asked the Edna Independent School District for tax abatement and the school declined. Diggs stated he was planning to come before the city council and ask the city for abatement but then the fire happened. City Manager Ken Knight reminded the city council that the City of Edna cannot legally spend any public funds on private property. Mayor Hermes noted that citizens are concerned because this is the property where the Juneteenth Celebration will be held. Mr. Diggs replied that he did not know how to fix our problem. Mayor Joe Hermes also stated it is not legal for the City to spend public funds on private property. Knight said that if Building & Standards declare the site a public hazard, there would be demolition and a lien would be placed on the property to repay any costs incurred clearing the area burned by the fire. City Manager Knight said this is a dangerous and hazardous condition. Letters can be sent to the owners to remediate the hazard. It is a long process for the city to take action. Mayor Joe Hermes said placing a lien on the property when there are already more than \$100,000.00 in taxes owed, would do nothing. Mayor Hermes went onto say that is not the city's problem to take this on and why is it entirely

up to the city. Why can't we ask other entities to share in the cost? Photos taken during a walk through of the buildings showed virtually all the windows broken, ceiling tiles on the floor, graffiti and vandalism throughout the entire campus. Doors to nearly every room were unlocked and trash scattered everywhere. Knight stated "broken windows breed broken windows." Frankie Palacios, a volunteer with the Juneteenth Committee, said the organization was ready and willing to volunteer to help with the clean-up and securing the buildings. He said probationers could perform community service hours helping with the cleanup. Mayor Hermes said that would have to be approved through the probation department. Councilmember Price said the city will hold its annual Clean Sweep on April 11th and 12th and it would be a good opportunity to get rid of the debris at no charge. Mr. Diggs said the committee's main concern is securing the historical building which is the former first grade wing. Mayor Hermes noted this is all going to take money. Councilmember Vasquez asked about possible asbestos at the site. Knight said because of the age of the buildings there was most likely asbestos in the floor tiles and other areas which would need to be taken into consideration during the clean-up. After further discussion, Councilmember Selders asked that this item be tabled in order for him to work with the committee to come up with a solution to the debris removal and securing the building. Councilmember Vasquez seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

CONSIDER PAYMENT OF CURRENT BILLS:

Mayor Hermes asked if there were any questions from council on items to be paid. There were none. Councilmember Sorensen made the motion to approve payment of current bills in the amount of \$72,648.81. Councilmember Selders seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

CITY STAFF REPORT:

"At this time, the City Council will hear reports / updates on all committees or department assignments which may include, but is not limited to the following: Police Department-grant updates, police report; Fire Department-grant updates, fire reports; Public Works Department-park reports, water & sewer line updates, street repairs/projects; City Manager & City Secretary-public information; Finance Director-financial report; Code Enforcement-progress reports on code issues. No formal action can be taken on these items."

City Manager Ken Knight informed the city council notification had been received from FEMA that the final maps are prepared and have a ninety (90) day review for appeal. Knight reminded the council that residents of the City may take advantage of cleaning up their property and hauling debris for free at annual Clean Sweep which will be held April 11th & 12th. Knight reported that the State Fire Marshal was in Edna and is involved with the Carver School fire investigation along with Fire Marshal Loyd Chase. **Chief of Police Clinton Wooldridge** reported that has received a complaint from a resident who lives at the corner of Faye and Cordele Streets in regards to 18 wheelers turning into his yard making ruts. He asked that the council consider putting up signs for no 18 wheelers on city streets in that area. Wooldridge went onto report that two (2) juveniles had been detained on the second fire at Carver School. **Street Superintendent Steve Sample** stated street sweepers are out and have completed the south side and will begin the north side on Monday; 50 tons of coal mix and patch material have been used in street repairs over the last two weeks.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT CODE §551.072 [FORMERLY EXCEPTION 2(F)] SETS OUT THE FOLLOWING:
CONDUCT CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY:

At this time, Mayor Hermes asked the audience to clear the council chambers; time 7:50 p.m.

TAKE POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council returned to open session at 7:58 p.m. There was no action taken.

ADJOURN:

Councilmember Price made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Selders seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

APPROVED: _____
Joe D. Hermes, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Becky Miska, City Secretary