

**CITY OF FORT SCOTT
CITY COMMISSION MEETING**

Minutes of October 16, 2018

Regular Meeting #20

The regular meeting of the Fort Scott City Commission was held October 16th, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Room, 123 S. Main, Fort Scott, Kansas.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Adamson, Bartelsmeyer, and Parker were present with Mayor Mitchell presiding. Commissioner Nichols was absent.

INVOCATION: Ian Johnson, Student Minister, Community Christian Church, said a prayer asking God for guidance for the City and all Government and City officials.

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE: Janet Braun, Travis Shelton, Rhonda Dunn, Rachel Pruitt, Robert Uhler, Denise Duncan, Diana Morriss, Deb McCoy, Darrell Parker, Bobbi Kemna, Larry Gazaway, Karen Gazaway, Steve Buerge, Dave Bruner, Charyl Deloney, Bobby Duncan, Russell Lingerfelt, Chad Brown, Billy Keith, Paul Ballou, Jara Martin, Sophia Martin, Breann Martin, Sherise Beckham, Amber Marsh, Tanner Beckham, Ian Johnson, Elaine Buerge, Carla Felt, Suzanne Street, Mark McKenney, Deb Needleman, and Clayton Miller, and representing the press, Jason Silvers, Fort Scott Tribune.

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: Deb Needleman, Human Resource Director, introduced Russell Lingerfelt, who is the new IT Help Desk Specialist for the City. He lives in Chanute and will commute back and forth.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND APPROPRIATIONS/CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Approval of minutes of the regular meeting of October 2nd, 2018.
- B. Approval of Appropriation Ordinance 1225-A totaling \$276,478.78.
- C. Street Closing Request – Community Christian Church – October 31st, 2018 – Annual Trunk or Treat Event

Bartelsmeyer moved the Consent Agenda. Parker seconded. All voted aye.

APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA.

APPEARANCE/COMMENTS/PUBLIC HEARING:

A. APPEARANCE: None

B. CITIZEN COMMENTS (Concerning Items Not on Agenda – 3 minute limit per citizen) - Bobby Duncan – Mr. Duncan stated that he has attended a lot of meetings since the 1970's. All those meetings were

recorded in some fashion. He said that this is an opportunity for lack of transparency because the postings are not accurate.

He also stated that the City Manager and workers are just as wrong today as they were back in February when the code footprint was approved. Since that time a lot of citizens have relayed their stories to him. Since the loss of Mercy and the recent raise given to the City Manager, the taxes are too high here. He said they are building onto their winery and the supplies in Fort Scott were \$400 higher than the other bids taken. He said that businesses are going downhill from his point of view.

C. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Mitchell moved to open the Public Hearing at 6:15 p.m. Parker seconded. All voted aye.

OPENED PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:15 P.M.

6:15 p.m. Resolution directing the repair or removal of an unsafe and dangerous structure and accessory structure located at 15 S. Crawford Street - Rhonda Dunn, Finance/Codes Director, informed the Commission that this structure is owned by a mortgage company in New Jersey. She has not received a response from them in regards to the letters she has sent regarding this structure. She stated that there are neighbors in attendance that may wish to speak.

Carla Felt stated she lives next to this structure and believes that they have a mice infestation. She believes the structure is a fire hazard. The garage that is not attached is falling down and she has heard that the ceiling has fallen in on the second story.

Suzanne Street stated that she is concerned after each wind storm that we have that the structure will have fallen down.

Rhonda asked for a time frame of 10 days to either repair or remove this structure.

Mitchell moved to give 10 days to repair or remove this structure and accessory structure at 15 S. Crawford Street. Adamson seconded. All voted aye.

APPROVED RESOLUTION NO. 41-2018 DIRECTING THE REPAIR OR REMOVAL OF AN UNSAFE AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 15 S. CRAWFORD STREET. STRUCTURE MUST BE BROUGHT UP TO 2012 INTERNATIONAL BUILDNG CODE BY OCTOBER 31, 2018 OR DEMOLITION PROCEEDINGS WILL BEGIN.

Mitchell moved to close the Public Hearing at 6:20 p.m. Parker seconded. All voted aye.

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:20 P.M.

CONSIDERATION:

1. Update on 523 S. Main Street – Rhonda Dunn, Finance/Codes Director, informed the Commission that this structure was before them two weeks ago and was scheduled tonight for an update. The co-owner, Mark McKenney, is also present. She showed photos of the progress that has been made. The windows are boarded up now.

Mark McKenney said that his brother Tim is currently taking bids on the roof.

Rhonda asked the Commission when they would like this brought back before them for an update on this structure.

The Commission agreed to 30 days.

