

A regular meeting of the City Council of Iola was held on August 23, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., at the Park Community Building 510 Park Avenue Iola, Kansas.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Wells called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Wells, Council Members Myrick, Slauch, Peterson, Ford, Peters, Ballard, Kinder, and French were present. Also present were Administrator Matt Rehder, Assistant City Administrator Schinstock, and City Clerk Hutton.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Council Member Myrick and seconded by Council Member Kinder to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Persons who wish to address the City Council regarding items on the agenda may do so as that agenda item is called. Persons who wish to address the City Council regarding items not on the agenda and under the jurisdiction of the City Council may do so when called upon by the Council President. Comments on personnel matters and matters pending in court or with other outside tribunals are not permitted. Speakers are limited to three minutes. Any presentation is for information purposes only. No action will be taken.

Mayor Wells read the above statement.

No public comments were made.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes Approval**
 - **August 9, 2021, Council Meeting**
- B. Appropriations Approval**
- C. Board Appointment - Marilyn Logan - Public Housing Authority**
- D. Blue Cross Blue Shield Insurance Renewal**

Council Member Ballard made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Council Member Peterson. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2022 Budget Items

a. Revenue Neutral Rate Public Hearing - Mayor Wells called the Public Hearing to order. No comments from the public were heard. Mayor Wells closed the Public Hearing.

Motion made by Council Member Slaugh and seconded by Council Member Peterson to approve Resolution 2021-14 exceeding the RNR for the 2022 Budget. All in favor. Motion carried.

b. 2022 Budget Public Hearing - Mayor Wells called the Public Hearing to order. No comments from the public were heard. Mayor Wells closed the Public Hearing.

Motion made by Council Member Slaugh and seconded by Council Member Kinder to approve the 2022 Budget as published. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks - Agreement - Assistant Administrator Schinstock informed the Council that the grant for the Mo-Pac trail was awarded for \$142,449 for the project.

Council Member Myrick asked if the right of ways had been secured for the trail extension. Assistant Administrator Schinstock stated that all right-of-way easements had been secured.

Council Member Peters noted that while walking on the current sidewalk connected to the trail, he noticed bicyclists driving on personal property. Assistant Administrator Schinstock stated that another public hearing would be held. Hopefully, some education for trail users will be helpful.

Motion made by Council Member Ford and seconded by Council Member Myrick to approve and authorize staff to execute the necessary documents with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks for the Mo-Pac Recreational Trail Project. All in favor. Motion carried.

C. Thrive Allen County Labor Study - Economic Development Director Jonathan Goering of Thrive Allen County noted that he feels the study would be helpful for the Allen County area.

Mayor Wells asked Administrator Rehder what fund would be used to pay for the city's portion of the study. Administrator Rehder stated that the money would come out of the Industrial Fund.

Council Member Slaugh asked if this study was comparable to the study done by the State every year.

Mr. Goering noted that the questions asked will be different from those questions for the State. He pointed out that the businesses would be questioned about the labor staff they need regularly.

Council Member Ballard wondered if this was a good time to do the study. Asking the businesses what they need while several individuals are choosing not to work due to extra stimulus and unemployment funding they are receiving.

Council Member French stated he thinks it would be a good time to ask why individuals do not want to work.

Council Member Ford stated that some kids don't want to go to college, which might help them know what jobs are out there they could train for.

Council Member Kinder likes the idea of finding out what jobs are available and why some are not currently working.

Council Member Slaugh made a motion to fund the labor study request from Thrive at a total cost of \$1,500. Motion seconded by Council Member Myrick. All in favor. Motion carried.

ROUNDTABLE

A. EMS Service - Discussion - Mayor Wells stated that he wanted to go around the room to allow each Council Member to voice their concerns with the county's choice to outsource the ambulance service to AMR.

Council Member Ford stated she is disappointed in the County not supporting local businesses. AMR is based out of Colorado. Instead of keeping the Fire Department

CITY OF IOLA

Page 4

08/23/2021

employees and going out of the area for a service the City of Iola has provided for years.

Council Member French stated that he didn't want Council Members to bash the County employees; the Commissioners made the decision based on financial decisions.

He encouraged the employees of the Fire Department to uphold the gentlemen's agreement we have with the County to complete the year professionally and successfully.

Council Member Peterson thanked all of the Fire/EMS employees. She felt like the negotiation with the County was a joke. The County seemed to have their mind made up long before they started conversations with Iola.

Council Member Ballard read from a letter he had prepared. He noted that the County had been playing a game with the City over this entire process. He wondered what would happen come January, and they haven't completed a contract with AMR.

Council Member Slauch stated that after talking to the Iola Register, he could be persuaded to change his opinion and have the City run its ambulance service. He remembers as City Administrator in 2013 negotiating the EMS contract with the County and how difficult it was.

Since 2014 the City has subsidized EMS as much as \$200,000 to \$300,000 each year.

Council Member Myrick told the Fire/EMS employees that the council fought for their jobs. He feels like the County betrayed the city.

Council Member Kinder thanked the employees for their work. He knows that the employees served faithfully and noted that the city and county could never repay you for the service you have done.

