

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Voorhis

OPEN MEETING

Roll Call taken by Mayor Thomas Voorhis

Mark Stewart PRESENT, Sherry Veach PRESENT, Dennis Roe PRESENT, Kelly Petty PRESENT, Richard Icenhower PRESENT, Ben Lord PRESENT

Call to order at: 6:30 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA.

Motion by Roe to approve agenda. Second Veach

Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

PUBLIC FORUM

Tim Cooke – 209 Meadowlark – Police Citizens Advisory Committee President – I want to speak for a few minutes and I will be speaking over the police department but not in the manner you guys are dreading. Nine months ago, our police chief approached me with an idea to establish what we now call the Police Citizens Advisory Committee. He shared his vision of how this committee could benefit this community outlining its purpose, activities and role. After several discussions, I accepted the invitation to launch the initiative and together we began to recruit board members. Soon after, the police chief introduced me to a another concept and it had been inspired by Sgt. Deckard's experience with another department. It was called Shop with a Cop. At first I wasn't familiar with the program, but he explained its purpose to help low income families or those with unexpected financial hardships to help during the holidays. Through this program, our officers would take children Christmas shopping often providing them with the only gifts they would receive that year. As someone who, years ago, faced similar struggles as a young 18-year-old father with limited resources, I instantly connected with this idea. After several weeks of planning and collaboration, we held our first PCAC meeting selecting board members and began sharing our vision for Shop with a Cop with our newly established Board. From there we launched various fund raising initiatives such as National Night Out and our presence at the Fair Grove Heritage Reunion. Despite a few hurdles excluding the changes within the department recently, Sgt. Deckard stepped in and we quickly regained momentum. The support we have received has been nothing short of incredible. Local businesses, private citizens and even the Fair Grove Fire Department has joined us, dedicating the entire month of October to fund raising on our behalf. This collaboration showcased the unity and spirit of our community. One night as the police chief and I sat in his office late racking our brains until well after 11:00 p.m. to be exact, I set a personal goal. I told him, I don't know how we'll do it, I don't know how we'll get there but I want to raise \$1,000 to adopt 10 children this holiday season. PCAC members that are here, will you stand up please? The team standing in front of you worked tirelessly on this project, often dedicating more time to it than to their full-time jobs. Tonight I'm proud to announce that we did not just meet that \$1,000 goal, we surpassed it. As of this afternoon, when I was briefed by Sgt. Deckard, I can confirm that we have raised \$7,400 and we will be adopting roughly 54 to 55 children from our school for the Shop with a Cop program. Thanks to this overwhelming support, the program has grown beyond it's original scope. Along with our officers, the members of the Fair Grove Fire Department will also participate, giving

these children the opportunity to spend time with all of our first responders. Wal-Mart in Marshfield has graciously offered us space for the event which will include food, beverages and likely even a visit from Santa Claus. Initially our plan was to allocate \$50 for needs and \$50 for wants per child. However, our success now allows each child to spend a full \$100 on the items they truly desire. Behind the scenes, PCAC members will also ensure that the families receive basic essentials like hygiene products and clothing. Additionally, thanks to private donations and excess funds we will now be in the position to help families with the costs of their holiday meals providing turkeys or hams to alleviate that financial burden. Transportation costs will also be covered if needed ensuring that every family selected can participate. This incredible achievement is a testament as to what could happen when a community comes together. Regarding our police department, every officer has contributed in some way to this effort. Donating time, money, enthusiasm and in some cases, even their days off and yes this includes members of this department no longer with us to see this become a reality. Regarding our city council, Dennis Roe, Kelly Petty and Tommy Voorhis have been instrumental stepping up for every event we have asked them to be a part of, weather that means climbing into a dunk tank, grilling hot dogs for hundreds of people or driving a barrel train full of children and police officers around Legacy for hours on end. They are very instrumental in the success we have reached to this point. We have also had faculty members from the school assist us in previous events. We are very grateful for each and every person that has helped us along the way weather that be in the form of volunteering for us, buildings and locations or making a financial contribution to our cause. Now I'm asking for your help. Not to do any additional work, these guys back here's already done it. We simply ask you to join us next Tuesday, December 17th at 6:00 p.m. I invite each of you to attend this event. Come meet the families, spend time with the parents while their children shop witness firsthand the impact this program is going to have on our community and the joy it brings these families. You are not just leaders, you are the voice of these communities, this community, this family, your friends, your neighbors are the very people who elected you to serve them. This event is about much more than holiday gifts, its about building connections, fostering relationships, the possibilities are endless. It's not about a doorbell camera, its about coming together and making this town a better place. Please accept this invitation to join us in celebration of the community. Thank you!