2. Consideration of demolition bid – 1601 E. Wall Street – Rhonda Dunn, Finance/Codes Director, informed the Commission that this property has been scheduled to be demolished for some time per the property owner. This demolition had not taken place so the City went out to bid on the fire damaged structure. Kevin Allen demolished this structure today. She asked for approval to reject the bids that were received from the City.

Bartelsmeyer moved to reject the demolition bids for 1601 E. Wall Street. Adamson seconded. All voted aye.

APPROVED TO REJECT DEMOLITION BIDS FOR 1601 E. WALL STREET.

COMMISSION/STAFF:

A. Director Updates:

Robert Uhler – Community Development Director Update: Robert updated the Commission on the Healthcare Working Group. He informed the Commission that in the 1870's, the Sisters of Mercy started a hospital to care for the injured railroad workers and the community of Fort Scott. There have been several changes to that service, such as the location and services, but the service to Fort Scott always remained. On Monday, October 1st, 2018, all that changed. Reta Baker has worked hard to secure healthcare in our community since 2014 when they first went into discernment. The City has been in communication with her and asked her to keep the City informed on all decisions regarding the hospital. She assured the City that she would give us plenty of notice before anything changed. On that Monday morning, the City received the same notice at the same time that all the rest of the community received it. That same afternoon, the City started receiving phone calls regarding the

Mercy announcement. The next morning, the City regrouped and started to form a small working group to handle the sheer volume of calls and track the inquiries about healthcare in Bourbon County. That group consists of City, County and Foundation stakeholders, who are currently on a fact finding mission. He said that they have visited with close to 20 groups and individuals to discuss healthcare and trying to learn what rural healthcare will be in the future. Their focus is on three principles: Primary Care Clinic with diagnostic services; a full functioning Emergency Department; and a working, profitable Ambulance service. He said he is confident that we will have all of that in the future. We appreciate all of Reta's service to this community. We are in the process of forming a much larger "Community Taskforce" that will focus on what healthcare will look like for us in the future. He is calling it Healthcare 2020. City, County, businesses, citizens, healthcare providers, employers, and their employees will be invited to participate in this very important topic. This is a community issue and we will work on this issue for the community.

Rachel Pruitt – Economic Development Update – Rachel updated the Commission on several items:

She stated that today is Boss's Day and they would like to recognize Dave Martin tonight. He has a lot of support here tonight in this room. She gave a definition of a leader from Steve Jobs: "Leaders – The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." Another quote from Ronald Reagan: "The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things." She asked Steve Buerge to say a few words about Dave Martin.

Steve Buerge: He said that Dave is a swell guy. He knew that before he was hired here. He knew Dave when he was the manager at Valu Merchandisers. He said the City was looking for a manager at that time. He knew he was dedicated, consistent, loved his family, and loved the Lord. All of these things were good aspects in an individual. He said that Dave is a pleasure to work with. He said that the City should be proud of LaRoche Ball Park Complex, new streets on South National and the new intersection at McDonald's – all this happened under his administration. He thanked Dave and congratulated him on his years of service with the City of Fort Scott.

Rachel informed the Commission and the public on several of Dave's accomplishments during his eight years with the City:

Community Amenity Improvements: Riverfront Park, Woodland Hills Golf Course, Aquatic Center, and LaRoche Baseball Complex.

Demographic Information: The population of the City of Fort Scott is 7,773. 844 jobs have been added since 2010. The median hourly

wage is \$14.76 an hour, which is one of the highest in Southeast Kansas. The median wage in 2010 was \$12.35.

Community Improvements: The total enrollment for USD 234 is up from 2017-2018 which was 1,882. From 2018-2019 the enrollment is 1,912 which is a student to teacher ratio of 13:1. The state average is 15:1.

Crime Index: The crime index since 2010 is down 21%. She praised Chief, Travis Shelton, who has been with the City for 22 years and Captain, Shaun West, who has been with the City for 25 years.

Fire Safety: The Fire protection class rating in 2012 went from a 5 to a 4. In 2017, it went from a 4 to a 3-3X. She praised Paul Ballou, Fire Chief, who has been with the City for 28 years and Dave Bruner, Deputy Fire Chief, who has been with the City for 24 years.

Housing: The average selling price increased by 42% from 2016 to 2018. The total volume sold increased by 45% from 2016 to 2018.

Infrastructure: Rachel said that there are 90 miles of paved roads which include 15 improvement projects, parking lot and off street parking reconstruction, storm drain improvements, and sidewalk improvement projects. She praised Chad Brown, Public Works Director, for his 20 years of service with the City.

