



## **City Manager's Report**

September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Honorable Mayor Blackie and Commissioners Cole and Gwin,

Thank you for taking the time to visit with me over the past few weeks regarding the budget and providing me the opportunity to address your questions. Over the past couple of weeks, I have been out of the office a bit as you know attending the Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) aviation meeting in Hutchinson and the League of Kansas Municipalities' Annual Conference in Wichita. I would like to thank Mayor Blackie and Airport Board Member Pat Schettler for attending the aviation meeting with me as well as Mayor Blackie and Commissioner Gwin for attending the LKM Annual Conference. I believe both events were of value and will pay dividends in the future. I highly recommend your attendance at these types of events if you are available as they always prove worthwhile. In addition to those meetings we also held a couple of budget workshops and I attended the Planning Commission's monthly meeting. I also met with a couple of our potential vendors vying for our business as a Benefits Consultant. Our health insurance renewal is expected to be presented to us at the beginning of October and I look to making a decision on hiring a Benefits Consultant following that renewal quote.

As for the regular business agenda items, Professional Engineering Consultants (PEC) will have our design engineer, Brian Wintle, here to present our project proposal and answer any questions you might have. Earlier this week I sent out information related to the project and associated contracts however I went ahead and included that information following this report in the event you have been unable to review it yet. Item B is a Mayoral Proclamation recognizing business and professional women for their contributions to society. Item C is the consideration

of the Planning Commission's recommendation to modify our existing ordinance to effectively relax restrictions on downtown (the Square) property usage. The Planning Commission took up an initial question of should the City relax restrictions on downtown property usage to the point where any use of a residential nature was acceptable throughout the property. Our existing code restricts downtown residential use to the upstairs for rental units and allows main floor residences for the actual property owners. The Planning Commission decided to recommend that the main floor of a downtown, commercial (B-2 District) property, be available to use as a rental unit but only the rear fifty percent (50%). The front fifty percent (50%) would therefore need to be commercial in nature, complying with the B-2 district requirements. This is a middle ground between the requested change and our existing code. I request your guidance on how you would like to proceed and I will draft an ordinance for the next meeting if requested.

I have received a request to vacate a portion of our right-of-way (the corridor surrounding a street in which the City has the authority to construct infrastructure) in order to facilitate the sale of a parcel of land. The property to be sold is located at the southeast corner of Catalpa Street and Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Avenue in our Industrial Park. The reason for the request of vacation is that a structure on the property resides twelve and a half (12.5) feet on our existing right of way. The potential buyer is reluctant to purchase the property and structure when the City has the right to force the owner to tear the structure down due to it sitting on our right-of-way. We believe to have existing utilities approximately seven and a half (7.5) feet from the structure which is slightly closer than we typically like to see at a ten (10) foot minimum. However, in my opinion the largest concern is the loss of right-of-way. In the event we decide to vacate the twelve and a half (12.5) feet to resolve this issue, I would like to see a third-party agreement purchasing twelve and a half (12.5) feet on the opposite side of the street so that we maintain our right-of-way width. The reason that I feel this is important is that we are developing an industrial park at this location. The goal is that we see further future growth in this location and if that occurs we may need to widen the intersection or add in a turning lane to accommodate larger and heavier traffic. If this need ever arises, having the necessary right-of-way in hand would be advantageous for the City. I again request your guidance on how you would like to proceed. If you would like to

go ahead and vacate the right-of-way in question without pursuing the acquisition piece, I will work with the City Attorney to prepare the proper documentation for the next meeting.

The City has a request from a Boy Scout Troop out of Overland Park to camp in our North Lake campgrounds. In the past, the City Manager has typically waived the camping fees for groups such as the Boy Scouts, racing groups, skiing groups, etc. It is my understanding that this was done because the City Manager was instructed by the City Commission to handle these requests and make the determination to waive the fees or not. I currently have no authority that I am aware of to waive these fees as the City Code grants me no such power – such authority would have to be granted via an ordinance. My recommendation is to either pass an ordinance granting me such authority or that we do not waive such fees. We do need to come up with a better structure on how to define camping “units” and the fees per unit as it is currently vague and very open to interpretation. For this specific situation, my recommendation would be that we charge this group nine dollars (\$9) to camp. Nine dollars (\$9) is our cost per “wilderness camping unit” for an out of county resident or group. As “wilderness camping unit” is undefined, I would classify the entire group as one unit as long as they do not occupy the camping locations which house utility hookups. The reason why I feel it is important to charge for these types of things is that we have costs associated to provide this service. We have to mow and maintain these locations. We clean up after these groups leave. As you know, we are already in a difficult budget situation and when we waive service fees for people and groups who utilize our services, our property tax payers and utility customers end up paying for those services which we provided for free. I ran into another situation just yesterday that I would like to change on this front. We currently receive a certain number of hunting permits every year from the State for hunting at Cedar Valley Reservoir. We have a limited number of these permits and we apparently have usually ran out of these permits before the season even starts. We currently provide these permits for free. Here again, we have costs incurred to provide this service, we have administrative costs in issuing the permits as well as costs in maintaining the Reservoir grounds. I guarantee we could charge for these permits and the hunters would be willing to pay for them. As you know, supply and demand is an equilibrium and right now our supply is drastically low compared to demand – free services tend to have that relationship. I plan to do a comprehensive analysis of all of our fees and permits

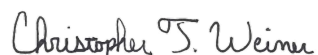
and how our costs/prices compare to our neighboring communities and service providers. Back to the point at hand though, I again need your guidance on how to proceed.

In response to Commissioner Gwin's concern related to the street projects this year, I would like to apologize for not being clearer in my plans and the decision I gave to Killough on the work to do. I would like to propose two different scenarios with the remaining \$60,566.10 we have remaining for street work. The first proposal would be to conduct a half-inch leveling course on Main Street from Seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) Avenue to Highway 169, Thirteenth (13<sup>th</sup>) Avenue from Walnut Street to Main Street, and Elm Street from Seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) Avenue to Eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) Avenue. This would be followed up next year by hopefully working with the County to have them chip and seal these roads for us. The second proposal is to do a two (2) inch overlay on Thirteenth (13<sup>th</sup>) Avenue from Walnut Street to Main Street, and a mill and two (2) inch overlay on Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Avenue from Spruce Street to Willow Street as well from Oak Street to Main Street, also on Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Avenue. My recommendation is proposal number two (2) as I think that a leveling course will be largely ineffective, especially on locations like Main Street due to the type of traffic it sees. Here again, I request your direction and Killough will likely start preparation of this work immediately.

I will have two budget proposals ready for your consideration on Tuesday evening, one with the mill levy at our current levy and one with the amount previously proposed. In this packet you will see two separate claims reports, that is due to a special pay that was issued on Monday to meet a required deadline. At the bottom of the last and larger report you will see that I have totaled the two reports as well as included our first half payroll from September. I intend to continue to provide this payroll information and include it in the amounts you approve every meeting for payments.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions and I appreciate the opportunity to serve you and this wonderful community as your City Manager.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Weiner, City Manager