Eric Bonsick 208 Mcadowlark Street – With everything that has transpired in the last few weeks, I would just encourage you ladies and gentlemen, my wife and I have only lived here 3 years and just seeing some of the history, we've been through 4 police chiefs in 5 years. I would encourage all of you to really look at the process and figure out what you're doing and you weren't all responsible for all of those people being put in leadership positions. You haven't all been here for this entire time, some of you have, some of you have not. Figure out what you guys are doing gentlemen and ladies. Figure out what you're doing and get it right this time. It may be different reasons it's been wrong, whatever happened, happened but it's kind of funny when you look and see the stories on the news of Humansville and stuff like that and you think wow, that stuff's going on here. I just encourage you that if the process is wrong, change the process. What's the definition of insanity? Keep doing the same thing and expecting different results. We're getting the same results every time we remove a chief. Thank you.

Old Business

New Business

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE PROJECTS FOR BOND (Roe, Icenhower)

Roe - We invited Larry Brown, the Treasurer to come and discuss that. Larry, you might first explain why you're looking at this because we are about to pay off a sewer bond, correct?

Brown – That's correct. You have \$1,000,000 of expenses for projects that have to be done here in the city. That needs to be done in the next few years. You have one General Obligation bond which is paid for by the property tax levy that is getting ready to pay off here in a few years. That is an \$0.11 levy. It brings in about \$27,000 a year in funds to pay the General Obligation Bond and interest. What you have the opportunity for now is to go before the voters and ask for a no tax increase General Obligation Bond which means that \$0.11 on \$100 assessed valuation would continue instead of stop. It would continue on past the 2 or 3 years it has left. So that basically, you're paying, the \$0.11 is 20% of their tax bill. So if you paid \$100 in taxes, \$20 of it is going to pay the General Obligation Bond. Since you have the opportunity to have a no tax increase bond issue, I've talked to everybody here, we've talked to Piper Sandler who is your bond underwriter to see exactly how much you can issue by keeping the levy the same. You have had increased valuation in your property and so Hannah Snider is the representative with Piper Sandler out of Kansas City who I've been working with. She did all of the numbers and said you would be able to issue about \$400,000 for a no tax increase. Which means you vote it in, the taxes will stay the same as far as the \$0.11 levy, it will bring in around \$30,000 a year to pay off the debt. That's if you only have \$300,000 or \$400,000 worth of projects to do. You have \$1,000,000 worth of projects to do. They split them up and said okay, we have to have this one, but we really need this one. Those are the projects that need to be done in the next 5 years. There are several options you can do. You could go ahead and instead of having a no tax increase just leaving at \$0.11, you could increase it \$0.20 that would go up to, instead of \$20 on \$100, you would be paying \$40 on \$100, that's \$0.20 on top of the \$0.11 that you have now. That's a \$0.30 increase you could pay the whole \$1,000,000. You could issue \$1,000,000 worth of debt if you decided to go that avenue and pay for it with just general obligation bonds. Another option would be to keep the levy at the \$0.11 and then go ahead and issue the \$1,000,000 in bonds and have the sewer usage fees pay for the other \$600,000. There are several ways to do it. I've talked with Hannah and basically it comes down to what does the Board want to do. Do you want to have a no tax increase issue on the ballot, pick up the same thing that you've picked up the last 10 years and only issue \$400,000 and only cover \$400,000 of the \$1,000,000 projects that you want to do or do you want to try and increase the \$0.11 to \$0.31 and have General Obligation Bonds which are paid for by property taxes, and do the whole project or do you want to do a combination of the two. Now those are things that I don't expect you to say that we are going to do this tonight, but I would like to get a meeting together sometime between now and the end of December because we have to have this done fairly quickly so we can have it for the January meeting to approve what you are going to go forward and do because of the election notices and all of that. What are the feels, do you just want to keep it the same as it's been, do you want to try to get all of the money from the property taxes and maybe just the G.O. Bond or do you want to do a mix. How is the sewer? What does the sewer committee think about paying more for the debt. So that's where we are, that's what we're working on. We would like to have another meeting sometime in the next couple of weeks with all of the Board, some of the Board, to decide what direction you want to move forward.