Council Member Peters said that he had been employed at manufacturing plants that outsourced some of their work to other communities and countries. This is happening with the County right now; they are outsourcing the EMS service outside of the County. No matter how it is handled, this approach is always harmful to the employees and the community.

Mayor Wells stated that he has worked with all levels of government, from Federal down to the City level. His concern is that two people decided something so crucial

CITY OF IOLA

Page 5

08/23/2021

to the entire county. Such a decision could be made with only two of the commissioners.

Administrator Rehder stated that staff is willing to take directives from the Council. Whatever decision they make, the team will go with it.

Council Member Slauch noted that he would like to know how much it would take for the City of Iola to provide a quality service at a reasonable cost.

Attorney Brett Heim was asked about his interpretation of the statute.

Motion made by Council Member Kinder and seconded by Council Member Ballard to suspend the rules and add an Executive Session to the agenda to discuss Attorney-Client matters. All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion made by Council Member Kinder and seconded by Council Member Ballard to recess into Executive Session for 10 minutes pursuant to Attorney-Client Matters *K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(2)*. The executive session shall include the Mayor, Council, Attorney Heim, City Administrator, and Assistant City Administrator. The regular meeting shall reconvene in the City Council Chamber at 6:44 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

Kenneth Powell spoke on behalf of the Iola Fire Department and clarified for the Council that the Fire Department staff are on board and have the equipment ready to go.

Mr. Powell relayed to the group that the City of Iola has the license to purchase and administer medications, two ambulances with all equipment on board. The loose equipment in all of the other ambulances was bought by the City of Iola.

Mayor Wells noted that the City could buy the ambulances if needed. It is the people that can't be replaced. He encouraged the staff to run the complex numbers and report back to the Council. He asked the Fire Department staff to be patient and know that the Council is behind them.

Council Member Kinder asked about the current Rescue and Hazmat equipment.

Administrator Rehder noted that the current EMS Agreement addresses those items. Therefore, a new agreement will have to be drawn up if the County requests the City to continue the service.

Council Member Ballard stated that we need to move quickly on this process to give staff some security.

Council Member Ballard made a motion with Council Member Myrick to suspend the meeting to add an agenda item to go into executive session to discuss an interim Fire Chief. All in favor. Motion carried.

City Clerk Hutton voiced concern about whether this item should be taken to an executive session.

Motion made by Council Member Ballard to recess into Executive Session to discuss non-elected personnel for three hours. Motion seconded by Council Member Kinder. Voting in favor of the motion was Council Member Kinder. Motion failed due to lack of yes votes on the motion.

Mayor Wells encouraged everyone to contact the County Commissioners and voice concerns about moving the ambulance service from a provider out of the County.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Non-Elected Personnel

Council Member Myrick made a motion to recess into Executive Session for 15 minutes pursuant to Trade Secrets, K.S.A. 75-4319 (b)(4). The purpose of the executive session is to discuss confidential data relating to financial and operational affairs and shall include the Mayor, Council, City Administrator Rehder, Economic Development Director, Jonathan Goering, and Assistant City Administrator Schinstock. The regular meeting shall reconvene in the city council chamber at 7:20 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

A. Council Member Peters -

- Council Member Peters commented on the Administrators Page in the packet. It is nice to see all of the employees with longevity.

B. Council Member Ford—

- Council Member Ford stated that she is enjoying all of the international students attending Allen County College.
- Council Member Ford informed everyone that Mr. Barclay, a retired teacher at the college, passed away today.

C. Council Member French –

- None

D. Council Member Peterson–

- None.

E. Council Member Ballard

- Council Member Ballard stated that the street sweeper needs a light on the back. It is hard to see with the dust.
- Council Member Ballard stated that he wanted the Council to make the decision on the State Street mill and overlay project. Independence made Heckert Construction grind down the entire road and redo it.
- He noticed the whistle had been installed on Canary Lane.

F. Council Member Slaugh–

- Council Member Slaugh asked those that are a part of the Economic Development Team to meet right after the meeting to set up a time for a meeting.

G. Council Member Myrick–

- Council Member Myrick stated that he was distraught that someone had destroyed part of the new sod on the football field with a vehicle following the Friday night football scrimmage. Council Member Ballard thanked all local businesses that contributed to the award money to locate a suspect(s).

H. Council Member Kinder -

- Council Member Kinder stated that he had some more concerns about flooding on South Oak Street. Administrator Rehder noted that when staff went to the area, they did not see the flooding problems.

I. Mayor Wells

- Mayor Wells apologized for losing his temper with Council Member Ballard approximately one year ago. He had apologized to Mr. Ballard in the past, but he felt that he lost his temper in a public setting; he should also apologize in a public environment. Mr. Ballard accepted his apology.

J. Administrator Rehder

- Administrator Rehder stated he was wanting to set up a Economic Development Committee Meeting also.

DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING


City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 13, 2021

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 27, 2021

7:30 p.m. Motion made by Council Member Myrick and seconded by Council Member Ford to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried

It was approved by the City Council of Iola, Kansas, on the 13th day of September 2021.





Mayor Wells



City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton