



City Manager's Report

December 23, 2019

Honorable Mayor Gwin and City Commissioners Brecheisen-Huss and Cole,

I would first like to start by expressing my condolences to Mrs. Ecclefield. Gary Ecclefield was a wonderful individual to work with. He always had a smile on his face and was friendly to everyone he came into contact with. I believe I speak for all City Staff when I say he will be dearly missed.

It is busy as always in these weeks leading up to Christmas. I wanted you to be aware that over the past few months I have been surveying different areas of Garnett that I believe need attention. Part of this process has been to make lists for each department head with the expectation that they will complete the tasks in a timely manner. This has been a positive system and we are beginning to see some major improvements throughout town. Most of my department heads have shown good leadership by ensuring these tasks are completed. Some of my department heads have even gone above and beyond the lists that I have given them. I am beyond proud of the effort that they have demonstrated. Another task that the Department Heads and myself have been working on is the completion of Annual Performance Evaluations for all employees. We are hoping to have all of these completed by the middle of January in order to make the COLA and any earned merit raised in effect for the first pay period in 2020.

Several of our employees recently attend the Active Shooter Training that was given by the Kansas Highway Patrol. Those in attendance expressed the value of the training and seemed much more informed after the course. Several employees from our Public Works Department have attended trainings recently. We now have two Certified Backflow Prevention Operators, Rusty Harvey and Brian Grissell.

Staff is in the process of preparing documentation of all fees that the City currently charges for various services. They are researching past ordinances and the City Code for the fee schedules and we hope to provide that for you at our next meeting. My hopes are to present this fee schedule, via resolution, for consideration on a yearly basis. I have been working with City Attorney Solander for legal counsel to determine if this in fact can be passed yearly, via resolution. This will assist our efforts in determining if our fee structure is sufficient for the costs that we accrue to provide such services. In the course of our research of past ordinances, we came upon ordinance number 3151 which specifies that no leaves, yard waste (grass), or other debris may be blown or deposited onto City streets or sidewalks. As we previously discussed the need for such an ordinance and happened to come upon it, I wanted to let you know, as we will start enforcing this next year. I have also addressed this in my Town Talk article for this winter. As we discussed at our last meeting, we are looking at replacing two of our heating units at the recreation center as they are both cracked, we are hoping to have them both replaced by the beginning of the year. We are expecting to replace both units for somewhere around \$7,000. As you may have noticed, Town Hall Center is in need of some maintenance. The wood siding is deteriorating as well as the flooring is peeling up inside. We are evaluating some options for siding and flooring to address these issues.

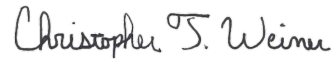
As for our agenda this meeting, the first item is the consideration of the Agreement with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) for the Maple Street Drainage Project. This agreement stipulates that KDOT will let and administer the project and invoice us appropriately. This is different from our last KDOT project by the elementary school where the City administered the project and the State reimbursed us. Once the bids are received, the City will still have the opportunity to decline the project or pursue a rebidding if the prices come in too high. The second item for your consideration is the contract with BG Consultants for Design Engineering Services for the Maple Street Drainage Project. I requested proposals from three other engineering firms as well and two declined to submit while Professional Engineering Consultants (PEC), who is designing our new water treatment facility, came in ten percent (10%) higher. These design engineering services are unfortunately non-participating (no KDOT grant share) and so will be entirely upon us to finance (likely split between the 2020 and 2021 fiscal years). Next, for your

consideration is the Airport Lease Agreement with Don Fairfield. Mr. Fairfield desires to build a new hangar at our airport and the airport board has reviewed and recommend approval. Item D is reviewing an agreement with US Cellular to install equipment on our water tower support and the adjacent land. City Attorney Solander and I have been negotiating with U.S. Cellular on this agreement for months now and believe we have addressed all significant issues the best we can to come to an agreement. I am asking for your review of this document now, while U.S. Cellular also goes through a final legal review process expecting for formal approval at our next, January 14th, 2020 Commission meeting. This agreement will allow U.S. Cellular the right to place their equipment on and next to the tower in exchange for \$1,400. In the event they exercise the option to place this equipment, they will pay the City \$16,800 annually in rental payments for use of this space. Item E is the agreement between the City and Chamber of Commerce to provide for joint employee (Kris Hix) for the Chamber and City. Item F is pertaining to discussion of the establishment of a landbank – as we’ve discussed in the past. Specifically, as I addressed at the last meeting, Denise’s Café is in need of either demolition or rehabilitation. As I referenced at the last meeting, it did not sell at the tax sale a couple of months ago and therefore the delinquent taxes (over \$20,000) remain in place. Director of Economic Development, Julie Turnipseed, has been working with a local investor who is interested in fixing up the property and running a business out of it. However, he is not willing to buy the property and pay the delinquent taxes which would currently be required. A land bank could potentially save this property in that Kansas Statute 12-5909(b) provides (in part) that when a parcel of property is acquired by the land bank, “the county treasurer shall remove from the tax rolls all taxes, assessments, charges, penalties and interest that are due and payable on the property.” We have planned for two officials familiar with land banks and their operations, from Atchison and Pittsburg, to attend the next joint meeting of the City/County/School/Hospital. However, this meeting is not until the end of February and having them present at that meeting will require any presentation to be relatively short. I would like to suggest holding a separate City/County meeting to discuss the possibility of establishing a land bank and afford you as Commissioners more of an opportunity to ask questions of these officials than will likely be afforded at the larger joint meeting due to time constraints. Next, is the consideration of the bills and payroll in the amount of \$285,396.99. Given

the Commission's willingness to move forward on street preservation work with Proseal, I negotiated and received an updated invoice from Proseal for the 2020 Street Repair Project Agreement.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher T. Weiner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Christopher T. Weiner, City Manager