Roe – I think, Larry, and my comment is, we've talked about this at the very minimum, we would want to do the \$400,000 because there's a no increase in the tax.

Brown – That's correct.

Roe – The question in my mind is if we go over that, how much over that. That would be something that we would discuss at the next meeting.

Icenhower – Now you're talking, you said something about the sewer?

Brown – Yes.

Icenhower – How would the sewer pay?

Brown – Two ways. There would be two options for the sewer. You would have a bond issue ballot which would be strictly for issuing revenue bonds on the sewer side, general obligations on the regular tax levy side. You would get \$30,000 from property taxes, you would get another \$30,000 from a rate that you would add to the sewer bill. That's one of the options. The other is that maybe the sewer has enough money right now, with the rates they have to pay the debt without doing anything on that. That would just be a Board decision. If you think, okay this year we're going to have \$20,000 debt payment, or \$30,000, can the sewer fund without having any additional increase, can it pay that portion of the debt and then have the property taxes pay the other half of the debt.

Icenhower – For the \$400,000?

Brown – Yes. But if you're going to increase and assess on your sewer, then that's something that would have to be voted on to issue those bonds.

Icenhower – The Revenue Bonds?

Brown – Right.

Roe – I was going to add, if we can wait until the next meeting, which is December 14th....

Davis – January.

Roe – I'm sorry, thank you. January 14th, what's the reason for having the decision made by the end of December?

Brown – You have deadlines for when it has to be to the county...

Roe – For the ballot, okay.

Brown – Yes. For the election. If you don't meet that deadline, then you can't do any of this and it just pushes the projects on down another year.

Petty – If we were to increase the general bond and it failed, we would then lose the current, at least no increase tax bond as well?

Brown – If that failed, there would be no tax increase, then when the Bond is paid off in 2 years, then the levy would go down \$0.11 which means that the individuals paying \$100 would only pay \$60 or \$70 because you are no longer having a levy.

Petty – I think historically, or at least last year, we did not pass the no tax increase for rerouting taxed from internet purchases to the city. I worry that if we go to hard and try to get more now versus keeping it as it is with no tax increase, it's going to be more successful instead of just a hard no on increasing it and then being without completely.

Roe – That makes sense to me, Kelly.

Brown – And you still have to decide, you do have the sewer possibility there. I'm not exactly how, I know you just recently discussed the rate increase on that.

Icenhower – Well that bond was established in 2008, the one we are paying off right now.

Brown – Yes and it was done sewer and regular sewer funds and obligation funds. It was done both of them supply funds to pay for them.

Icenhower – Well, for the people in the audience, of course everybody up here's got it, but what this consist of is on the sewer side, replace the sand filters that was put in in 1992, they're getting worn out, that's \$150,000, sand filters erosion removal to replace the coating is \$15,000, replace sand filter controls is \$20,000, influent pump is \$25,000, flow meter is \$25,000, INI repairs \$65,000, new pumps and control, that's \$150,000. On the street side, we are looking at a few culverts. That one little bridge down there, the concrete is falling apart and the sidewalk will run down there so we're going to have to have enough room to accommodate the sidewalk. 38 South Main is right there by my old shop right off of 125, that culvert there. The concrete is actually falling down on the inside. That was built back in the 20s. That's \$250,000. East Maple, there's a whistle or a culvert over there, that's \$75,000 and one on East Cottonwood out there pass the school, that's another \$65,000. The street comes up to \$500,000, the sewer is \$450,000. That's where the \$1,000,000 is coming from. Just throw it out there so people know what we're looking at doing.

