**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF PERU, NEBRASKA ON MARCH 21, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M.**

Mayor Dave Pease called the meeting to order and informed the public of the location of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

Present at 6:00 p.m.: Mayor Dave Pease, and Council Members Ethan Coatney, Spencer Vogt, Quentin Kieler, and Marty Peregoy. Upon roll call by the City Clerk, a quorum was declared.

The Council reviewed the minutes from February 22, 2022, regular council meeting. Council Member Coatney made motion to approve the minutes. Council Member Vogt seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote as follows, Councilmember Q. Kieler: AYE; Councilmember E. Coatney: AYE; Councilmember S. Vogt: AYE; Councilmember M. Peregoy: AYE; Motion Carried 4-0.

Council Member Peregoy made the motion to approve the claims already paid pursuant to Resolution No. 2018-01. The motion was seconded by Council Member Vogt; Roll Call Vote as follows, Councilmember E. Coatney: AYE; Councilmember S. Vogt: AYE; Councilmember Q. Kieler: AYE; Councilmember M. Peregoy: AYE; Motion Carried 4-0.

Council Member Peregoy made motion to approve the claims still needing to be paid. The motion was seconded by Council Member Coatney; Discussion, Roll Call Vote Councilmember S. Vogt: AYE; Councilmember M. Peregoy; Councilmember Q. Kieler: AYE; Councilmember E. Coatney: AYE; Motion Carried 4-0.

NMC Rental - $1,101.28 (wtr); WesTech - $13,400.00 (wtr); JEO-$18,346.25(wtr,swr, sts); OPPD-$2,961.00(gen,wtr,p&r,sts,rurfr,fr,res);Windstream-$568.86 (gen,wtr,p&r,sts,rurfr,fr,res); Verizon-$40.01(wtr); Casey’s-$945.89(sts,res,fr); Card Services-$173.77(wtr,gen);Black Hills Energey-$303.18(gen,fr,rurfr,res); Access Systems-$151.06(gen); Bound Tree-$276.24(res); Auburn Newspaper-$112.23(gen); Neb. Public Health Enviro. Lab-$30.00(wtr); Municipal Supply-$1,964.48(wtr); Nemaha County Treasurer-$8,429.30(gen); NAPA-$14.99(sts); Xpress Bill Pay-$64.75(wtr,swr); One Call Concepts-$3.58(wtr,swr); Board of Public Works-$6,036.04(wtr); Pitney Bowes-$169.29(gen); Matheson Tri Gas-$69.67(res); Eakes Office Solutions-$702.33(gen); Cody’s U-Save-$15.24(res); Blue Rivers Area Agency-$100.00(gen); Quick Med Claims-$118.86(res); American Recycling & Sanitation-$2,150.00(san); Purchase Power-$220.90(gen)

General(gen), Streets(sts), Water(wtr), Sewer(swr), Parks & Rec(p&r), City Fire(fr), Rural Fire(rurfr), Rescue(res), Grant(grnt). Sanitation (san)

The City Clerk reported that the February 2022 Hwy Allocation was $5,192.10. She updated the council on the status of several ongoings projects. The parts had arrived for the fire hydrant on Park Avenue and will be repaired when Rieschick Drilling is available to assist. The city insurance company had inspected the roof on the City Hall as well as both maintenance buildings. The clerk anticipates the final report within the following week.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mayor Pease stated that the monthly water report could be found in the clerk’s office. He noted that unmetered usage is down considerably.

Mayor Pease stated he did not have a Mayor’s Report

Old Business #1 – Council discussed the job description for a Code Enforcement Officer. It was noted that Auburn is also looking into this position and maybe the towns could work together and hire 1 individual to cover Peru and Auburn. Council chose to table this item until further discussion can take place with Auburn.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Item 1.** Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Deborah Solie, provided an update to the Council on several topics. Solie stated that the NRD is working on a plan that would bring RV pads and such to the trailhead. SENDD and the City are pursuing a potential home for the Purchase Rehab Resale grant. So far, the house fits the program’s guidelines. SENDD was able to purchase 2 other homes in Peru that will be renovated and sold as family homes. Solie noted that Peru would qualify for the USDA community grant/loan program that would assist in the cost of repairing City Hall and the maintenance building.

**Item 2.** City Clerk, Charlotte Carpenter, approached the council about changes to the clerk position. She requested to go full time and be allowed to work remotely for a portion of that time. Council discussed what the office hours would then be. Carpenter explained that she would be in the office Monday and Friday and remote Tuesday through Thursday. The Deputy Clerk would then be in the office Tuesday, Thursday, and a partial day Friday. Councilmember Peregoy made motion to approve changing the City Clerk position to full time and allowing the clerk to work remotely Tuesday through Thursday. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Kieler. Further discussion took place about no one physically being at City Hall on Wednesdays. It was suggested that the Clerk work 8:30 – 12:00 in the office on Wednesdays and then 12:00 – 4:00 remotely. Councilmember Peregoy amended her original motion to approve changing the City Clerk position to full time and allowing the Clerk to work remotely on Tuesday and Thursday and 12:00 – 4:00 remotely on Wednesday. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Kieler. No further discussion, Roll Call Vote as follows, Councilmember Vogt: “AYE”; Councilmember Coatney: “AYE”; Councilmember Peregoy: “AYE”; Councilmember Kieler: “AYE”; Motion Carried 4-0.

