



City Manager's Report

April 9th, 2019

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

I want to thank you for taking the time recently to hold extra meetings to address departmental requests as well as deal with unexpected pressing issues requiring Commission action. Your willingness to hold and participate in these extra meetings is much appreciated. I know it is tough to find a time for workshops to focus on topics like the City Code, Personnel Policy, and Strategic Planning, but I do think once completed, all of these updates will pay dividends for the City – so hopefully, we can continue to work toward completing these updates. In addition to these, I hope to have our first budget workshop outlining initial budget numbers and projections as well as 2020 priorities either later this month or toward the beginning of May. Please let me know what time frames work the best for you.

We have submitted the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) grant application for their City Connecting Links Improvement Program (CCLIP) request for proposals, and hope to meet with KDOT staff regarding our project proposal within a couple of months. I will look into financing options for the proposed \$400,000 City match. We have been continuing to work with Trustpoint Insurance to update our insurance policies and look for options for the local Disc Golf Club. We are working with the local Club to try and find a workable solution. Scott Rogers has indicated that with Spring and warmer weather upon us, he intends to start taking apart one of the welcome to Garnett signs to paint it, work on the frame, and put it back together. This is the project that was approved last year and will be largely funded from the local Rotary and Lions Clubs with the finances ran through the City.

Our energy consultant, Kansas Municipal Gas Agency (KMGA) had a call with the Minnesota Municipal Gas Agency (MMGA) last week and things are now back on track. The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) has identified a number of other municipals that will participate in the prepay program. In fact, they have more than enough gas volumes now with over 20,000 MMBtu/day. RBC will be working on two existing prepay projects where they have reached that initial five (5) year period and will be remarketing the bonds on these two projects over the next couple months. After that, they can then work exclusively on closing the MMGA/KMGA prepay project.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

Final documents/contracts	May 2019
City's Approval of Agreement	June 2019
MMGA Bond Closing	July 2019
Gas Deliveries Begin	November 2019

We held our first employee health insurance committee meeting and an emergency operations planning meeting and I think they went well. We will continue to hold these meetings, along with the pay scale committee, and others to make improvements where possible. I attended a meeting with a couple of contractors who are interested in partnering with the City to develop additional senior housing in the community. We plan to meet again later this month to continue these discussions. We have also been continuing to work on our airport master plan update and are making progress with our consultant, Garver, toward completing this. The company conducting our cultural resources survey for the water plant project is supposed to be here tomorrow (Friday) to conduct the field work for the study. We all have some significant training classes coming up here in short order in addition to those some have already attended. We spent a significant amount of time recently fielding customer concerns about not receiving their utility bills. I have spoken with the postmaster a couple of times regarding this issue and I believe we will have the problem resolved. Thus far this month we have not had the problems we encountered last month.

As you know, late last week we scrambled to research and facilitate the recent movement of a house out of the community. I appreciate your assistance in making this move happen. I'll mark down the changes we discussed for the pertinent section in our city code revision.

As for the agenda, it is another rather long one, but half of it is in filling or reappointing expired advisory board terms. The first item under regular business is a proclamation declaring April as "Fair Housing Month". This is a requirement for some grant opportunities. Item B is another proclamation, this one declaring May as "Community Action Month". I expect the East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corporation (ECKAN) to have a representative present in recognition of the proclamation. City Attorney Solander has drafted ordinances 4201 and 4202 repealing the loyalty oath and amending the age restriction for volunteer firefighters, as directed by the Commission. Resolution 2019-4 is the Resolution required to transition from the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs) to the Kansas Police and Fire (KP&F) retirement system for our law enforcement personnel. Resolution 2019-5 adopts the official City Flag as previously presented. Resolution 2019-6 extends our agreement with the Southwestern Power Administration to purchase three hundred (300) kilowatts of hydroelectricity for another fifteen (15) years. As you may recall, this particular energy product has been one of the best performing products in our energy portfolio from a wholesale purchasing price perspective. Given the uncertainty of the energy market, the relatively small amount of energy being secured, and the positive experience thus far received, I recommend approval of this extension as do our energy consultants from the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency (KMEA). Following the resolution is the formal agreement to purchase the energy. The next item is a transient guest tax funding request from the Anderson County Corn Festival, also known as "Cornstock". The Tourism Committee has reviewed their application in the amount of \$4,500 and has issued a favorable recommendation. I concur with this recommendation as Cornstock has proven to be a very successful community event over the years and most definitely accomplishes the goal of being an event which brings people into our community and into our hotel rooms. This application amounts to almost a quarter (22.5%) of the Tourism Fund's local event grants budget. However, last year saw just over half of the Tourism Fund's budget being spent. Given the impact of *Cornstock* and the available resources, I recommend approval of the request.

