

CITY COUNCIL
MAY 3, 2021
7:00 P.M.

The Council of the City of Augusta, Kansas met in regular session on May 3, 2021, with Mayor Mike Rawlings presiding. Council present were Eric Birk, Jamie Crum, Mike Huddleston, Tom Leffler, Kip Richardson, Ron Reavis and Bill Slade. Councilmember Jake Marr was absent. Also present: City Attorney Andrew Marino, City Manager Josh Shaw, Assistant City Manager Cody Sims and City Clerk Erica Jones. Staff Present: Director of Public Safety Bob Sage, Anita Riley, Travis Combes, Susie Geiger and Susan Smith. Visitors present were: Cole Martindale, Christine Cox, Cory Cox, Pastor Rick Neubauer, John Cox Jr., Clarisa Cox, Chad Phillips and Ken Schnake.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer: Pastor Rick Neubauer gave the invocation.

Minutes: Richardson made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 19, 2021 City Council meeting. Crum seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Ordinance: Crum made a motion to approve Ordinance 4A dated 4/28/2021. Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Proclamations:

Mayor Rawlings read a proclamation declaring May 3rd to May 7th as Teacher Appreciation Week.

Mayor Rawlings read a proclamation declaring May 2nd to May 8th as Public Service Recognition Week.

Visitors:

Chad Phillips, 335 E Broadway, addressed the governing body. Phillips stated he has filed for a conditional use permit to open his tattoo shop and he was reassured several times that today was the day the Council would be voting on it, but now he's being told it will be May 17th. Phillips stated the delay will result in a \$2,100 loss for him. Sims stated that May 10th is the end of the required 14 day waiting period for council action on a conditional use permit. Sims stated that under the old regulations, the Council did not have to take action. But the new regulations include a 14-day protest period and then it goes to the council for final approval similar to a zoning change. Sims stated he spoke to the City Attorney about what remedies we have and they discussed three options. Sims stated the 1st option is to wait the 14 days and the Council will consider it at the May 17th meeting. The second option is to schedule a special meeting to consider that one business item on May 11th or after. And the third option is to issue an administrative exception if there is a manifest injustice placed on the property owner. Sims stated that as zoning administrator he could write an administrative exception to allow Phillips to operate after his state inspection from May 12th thru May 17th and the Council could consider the Planning Commission recommendation to approve the conditional use permit on May 17th. If approved, the administrative exception would cease at that point. He stated if the council does not approve the conditional use permit Phillips would then have to cease operations. Reavis made a motion to direct Sims to issue the administrative exception. Richardson seconded the motion. Huddleston called the question. Motion to call the question died from lack of a second. Motion to direct Sims to issue the administrative exception carried without opposition.

Business:

Old Business – Update on Condemnation Process of a Detached Residential Garage Located at 654 North Santa Fe Street: Leffler made a motion to table any further condemnation action pertaining to Resolution No. 2021-06 until June 7, 2021. Reavis seconded the nomination. Motion carried without opposition.

Zoning District Reclassification Ordinance No. 2174 for Zoning Case Z2021-08 Great Plains RV and Powersports LLC for Property Located at 207-211 North Walnut Street: Richardson made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2174 accepting the Augusta Planning Commission’s recommendation to authorize a zoning district reclassification from C-2 Central Commercial to I-1 Industrial for property located at 207-211 North Walnut Street. Leffler seconded the motion. Roll Call: Reavis Yes, Huddleston Yes, Birk Yes, Richardson Yes, Crum Yes, Leffler Yes, Slade Yes. Motion carried.

Old Business - Airport Coronavirus Relief Grant Program Grant Agreement: Leffler made a motion to authorize the Assistant City Manager and the City Attorney to sign the Airport Coronavirus Relief Grant Program (ACRGP) Grant Agreement No. 3-20-006-023-2021 for the Augusta Municipal Airport. Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Leffler made a motion to approve Policy 2021-01 requiring facial coverings in all public areas at Augusta Municipal Airport where social distancing recommendations set forth by the CDC and the TSA cannot be achieved pursuant to Executive Order No. 13998. Crum seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Old Business – Discussion of Utility Abatement Program Suggested Modifications: Council reviewed and discussed suggested modifications to the annual nonprofit utility abatement program and Council consensus was to discuss this further at the next budget work session.

