



City Council Work Session Meeting Minutes March 23, 2021

Mayor: Robert Duncan, Presiding
Council President: Mike Caughey, Present
Councilors Present: Robert Boese, Adam Keaton, and Kim Downey
Councilors Absent: Randy Klemm and Charlotte Thomas
Staff Present: City Administrator Michele Eldridge, Public Works Director Chuck Scholz, and Finance Officer/Deputy Recorder Cathy Nelson
Meeting Location: Harrisburg Municipal Center @ 354 Smith St.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL by Mayor, Robert Duncan at the hour of 6:33pm

CONCERNED CITIZEN(S) IN THE AUDIENCE. Those present were there for items on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

THE MATTER OF PROVIDING WASTEWATER PRESSURE LINES UNDER SLOW TRACKS

STAFF REPORT: Scholz explained what the project entailed and what was asked in the bid packages covered. The project will alleviate the emergency repairs needed and improve the overall functionality of our sewer system where it crosses under the slow speed tracks. It still leaves only one line under the tracks. He contacted other companies for another bore under the tracks at a different location but stopped looking when the estimates reached \$1,000,000 without meeting the core requirements.

- Boese asked how much pressure the lines would need. Scholz stated that they would need 115 psi and could handle 400psi.
- Caughey thanked Scholz for adding the drawings to the packet.
- Keaton **motioned that the contract be awarded to Pacific Underground Co. in the amount of \$134,915.00 for the Sanitary Sewer Overflow Improvement and was seconded by Downey. The City Council voted unanimously to award the contract to Pacific Underground Co, in the amount of \$134,915 for the Sanitary Sewer Overflow Improvement.**

Scholz gave an update of the other projects happening in Harrisburg:

- Waterlines on 6th Street Place - started this week and should be done next week.

- Diamond Hill from 7th to 9th Street - will come to council late April after going to bid next month.
- Water Treatment Plant – filtration and onsite chlorination information will be available at the April meeting. Going through phases and chapters of plans to reach 80-90% for submittal. Water Improvement plans will be available in April, so we can get it out to bid early summer. By fall of next year we will have treated water.
 - Caughey asked about well 9. Scholz stated that it will not be built on someone else's property. We have already done test wells and submitted results to the State for approval. We expect to go to bid in the very near future as we are 98% done with the plans.
 - Duncan asked what test have been done. Scholz answered they have done soil test and which aquifer we are tapping.
- Scholz asked to be excused for the rest of the meeting. Mayor approved request.

THE MATTER OF A REQUEST BY THE LIBRARY BOARD TO INSTITUTE A FINE-FREE LIBRARY SYSTEM

STAFF REPORT: Eldridge reminded the City Council that they talked about this request back in 2019 and asked the library board to create a proposal for a fine-free library system. The Library Board is now ready to present the proposal to the City Council starting on page 18 in the agenda packet. Members present are Barney and Hansen along with staff of Palkey, Spangle and Ross. The Library Board pointed out that they are asking to only waive the late fees, not the cost to replace lost or damaged books. If a book is lost or damaged, customers can bring in a comparable priced book or pay for the book. They also stated that there are three (3) libraries in the region who are already fine-free.

- Caughey asked how long patrons can keep a book. The Library Board stated the maximum timeframe is 63 days. Customers get fined 10 cents per day per book after that time or if they fail to renew the book. The late fees are not deterring returning books late. Caughey asked why it is 63 days, because that seems like a long time. The Library Board replied that that was the Library Consortium Policy that they had to follow.
- Ross shared that the \$536 amount in late fees to be forgiven is spread out over 49 patrons. Spangle stated that this is impacting the children the most.
- Caughey asked if there was contact between the library and the customer regarding late fees. Ross said that they receive emails or letters. The new policy will still charge for lost books and stops future checkout until the fees are paid and they will receive notices from the Library.
- Downey said that she spoke with several residents who are concerned about irresponsibility plus the cost to taxpayers to replace books. But it sounds like it will not cost taxpayers to replace books from the regular customers.
- Boese said he likes the idea of removing the fear of fines, especially to kids. The bad part is if non-responsible people take advantage. He suggested doing a trial period, maybe 6 months.
- Keaton asked how the amnesty program worked and if people brought back books during that time. Spangler stated that it seemed like more books came back but they did not track it.
- Caughey recommended that the council approves a six-month trial and keep records on how many books come back. Keaton countered that six-months does not cut it. He proposed a full year.
- Keaton **motioned to approve the fine-free proposal made by the Library Board for one (1) year starting July 1, 2021 with tracking systems and review.**

Motion seconded by Downey and the City Council voted unanimously to approve the fine-free proposal made by the Library Board for one (1) year starting July 1, 2021 with tracking systems and review.

THE MATTER OF DISCUSSING POSSIBLE USES OF THR RECENT AMERICAN RESUE PLAN (ARP) FUNDING

STAFF REPORT: Eldridge noted the City Council that Harrisburg will receive \$794,341 in two payments, one soon and the other half next year. LOC recommended being very transparent on how funds are spent. How do we want to spend the \$397,000 we will receive this upcoming budget year?

- Helping business is a priority. We can set \$100,000 aside to develop some programs.
- Apply \$100,000 to the Storm Drain, Water and Sewer budgets to stop a rate increase.
- The Hart Center requested and additional \$5,000 to make their annual request \$20,000.
- Duncan recommended doing something for citizens who suffered due to unemployment. Duncan stated that there are several unemployment services available even though the PUA (Pandemic Unemployment Assistance) is over, it is possibly coming back. Keaton said it might be hard for the city to do that.
- Keaton suggested adding funds to the HRA loan program. Duncan reminded the Council that they can not use the HRA because it creates a tax break which is not allowed. Eldridge suggested creating a new grant program coping the loan program.
- Downey asked if we could use the funds to put on events and advertise for local businesses. Eldridge said we could.
- Duncan asked if staff could reach out to other cities and find out what they are doing with the funds.
- Keaton said the reason for the grant was to help communities affected by COVID. We should use it to help with major planning documents that we could not do before like updating the Parks Master Plan and the Transportation Plan. Eldridge said that we did receive a separate grant for parks. We can use the ARP funds for the City match.

OTHER ITEMS

- Eldridge reported that Linn County is at the Moderate Covid Level.
- Council personal OGEC reports are due April 1st.
- Eldridge is working with Cindy Knox for landscaping on Peoria and Hwy 99. She spoke with the Linn County Road Master about visual clearance. They will focus on the south end entrance next.
- The TMG Grant Pre-Application is in. The main application is due May 3, 2021.

ADJOURN: The City Council adjourned the meeting at the hour of 8:11pm.

Mayor

City Recorder