

Westmoreland City Council
May 09, 2024 minutes

The Westmoreland City Council met on May 09, 2024 at the Westmoreland Community Center for its monthly meeting.

Present: Mayor- Mark Jack, City Clerk- Julie Wren, Maintenance Supervisor- Robert Krohn, City Attorney- Summer Dierks(via phone), Councilmembers- Jim Smith, Waide Purvis and Bruce Meininger.

Absent: Councilmember John Coleman and Ashley Rice and City Treasurer Mandi Reese.

Others present: Residents; Michelle Campbell, Jim Moore, Jeff Rosell, USD 323: Scott Harshbarger; Fire Chief: Kevin Umscheid; Reporter of The Times: Cale Prater; Pott Co. Police Officer: Dale Rice.

There being a quorum present, Mayor, Mark S. Jack called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda: Councilmember Purvis asked to add Pawnee Mental Health Employee Assistance Program. Councilmember Purvis moved to approve the agenda with the amended item added. Councilmember Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Consent Items: Councilmember Meininger moved to approve the consent items which consisted of April 11, 2024 and approval of monthly bills-except those that may be pulled for further discussion. Councilmember Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Public comments on non-agenda items: Michelle voiced her appreciation to the Council and employees and Robert who has been "working his butt off" since the evening of the tornado. She was proud to see the coordination between the County and City. It was fantastic and enjoyed seeing it all come together. Scott with Westmoreland Elementary School said he couldn't be prouder of this community and proud of the city representation.

NEW BUSINESS-

- **Tornado Relief Updates:** Councilmember Purvis updated on where we are as of today. There were 3 Senators in town and we have asked for their support in our recovery. Westmoreland is now in recovery stage.
- The cleanup portion is over. Pott. Co. will still pick up items on the side of the roads but we are not sure for how much longer. The support and help from Pott.

Co. has been top notch and we have been working hand in hand with them since day one.

- Purvis and Wren walked every street and looked at every house that had been damaged by the tornado in Westmoreland with Pott Co. Economic Development and SBA this morning. We will now be waiting to hear from SBA to see if we qualify for low-interest-rate loans.
- We got in contact with a local foundation - Caring Community Foundation to help set up an account to accept donations and to get funds divided out ASAP. At this point, the fund has over \$100,000. People are still encouraged to donate. There will be an application CCF asks residents to fill out.
- Regarding City property:
 - The pool house had to be torn down.
 - Damage to the RV Park included 4 campers/RV's, one replacement electrical box which controls 3 sites is on backorder).
 - City Shops and City vehicles.
- Robert has worked above and beyond. Water pits were destroyed so he is trying to get those repaired.
- We have had 6 special meetings.
- The community center opened right after the tornado in case people needed a place to stay
- Donations flooded in. The plan is to be open for two weeks and then the 18th will be the last day of being open. Everyone is encouraged to tell everyone they know the community center is open, for them to get what they can use.
- Jim Moore wanted to know why FEMA or State Level hadn't been declared Westmoreland a disaster area. Purvis responded that as far as the State is concerned, there is no State Disaster fund for devastation like this. Kansas is one of the few states set up like this.
- We weren't declared a disaster by FEMA due to still being open as a city, meaning we were still able to get/shop for supplies needed and honestly wasn't a big enough disaster. Purvis urged everyone to contact the senators and explain how much this has hurt our town!! We need their support and help.
- Michelle stated the City's posts on Facebook have been helpful and sharing the County's information has helped a lot.
- Purvis also wanted to give a huge shoutout to thank the firefighters for their searching and clearing at the beginning and that it was an unbelievable job!!

Speed limit off Walnut-Skene-Quail: Councilmember Purvis brought up how it is hard to enforce speed limits when we don't have a city police department. He suggested going to the County to see if there's something they can do.

Pawnee Mental Health Employee Assistance Program: Pawnee Mental Health had sent a staff member to Westmoreland to be available if needed for the City Staff. This was donated by Pawnee. There's a program they provide for employees called the

Employee Assistance Program. Each employee is permitted three visits per presenting problem, per individual per year. The cost is \$1.00 per employee, per month upon signing of the annual contract. Councilmember Purvis moved to approve the \$1.00 a month per employee contract with Pawnee Mental Health for the Employee Assistance Program for a year. Councilmember Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Future agenda items: Disaster/Recovery Update, Pool: Existence of pool remains, in a couple months review our emergency plan and possibly make a workday of it; storm shelter for the City and Speed bumps.

Reports:

Treasurer: Absent.

Maintenance Report: Krohn reported items needing to be taken care of:

- A dozen water meters to fix/ordered
- Few water valves needing fixed
- Larson Construction will be fixing a fire hydrant
- RV Park: Valburg Electric is helping with the replacement of electrical boxes. We are waiting on RV's to be cleared before beginning anything
- T-ball field fencing needs to be replaced, the local rec wants to help rebuild and has volunteers ready to go today. Krohn stated he didn't want any games until it is safe and could be used for practice but not games yet. About 400 ft of fencing needs to be ordered for the outfield. Councilmember Meininger motioned to allow the purchase of fence for the T-ball field but Robert not put it up. Seconded by Councilmember Smith. Motion passed 3-0.
- City Shop: The structure was lifted on all opened equipment bays and water is now coming into the Shop. This needs to be addressed at some point.
- Speed bumps- Summer suggested as long as they are posted we can install them, but she is concerned about what will happen when snow is being cleared.
- Our City Streets aren't made for all the heavy equipment they are experiencing, worried what it's going to do to them.

Clerks Report: City Clerk had nothing to report at this time.

Streets- Councilmember Meininger had nothing to report.

Utilities- Councilmember Coleman was absent.

Animal Control- Councilmember Smith had nothing to report.

Planning & Zoning- Councilmember Smith had nothing to report.

Pool- Councilmember Rice was absent. Krohn stated that before the tornado it was going to cost \$8,500 for an engineer to come in to look at what needed to be done.

What was left of the pool house, was torn down due to liability issues. The insurance adjuster agreed that demolishing the pool house after the tornado damages was the right thing to do. The next discussion is if we need to tear out what remains and leave space to build a new facility or to make a plan due to the fence we have now boarding what's there is costing \$2,200 for three months.

Cemetery- Councilmember Purvis had nothing to report, no damage there.

Parks- The park next to the pool was damaged by the tornado. Before the tornado there was discussion on pickleball courts being added to the tennis ball court. Krohn has been in contact with Jeremy Lehning with this project. Plans are to leave it as a Tennis Ball Court, have two pickleball courts added, maybe a movie night same evening as a pickle ball tournament. Each pickleball net is \$500 and they'd also like to add a couple basketball goals. After discussion, Councilmember Smith moved to spend the \$1,000 for the nets, \$600 for the basketball goals and \$50 a month for lights which a resolution will be considered at the next meeting. Councilmember Meininger seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. Resident Jeff Rosell offered to donate a basketball goal that he no longer needs. The council graciously accepted.

Fire Department- Umscheid stated the windshield is repaired now on engine 1.

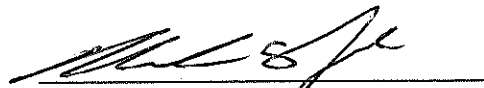
Flint Hills Regional Council- Councilmember Meinger and Resident Michelle Campbell- Nothing to report other than a meeting next week.

Mayor- Mayor Jack had nothing to report.


City Attorney- There will be a court case next week.

There being no further business, Councilmember Smith moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Meininger seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Mayor Jack declared the meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.
Approved by the Governing Body on June 13th, 2024.


Mark Jack, Mayor

ATTEST:


Julie Wren, City Clerk