Cross Lot Access Easement Agreement with USD 402: Leffler made a motion to approve a Cross Lot Access Easement Agreement with USD 402 giving the City permission to move equipment across property owned by the school district as part of the project to rehabilitate the State Street water tower and for future maintenance. Slade seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Mayoral Appointments to the Airport Advisory Board: Richardson made a motion to approve the mayor’s recommendation to re-appoint Tom Leffler, Michael Snow, Alex Huckins and Willie Sinsel to the Airport Advisory Board. Crum seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Matters From/For Council and Informational Memorandum:

City Manager: Crum made a motion to schedule Budget Work Session #1 for Monday, May 10th at 6:00 p.m. Leffler seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Council discussed replacement options for Police Chief vehicle utilizing the \$14,000 insurance settlement resulting from an accident that totaled the vehicle. Crum made a motion to authorize the police chief to purchase a used vehicle up to \$14,800 utilizing the settlement to be used as a trip car for the department/City. Huddleston seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

Shaw stated he included an attachment in the informational memorandum that he refers to as an idea document. He stated it is just him putting ideas on paper that are being discussed in the community. He stated he is not committing the City to anything, but bringing the ideas to light as some of these things may be discussed and turn in to a strategy or plan to be presented to the Council in the future.

Huddleston: Huddleston stated Shaw's report shows he assisted a local business owner with the development of their website. He stated there should be some type of limits or guidelines about helping private business owners with tax dollars. Shaw stated there are programs like this in other communities to help business in the economic development office. He stated he met with the business owner over lunch, but used his own time over the weekend to work on it. Council consensus was supportive of Shaw doing this type of activity.

Reavis: Reavis stated he does not feel the Animal Control report included in the packet is a complete report. He said the report shows there were 43 animals picked up and zero picked up by officers and only showing one dead animal was picked up. He stated that doesn't seem to be a complete report.

Reavis stated we seem to be having a lot of job recruitment advertised and stated he would like to see if there is some way to see if there is a better way to handle employee retention. He asked if we looking in to employee retention. Shaw stated we are and there is no simple answer to it and a lot of ways influencing it. He stated that money is not the exclusive answer and people are struggling to fill positions everywhere right now. Reavis asked if we have enough staff to complete our services. Shaw stated a couple departments are struggling.

Richardson: Richardson asked Sims to provide an update on the swimming pool. Sims stated that staff is finishing the hiring process with lifeguards. He stated June 1st thru June 3rd will be training dates, and June 4th will be a work day and that the pool will open to the public on June 5th at 1 p.m. Shaw stated our crews are doing some investigations on the splash pad to make sure there was no damage to the equipment or control room from the February storm and will try to open it as soon as possible. He stated if nothing is wrong, the plan is to open the splash pad on Memorial weekend as usual. Huddleston asked if there is a concern about the national shortage of chlorine. Shaw stated that it could have an impact on the pool, not the splash pad. Sims stated we received a big order of chemicals before the pool closed last year, so we may have a stockpile that will help us open. Richardson asked if we could do something with the bathroom floors because they are really slick. Sims stated he would look in to it.

Crum: Crum asked if the City could receive an update from Superintendent Matt Ward on student enrollment and their struggles because it will affect all of us in the City. She asked if he could be invited to speak at a work session or future meeting. Shaw stated he would ask him to see what dates he would be available and if he can attend this first budget work session on May 10th.

Slade: Slade stated that with the spring weather it is nice to see the fisherman out using the lake. He asked where we are with regard to stocking the lake. Sims stated we stock it every two to three years.

Reavis: Reavis asked if it would be possible for staff to put out something on social media about how to file for city office as the deadline is quickly approaching on June 1st. He asked staff to include basic information and a ward map. Shaw stated staff will get something put together.

Adjourn: At 8:29 p.m., Reavis made a motion to adjourn. Slade seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

City Clerk