Brown – If you can you can do the projects together, you already have the construction people here, you've already done the bids, you've already done the process. It will make it go a lot quicker and a lot of the times, it's a lot cheaper. Because you don't have to do one project and then all of the sudden you have to go an do it all over again, go out and bid it again, go out and find somebody else and we've seen in the last 3 years construction costs have gone up 30-40% and it's going to be the same thing in another 3 years so this \$1,000,000, we are talking \$3,000,000 if you wait another 3 years to do it, or 4. It's something that has to be done, this is a

way to do it and you have the option and opportunity right now to go along with what was done. The citizens have paid in the past to do improvements here, and whether or not they want to continue to do that kind of depends on whether they like this place or not because if you can't continue to improve your city, why are you here? Some of these things are 80 years old. You can't continue to just have, the system will start falling in. You'll start having people driving across the roads and the roads will fall in. A lot of things have to be fixed and they have to be repaired and it's just something that you have to do.

Roe – Okay. And you're recommending a meeting before the end of this month...

Brown – Hannah wanted one because there are so many ways you can do it and I told her, I talked to her today, you know the Board hasn't even decided which direction they want to go. It may be that you don't want to mess with the other because you've had bad results from other ballots and maybe you don't want to do that and maybe you do want to keep it even for now and try something else next year.

Roe – Okay. Would Hannah be present or would it be a phone call?

Brown – Yes. She would be present. She said either way. She was going to come tonight and I said it's probably not a good idea because I don't think we have enough direction yet.

Icenhower – I would be in favor of meeting her face to face.

Roe – That's where I was going with this. I think it's easier...

Icenhower – We know we can keep the tax levy the same and do the \$400,000 and visiting with her, maybe we can figure out options we can do otherwise.

Roe – Agreed. So my thoughts are we get some dates that she's available to meet with us and work through Sara and the Mayor...

Brown – Hannah is going to be sending out an email to all of the Board members tomorrow. I thought she was going to today but I think she's waiting to get an idea but she's wanting to email you and see what works for this Board. But there is a time issue and that's why it had to be done.

Icenhower – In my opinion it would be whenever she's available.

Roe – Hopefully that's part of the purpose of the letter is to give us some dates that she's available.

Brown – Well, we all have different schedules.

Roe – Well, we've got to start with the dates she's available. She's a key player and you as well and then we will see if we can work with the Mayor and Sara and see if we can get a quorum here to move forward.

Brown – And if we have a committee, maybe the whole Board doesn't have to meet. Maybe that committee can let us know what direction they would like to go. It could be that we only have to worry about three schedules or four schedules instead of everybody.

Roe – Well, sewer and street committee would be the three of us. We're the ones that have been talking about this but it would take Board approval to move forward.

Icenhower – I would like all of the Board that could be there to be there.

Roe – Exactly.

Veach – Yeah, because you've got some Board members that don't know what's going on...

Icenhower – Right, so my suggestion is to just set a date and everybody just try to work around it and make themselves available.

Roe – Okay. Thank you, Larry.

2025 MAYORAL PROCLAMATION

Voorhis – You guys should all have it there in your packet.

Roe – Sara, does that require a vote?

Davis – A motion, yeah.

Motion by Roe to approve the 2025 City Hall holiday closures Proclamation as printed.

