

City Council Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2024

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Debi Schwertfeger called the regular City Council Meeting to order. Council members present were Jason Booker, Mark Berner, Denise Hartman, Sean Honer, Nathan Adams, and Sharon Haun also present were the City Administrator Nick Jones and City Attorney Brian Henderson and Molly Priest, Others attending were Jan Sciacca, Angie Schwerdtfeger, Pat Riordon, Karen Exon, Sharon McVay, Fred Bammes, Mollie Avery, Daniel Winter, John Petz, Don Moller, Steve Crichton, Robert Herbig, Larry Karns, Marty Wright, Bob Hiebert, Shelley Dunham, Gary Catlin, Cody Catilin, David Fox, Annie McDiffett, Maggie Ziegenhert, Annette Adams, Taylor Adams, Jesse Knight, Ryan McDonald, Julie Hower, Ryan Moss, Linda Cosgrove, Pastor Billy Kryger, Vern Hay, Terry Humpries.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Marty Wright addressed the Council regarding concerns with the city trying to annex Council Grove City Lake, Mr. Wright said he felt bullied by the letter that was sent out to the lake residents and how a lease that has been in place for 12 years is now not considered legal. Mr. Wright also brought up instances where sewer mains around other lakes have broken and caused more pollution to the water than the current septic systems do now.

Don Moller the Council Grove Lake Association President addressed the Council regarding what he believes are violations of the Kansas Open Meetings Act. Mr. Moller listed off 7 different insistent that he considered violations of KOMA taking in Executive Session. 1.) Intention to terminate lease, 2.) Sale Price of \$25,000, 3.) Establishing a date for response of November 15, 2024. 4.) Allowing those financially unable to work with the city to affect sale. 5.) Determining that the city will proceed with a lawsuit against any that do not agree to move forward with the sale. 6.) Those that do not agree will be ineligible to purchase lots in the future, 7.) Approval of the letter in its final form in Executive session.

Taylor Adams with Adams Homestore read a letter signed by some of the Council Grove businesses regarding the actions taken by the City Council and the potential effects it could have on local businesses and urged the City Council to hold on their intended actions before moving forward with plans for annexation and litigation toward the lake leaseholders without a better understanding of the impact this will have on all citizens, leaseholders, and business owners. Mr. Adams read through the list of Business owners that signed the letter.

Terry Humpries, a lake leaseholder addressed the City Council and asked them to take a new approach of collaboration with the Lake Residents instead of an ultimatum. Mrs. Humpries said through the years Lake Residents that they wish to have stability and to own their lots and for more than a decade the lake residents have proposed different approaches to accomplish this. Mrs. Humpries said that the desires have been made public and are a part of the City Lake Association Master Plan, which is posted on the website. Mrs. Humpries asked that we work together for the benefit of all.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilperson Jason Booker made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented in the packet. Councilperson Nathan Adams seconded the motion. Motion Carried 5 – 0 The consent agenda consisted of:

- October 15, 2024, Minutes
- October 15, 2024, to Current Appropriations.
- Cabin Transfers: N/A
- Corporate Application for License to Sell Cereal Malt Beverages: Dollar General

OLD BUSINESS

- **Safe Routes to School: Update**
 - City Administrator Nick Jones told the Council that Bettis is almost finished up with the work on the West side of town and has started on the sidewalks on the east side of town. There have been few issues or complaints. Things are going well.
- **Street Scape – KDOT TA Grant: Update**
 - City Administrator Nick Jones informed the Council that paperwork has been signed and submitted to KDOT. Jason Hoskinson with BG Consultants is working on an agreement for design and engineering. Once the agreement is signed, we can start working on completing a design for the area.


NEW BUSINESS

- **Office Committee Recommendation - Job Description/Pay - CVB Director Position**
City Administrator Nick Jones read the recommendation from the Office Committee to approve the job description for the CVB Director position with a pay range of \$16.50 to \$30.00 per hour. After discussion Councilperson Jason Booker made a recommendation to approve the job description for the CVB Director with a pay range of \$16.50 - \$30.00. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Sharon Haun. Motion carried 6 – 0
- **Police/Fire Committee Recommendation: Fire Department Grant: Steve Crichton:**
City Administrator Nick Jones read the recommendation from the Police and Fire Committee to approve the purchase of a 2024 RAM3500 Tradesman REG Cab 60' C/A 4x4 from Bolton Auto for the Fire Department to replace one of the Grass Trucks at a price of \$62,787 and to purchase a 9'6" Flatbed with lights from Gary's Speed Shop for \$2,995 and to have K& M Welding to do modifications to the bed and install for \$2,690. Mounting of tank and misc. plumbing with be charged at \$85.00 per hour with payments coming from the Rural Fire Contract. Steve Crichton with the Council Grove Fire Department also spoke to the council regarding the purchase and told them that to buy a truck outfitted would cost around \$200,000 and the city doing it would cost under \$100,000. After discussion Councilperson Mark Berner made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Police/Fire Committee to purchase the new fire truck with payments coming from the Rural Fire Contracts. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Sean Honer. Motion carried 6 – 0
- **Executive Session: Attorney Client Privilege – Data Relating to Financial Affairs of an Outside Corporation:**
There was no update regarding Data Relating to Financial Affairs of an Outside Corporation.
- **Executive Session – Attorney Client Privilege with Pat Riodan for City Lake**
Executive Session was changed to having Attorney Pat Riodan present the Council with a draft contract for the sale of the lake lots to the current leaseholders. There was much discussion between the Council and Lake lease holders regarding the sale of the lots. Councilperson Mark Berner asked the group why they wouldn't want to buy their lots for \$25,000 as it was a very fair price. A lake lease holder responded by saying tax implications as the reason they do not want to own their lot. Leaseholder Shelley Dunham said she would not take the lot even if it was given to her and that she would see us in court. After more discussion Councilperson Jason Booker made a motion to approve the draft of the contract with the authorization for City Administrator Nick Jones and City Attorney Brian Henderson to work with Attorney Pat Riodan to finalize the contract. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Mark Berner. Motion carried 6 – 0

GOVERNING BODY COMMENTS

- **Mayor Debi Schwerdtfeger** – said she liked seeing folks bringing their kids downtown.
- **Councilperson Mark Berner** – N/A
- **Councilperson Denise Hartman** – said she loves this community and that is why she gets emotional about it.
- **Councilperson Sean Honer** – N/A
- **Councilperson Nathan Adams** – N/A
- **Councilperson Sharon Haun** – said excited about SRTS and the Streetscape project for downtown.
- **Councilperson Jason Booker** – said here comes winter, cold and windy. SRTS is looking great.
- **City Attorney Brian Henderson** – recommended Council attend League of Municipalities Conferences in the future.
- **Assistant City Attorney Molly Priest** – N/A
- **City Administrator Nick Jones** – said the Washunga Days committee has asked the city to get bids to add more fence are the riverwalk for events.
- Mayor Schwerdtfeger asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilperson Denise Hartman made a motion to adjourn. Councilperson Nathan Adams seconded the motion. Motion carried 5 – 0


Debi Schwerdtfeger Mayor

ATTEST: 
Nick Jones City Administrator