**Item 3.** Council reviewed the proposal from Fire Guard for a fire alarm system in City Hall. Councilmember Peregoy noted how expensive this system would cost. The Disaster Recovery Coordinator informed the council that the USDA grant/loan would also be able to cover the cost of the fire system. Discussion took place about looking into further once more information is available about the USDA funding. No formal action was taken by Council.

**Item 4.** Council reviewed the proposal from JK Energy Consulting for a Water Cost of Service Study. Mayor Pease stated that he has felt we have needed higher rates for some time but this can’t take place without having a Cost Study done first. Further discussion was had about what future cost will be considered in this study and if there were any other Consulting companies that do Cost of Service studies. Councilmember Vogt made motion to approve the JK Energy Consulting Water Cost of Service Study proposal. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Kieler. Roll Call Vote Councilmember M. Peregoy; Councilmember Q. Kieler: AYE; Councilmember E. Coatney: AYE; Councilmember S. Vogt: AYE; Motion Carried 4-0.

**Item 5.** Councilmember Peregoy provided an update from the Animal Humanity and Control committee. The group is working to set up a fee or charge for what is done if the required yearly license is not followed. They are also speaking with local vet offices to see who would contract with the City to accept stray animals.

**Item 6.** Councilmember Peregoy provided an update about what took place with the maintenance job description. The maintenance department has been given each a notebook where they will log what has been accomplished. This notebook will then be reviewed at the annual employee reviews. It was discussed to review this new process in 3 months to see how it is going.

**Item 7.** Councilmember Peregoy requested an update as to where the city stands with the nuisance abatement process. City Attorney Ligouri stated that he would be able to provide a breakdown of the process to the Council at the May meeting. This process would then give the city a starting point. Council discussed that the first properties that should be addressed are 820 2nd Street, 600 5th Street, and 320 California Street. Further discussion took place about contacting developers to see if any would be interested in developing on the empty lots in Peru.

**Item 8.** The City Clerk will reach out to the clerk group to gather information on a fee chart for property owners that are not in compliance with ordinances.

**Item 9.** Councilmember Peregoy would like to have a conversation with Dr. Long about his property located at 5th and California Street. She would like to see the city have first right of refusal if he decides to sell the property. Councilmember Kieler stated that he was under the impression that this was already in place. The City Attorney will look at the courthouse to see if there is a reserve on the deed.

**Item 10.** JEO provided the council with a change order for the Water System Improvements Pipe Procurement Contract. Zach Schulz and Tim Adams with JEO stated that this project has not gone out for bid yet because we are still waiting on a response from FEMA. The original agreement with Winwater stated that the pipe would be directly delivered to the contractor by May 1. Since there isn’t a contractor in place the pipe is needing to either be stored at Winwater or a site of the City’s choosing. The Board of Public Works have given the okay for the pipe to be stored in their yard but this would require the city to rock the storage area and pay for insurance on the pipe. Councilmember Kieler was under the impression that this would not be a problem. Council requested further clarification on how long Winwater would store the pipe if the City paid an extra $18,000.00. Schulz stated that this is something that can be brought back to the council at the regular April meeting. However, JEO does recommend keeping it in Winwater’s storage yard indefinitely. Council will discuss this topic further at the regular April council meeting.

**Item 11.** Zach Schulz with JEO requested that the council go into a closed session. Peregoy made motion to go into closed session for a strategy session for negotiating guidance by members of the public body to legal counsel, JEO, JCG, negotiators on the City's behalf, and the mayor on compensation for easements (temporary/permanent) and reimbursement for removal of property, structures, crops, landscaping, etc., Second by Kieler, motion approved 4/0 by roll call vote. Mayor Pease restated in open session that the City Council was now going into closed session for negotiating guidance by members of the public body to legal counsel, JEO, JCG, negotiators on the City's behalf, and the mayor on compensation for easements (temporary/permanent) and reimbursement for removal of property, structures, crops, landscaping, etc. Council went into closed session at 7:59 p.m.  The mayor ended the close session at 8:47 p.m. and the council reconvened in open session. No action was requested or taken by Council.

**Item 12.** The topic of the use of eminent domain to acquire permanent and temporary easements for the 2021 Water System Improvements project came before the council. No action was necessary for this item.

With there being no further business, Council Member Peregoy made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Coatney seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote as follows, Councilmember Q. Kieler: AYE; Councilmember S. Vogt: AYE; Councilmember E. Coatney: AYE; Councilmember Peregoy: “AYE”; Motion Carried 4-0.

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Dave Pease, Mayor

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Charlotte Carpenter, City Clerk &Treasurer