Seconded by Veach

Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

BILL NO. 24-13 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING GUIDELINES FOR THE USE AND PLACEMENT OF SHIPPING CONTAINERS WITHIN THE CITY OF FAIR GROVE, MISSOURI. (Posted 12/2/2024)

Motion by Veach to table until the next meeting. Seconded by Icenhower

Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT TO EMPLOYEE

Motion by Veach to deny reimbursement payment to Chief Roy Howell in the amount of \$59.99 and return the property. Seconded by Roe

Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE FINANCIAL SOFTWARE FOR THE CITY

Roe – Sara, I'm going to let you speak about what we're using and maybe just a short description of some issues you have with it and why we would like to go to QuickBooks if you wouldn't mind to do that first.

Davis – Sure. Currently we use gWorks, which was recommended by Larry the Treasurer, and it has been nothing but problems since we got it. It errors out all of the time, we're not able to

accurate track of vacation, sick time, all of that. It doesn't really track that. Sometimes things show up on people's checks, sometimes it doesn't. It just has a lot of issues. We looked at QuickBooks and online it allows us to let the employees clock in and out from there and allows the employees to look at their vacation and sick time. It does everything we need it to do.

Roe – Okay and based on the information you've provided us, QuickBooks is cheaper.

Davis – Correct.

Roe – And if I recall, the other towns that use gWorks have moved away from them.

Davis – Every town has left gWorks.

Roe – That's what I was thinking, okay.

Veatch – And didn't we use QuickBooks before?

Davis – Correct.

Stewart – QuickBooks can do whatever Larry was needing?

Davis – Yes.

Petty – You have previously used QuickBooks extensively, correct?

Davis – Yes. I have used it in about 2 years so I don't know if anything has changed, but yes.

Icenhower – I visited with Sara this morning on this and the only thing we're going to have to watch for is that she wasn't sure she could get everything switched over from gWorks to QuickBooks by the end of December.

Roe – I talked to Sara before the meeting and she said I cannot get it switched over before the end of December.

Icenhower – I don't know but will gWorks, are they going to shut us off on the 31st of December?

Davis – Honestly, I am not sure.

Icenhower – I just wonder if they would entertain, would they do it by month or do you have to do it by the year?

Davis – I can ask them, I'm honestly not sure. Generally, it's by the year.

Icenhower – We'll get ourselves hung out here if we're not careful.

Davis – Right.

Stewart – We can have somebody help here. Was it \$25 a month? Would that speed that up or maybe make that possible?

Davis – Yes. It would probably get it done really quick.

Roe – If we what now?

Stewart – In the bid here, it mentioned for \$25 a month we could have QuickBooks expert help her with moving things over. It's a month-by-month thing, we don't have to get into a long term contract.

Icenhower – Would that help get it switched over?

Davis – Yes.

Icenhower – Do you think you could do it then?

Davis – Yes.

Motion by Stewart to approve QuickBooks Premium Payroll online with 3 months of the live expert. Seconded by Veach

Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

Business Meeting

SEWER AND PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Roe – That's you. I do mine during the committee reports.

Hokanson – Right. I don't really have anything other than what you have. Unless somebody has questions.

Icenhower – Did you get educated today?

Roe – With your online training?

Hokanson – Yeah. I got another one tomorrow that's 8 til noon.

Davis – You've got one on Thursday too.

Hokanson – Yeah, I've got another one on Thursday.

Davis – And another one next week.

Roe – What we're talking about is Kenny has a license, a B license sewer operator. It starts A is the lowest level, B is the middle level and C is the highest level.

Icenhower – The other way around.

Roe – I'm sorry, the other way around

Hokanson – C is the bottom, then it's B, then it's A.

Roe – Okay, A is...

Hokanson – A is top of the line.

Roe – Okay. I said it backwards. Thank you, thank you. That's why you have more knowledge than I. And that requires online training to keep that license up.

Icenhower – Yeah, you have to have so many hours of training every year.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Motion by Roe to approve October 2024 financial statement as printed. Second Veach Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

PARK BOARD

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Greg Porter – Did you get that mitigation plan? Okay, that is what was submitted to Greene County on the city's behalf. That is for you guys to review to see if there are any changes that you would like made. I've got until the 1st to make any changes that you guys see necessary for that. Otherwise, this will be the city's portion in the Greene County master plan.