I have spoken with each of our advisory board members whose terms have expired and thanked them for their dedication and service to our community and asked them whether or not they are still interested in serving on these boards in their same capacity. The vast majority of our board members have indicated a desire to remain on the board with a few stepping down for various reasons. Those stepping down are Adam Caylor from the Planning Commission, Betts Abraham, Carrie Rulon and Steve Markham from the Library Board, Jenny Schooler from Walker Art and Charlie Caron from the Community Foundation. I have below broken down the various boards, vacancies, and candidates for your consideration:

Planning Commission - Three (3), three (3), year terms. These are the terms expiring for Skip Landis, Les Thomas, and Adam Caylor.

Mr. Landis and Mr. Thomas are both still willing to serve while Paula Scott and Bob Mills are both also interested in joining the Commission. Mr. Caylor has indicated his desire to step down from the Planning Commission. In this rare case, we have four (4) candidates vying for just three (3) spots.

Tourism Advisory Board - Three (3), three (3), year terms. These are the terms expiring for Paula Wallace, Nicole Stevenson, and Tom Emerson.

Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Stevenson, and Mr. Emerson are all still willing to serve and are the only candidates for these three (3) positions.

Anderson County Development Agency - One (1), three (3), year term. This is the term expiring for Eric Glaze.

Mr. Glaze is still willing to serve and he is the only candidate for this position.

Library Board - Two (2), four (4), year terms. These are the terms expiring for Mike Hermann and Betts Abraham. Board Members Carrie Rulon and Steve Markham have also resigned their positions on the board creating additional vacancies. The individual appointed to fill the remainder of Mr. Markham's term will be for a three (3) year term set to expire in 2022 and Mrs. Rulon's term will also be for the remaining two (2) years set to expire in 2021.

Mr. Hermann is still interested in serving on the Board while Mrs. Abraham has fulfilled her full two (2) terms on the Board and therefore her position is open. Denise Scheibmeir, Jordan Hall and Sharon Yost are all interested in joining the Library Board.

Garnett Community Foundation - Two (2), three (3), year terms. These are the terms expiring for Charlie Caron and a vacant position.

Mr. Caron has indicated that he is stepping down from the Foundation leaving two open positions. Jonathan Hall indicated interest in joining the Community Foundation. Hopefully, we have additional interested applicants come forward soon. Other board members have indicated that they may not wish to remain on the Board past the expiration of their current term.

Parks and Recreation Board - Two (2), three (3), year terms. These are the terms expiring for Rochelle Kohlmeier and Matt Stevenson.

Mrs. Kohlmeier and Mr. Stevenson are both still willing to serve and are the only candidates for these two (2) positions.

Walker Art Committee - Two (2), three (3), year terms. These are the terms expiring for Denise Scheibmeir and Jenny Schooler.

Mrs. Scheibmeir is willing to serve another term. Mrs. Schooler has indicated desire to step down from the Walker Art Committee after completing her full term.

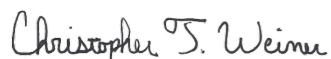
The bills and payroll this cycle total \$211,167.49. This month's employee of the month is Rusty Harvey. Rusty has been with the City for a little over six (6) months now and has shown a willingness to tackle any project exerting maximum effort. He is not afraid to get dirty and has developed the ability to complete all of the plant maintenance. He is continuously learning where our sewer mains are located as well as how to operate the sewer camera and rodding machine. He is an excellent co-worker, accepts responsibility, and a pleasure to work with. I would like to thank Rusty for his efforts these past six months and I know he'll keep up the excellent work ethic.

Our financials through the first quarter of the year are looking good. The only concerning funds at this point would be the electric and gas funds. Both of these funds are sitting fine for the time being but higher than anticipated usage, mainly due to colder temperatures this winter, have resulted in higher than expected wholesale purchasing costs. A protest petition has been started in an effort to force the passed charter ordinance expanding our three-member City Commission to a five-member City Commission to a vote of the people. County Clerk Julie Heck has provided me with a breakdown of what our estimated costs will be in order to conduct a special election in the event one is needed. For a regular election, an estimated \$4,300 is the expected cost, while a mail ballot election would carry an estimated cost of \$7,650. The mail ballot election, while more expensive, would likely see a better participation rate. As mentioned, these are only estimates as the actual costs will vary. I have also received the supplemental agreement with our water plant

engineers, Professional Engineering Consultants (PEC), to complete the anti-degradation study of our lagoons as required by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). I plan to ask around from a couple other engineering firms for price comparisons but will likely move forward with PEC in order to keep all of the water plant work under one roof. Please try and attend the First Impressions Results Meeting which will be held on April 15th and Town Hall Center at 7 P.M. This will be an excellent opportunity to obtain a different perspective on our community to hopefully build on our strengths and improve on our weaknesses.

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 cursive script that reads "Christopher T. Weiner".

Christopher T. Weiner, City Manager