Lord – Greg, I went over that with Mark and it's fine.

Porter – Fantastic.

Lord – Thank you for doing that.

Porter – As far as I know, last month we didn't have any siren tests but we were having some issues on the last one so we had some fixed. Tomorrow is the actual test so we will see that everything is up and running. I had some reports that over by O'Bannon Bank wasn't working again. He went and tested and said everything is receiving signal and it looks as though everything should be working fine, so either somebodies not hearing it and think they should be hearing it inside and it's an outdoor warning system as opposed to an indoor warning system so I don't know if somebody is thinking they're not hearing it or what. Hopefully we'll find out tomorrow if everything is working fine. Yesterday the Fire Board, do you want to talk about that?

Icenhower – Yesterday Tom and I met with the Fire Department Board and we negotiated out a contract, they're going to find the contract and we'll sign the contract for \$60 a month rent for an office over there. It will be \$720 a year which I think is very reasonable.

Porter – That includes electric, internet, everything.

Icenhower – That's everything. So WiFi and everything is over there and they were, they had our old contract originally to where each party, it's for a year, and each party will have 30 days to renege on it. I'll have to take part of the blame on this. I forgot all about it. I was supposed to be taking care of this and evidently my wife had me busy doing something else, I don't know but anyway I forgot all about it. Tom Faulkner and I met with them yesterday and it's all taken care of. We just need to wait until we get that contract back from the Fire Board and then we can sign it.

Motion by Icenhower to pay \$720 a year for renting the office space for January 1st through December 31st for O.E.M. Seconded by Veach
Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

Porter – I think that is all I've got except for after the meeting, Mr. Mayor, I need some signatures from you for the 2024-2025 EMPG Grant so that I can get that submitted.

Voorhis – Yes, sir!

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Interim Chief Deckard – So I'm just going to give an update as to what we've done from the last meeting, from like November 12th from all the way up to today. Based off of my research we've had 181 incidents. Out of 181 incidents, 92 of those were traffic stops, 12 of those were check well being, check person, 2 DWI's, 2 like domestic disturbances, 1 harassment and then everything else just kind of falls under miscellaneous type stuff. Within the past month we have had all of our officers take some kind of vacation leave. So we do have upcoming events. With that December 17th is our Shop with a Cop. We've got in the works with Marshfield Walmart is going to host us there. Just like our President of the PCAC, Tim Cooke has said, we will have approximately 50-55 kids that we can shop for. All of that is coming from our Fair Grove School District and their immediate family such as like the other kids. So Walmart has stated that they will provide a meal, a snack and possibly Santa Claus. Also we have received some donations like gift cards from Kum & Go and for Price Cutter. Kum and Go is going to help if the families need gas or something we can provide those and I do believe that we are handing out a Price Cutter card to each family with a certain amount on those, I'm not sure how much it is, that we are going to provide families so they can get food and stuff like that as well. For the end of the year, my goals is to get us caught up with NIBRS which is our National Incident Base Report System. That is something that we are supposed to be reporting to at least once a month. I don't believe we have been doing that so my goal is to get us compliant with that plus there's end of the year that we have to submit. Also, VSR, which is our Vehicle Stop Reports are our racial profiling forms so I'm going to try to get us compliant for 2023 with the information that I have and then for what we have for 2024. A lot of that, state compliant, we have to do those but also it

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helps us with getting grants. That is all that I have as of right now. Do you guys have any questions for me?

Voorhis – Thank you.

CITY CLERK

The only thing I have is filing for the election opened today and ends December 31st at 5:00.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Sewer Committee report attached.

Icenhower – You might add that this project down here at the treatment plant is \$90,000.

Roe – Yep. Which was approved after the bids were opened. That's just one of the many projects that need to be done. We are working on it one piece at a time and moving forward. And that's all out of our budget, the sewer budget. We're not using any grants or other sources of income for that. Any other questions?

Voorhis – Any other committee reports?

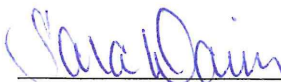
APPROVE BOARD OF ALDERMAN MINUTES

Motion by Roe to approve Board of Alderman Minutes for September 24, 2024, October 8, 2024, October 22, 2024, October 23, 2024, November 12, 2024, November 19, 2024 and December 3, 2024. Second Veach
Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE

Mayor Report

Adjournment

Motion by Icenhower to Adjourn at 7:22 p.m. Seconded by Veach
Stewart AYE, Veach AYE, Roe AYE, Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE



Sara Davis, City Clerk

Sewer & Street Committee Report November-December 10, 2024

Sewer

In November Independent Electric completed a rebuild of one of our older Sludge Return Pumps from the WWTP and delivered it. The rebuild was at no-cost because this pump was still under warranty from a re-build done earlier this year. With the return of this pump we now have a spare pump for the Sludge Return lift station.

Also in November Kelly scheduled two meetings with Richard and I. The first meeting was to review the Sewer Rate Study proposal done by OWN Engineering. Based on this information we put together our first recommendations on what the sewer rate proposal should be. The second meeting was scheduled with Larry Brown our City Treasurer. Larry has experience with other cities providing input based on the City's Sewer budget as to what the proposed increase should look like. The numbers were modified again and presented to the Board of Aldermen at the Nov 19th meeting. The Board agreed to move forward and schedule a public hearing early 2025.

We have a major project at the WWTP that will begin next week. The contract for this work was awarded early fall. The plan is to upgrade the drive system on each of the 2 rotors in one of our Oxidation Ditches. They will also install a new bearing on one of our Clarifiers. The sludge in the Clarifier has been cleaned out and the Clarifier is now ready for the bearing work to be done. This work is being done by Copperstate Machine and Industrial Service, LLC. They did similar work for the City of Mt Vernon. The crew doing the work is from their Arizona location and their tools have arrived. One of two gearboxes for the rotors is due today at the WWTP. The crew will start early Monday morning next week at the WWTP and expect to be there all week.

Street-Sidewalk Project

Yesterday Dec. 9 the crosswalk signs on Old Mill Road were installed for the new sidewalk. The installation of the chain link fence along the sidewalk on S Orchard started late yesterday afternoon. Their goal is to have the fence completed before the end of this week. Once the fencing is completed the sidewalk barricades will be removed to allow people to use it. We are also working with OWN Engineering on providing a bid spec for extending this sidewalk all the way to the Senior Center Driveway with a crosswalk to the Driveway for City Hall. The plan is to get this bid spec published early 2025 and to be paid with the Municipal Partnership Project funds of about \$30,000 and City Street Funds.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Roe, Richard Icenhower, Kelly Petty

Public Statement Regarding Concerns Over Information Transparency

I want to address the concerns that have been raised regarding the placement of our Chief of Police on administrative leave and the transparency of our city council's actions. I understand that these decisions can lead to questions and uncertainty within our community, and I want to assure you that we are committed to being transparent and acting in the best interests of the City of Fair Grove.

Firstly, I want to clarify that placing the Chief of Police on administrative leave is a decision that often falls under the authority of the Mayor. This is standard procedure, and it is important to note that the council can only vote to override the mayor's decisions or if there are specific actions that require council approval.

I take this responsibility very seriously, and I assure you that my actions are guided by a commitment to our law enforcement officers and the safety of our community. Since I took office, I have consistently supported our police department, and it is worth noting that during this period of the Chief of Police being on administrative leave, not a single officer has departed from our department.

While there are certain personnel matters that we cannot publicly discuss, please know that if a vote were required, we would provide the appropriate and accurate information as requested. Transparency is a priority, and all votes and decisions made by the council are publicly documented.

I want to reaffirm that the decision to place the Chief on leave was made in the best interest of our city. I remain dedicated to serving the City of Fair Grove and ensuring that our community remains safe and well-represented. This promise has guided me since my election, and I will continue to prioritize the well-being of our community.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Thomas Voorhis
Mayor
City of Fair Grove