Utility Infrastructure: Rachel said that there are over 220 miles of water and sewer lines maintained each year with over 3,100 water connections. She praised Michael Mix, Water Utility Director, who has been with the City for 16 years.

Sales Tax: Rachel informed the Commission that sales tax has rose from \$1,239,246.58 in 2010 to \$2,052,197.07 in 2018.

Unemployment Rate: Rachel said that unemployment rates have dropped from 9.0% in 2010 to 3.9% in 2018.

Employment Expansions: Rachel said that since 2010 to 2018, 844 total jobs have been added.

Business and Industry Improvements: Rachel named off several notable projects that have been completed and are in progress and all the new businesses since 2010.

The Directors presented Dave with a plaque that reads: "True leaders have a servant's heart."

B. City Commission:

Bartelsmeyer – Commissioner Bartelsmeyer stated that the Commission has taken several hits from the public on the salary increase that was given the City Manager. She read from a salary survey that the League of Kansas Municipalities had recently taken which shows that cities with a population from 4,001 to 15,000 that the average salary for a City Manager position ranges from \$92,581 to \$117,603. There is incorrect information going around. The salary for the City Manager is right where it needs to be. When Dave started with the City, his salary was \$70,000. If we lose him, we will have to pay a new one much more than that. She is upset about the incorrect information being put out there and wants it to stop.

Parker – Commissioner Parker stated that we as a City stand behind Dave Martin and his salary increase. The previous City Manager that he replaced was never here. He would leave on weekends and didn't even own a home here. Dave is married to this community. He does the radio broadcasts every Thursday morning to keep the citizens informed which is a tremendous thing. If we lose Dave, we would have to pay more to a new person. We need to be happy with what we have.

Adamson – Commissioner Adamson echoed the other two Commissioners comments. We all need to bond together as a community especially with the hospital issue we have. We are a strong community and need to remember that at this time.

Nichols – Not present.

Mitchell – Mayor Mitchell said that she feels the other Commissioners will support what she says or they wouldn't have elected her as the Mayor. She has served on the Commission for 6 ½ years and learned so much from Dave and his guidance. They don't always agree but they talk through things. She said that we should be worried about protecting the jobs at Mercy. Dave and his staff are out beating the streets and having meetings and trying to secure good health care in this community for a long time to come. Instead of griping about his salary, she said she would encourage each and every person to walk in his shoes for a week and answer his phone all hours of the night and weekends. She feels as a governing body that we make the best decisions we can and if you think you can do a better job, you should apply when the next City Commission opening comes up and see how well it goes for you. Dave has a good, intelligent staff with a hard job to do. She is very tired of the fake news on social media and if you can do better, get your butt in the race to run for City Commissioner. Dave is a superb leader and guides us. She said that the people on social media should come and confront them face to face. Their phone numbers are all published. She is concerned for the safety of the citizens with health care being a priority and the 277 jobs we need to save.

C. City Attorney: Stated that that complexity of the hospital issue is huge. He has had conversations with lots of people outside the community. He is fortunate enough to have many City Attorney friends who shared information with him. Every situation is different.

D. City Manager:

1. Dave stated that this is the best day ever that a boss can have. He said it is a pleasure to serve this community. He said that he has the best team with the best staff that work hard with him every day. He said that they will continue to fight for health care and do all we can as a City. He is just speechless. He thanked his family for being here tonight also. He thanked the strong City Commission that we have.
2. Tri-Yak-A-Thon – Dave asked the City Commission to approve the change of this event to this Saturday, October 20th at Gunn Park.

Parker moved to approve to hold the Tri-Yak-A-Thon on Saturday, October 20th, 2018 at Gunn Park. Bartelsmeyer seconded. All voted aye.

APPROVED TO HOLD THE TRI-YAK-A-THON ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20TH, 2018 AT GUNN PARK.

3. KMIT Board of Trustees – Dave informed the Commission that Deb Needleman, Human Resource Director, has been selected to serve on the KMIT (Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust) Board of Directors which is quite an honor. He thanked Deb for serving on this board.
4. Health Care – Dave said that about a year ago a group of City staff along with Dr. Nichols met with an attorney who helps cities with rural health care. They came back and met with Reta Baker and said that we all need to come together on the health care issue. Unfortunately, that did not happen, and Mercy chose to close the hospital at the end of the year. Reta is doing all she can to save the clinic. At some time, the City and County will have to step up, whether through budgeting funds financially or other steps. The City has a sales tax that will sunset in 2021. The Commission may need to look at this tax for health care needs.

ADJOURNMENT:

Bartelsmeyer moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. Parker seconded. All voted aye.

ADJOURNED MEETING AT 6:49 P.M.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is to be held on November 6th, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

RECORDED BY:

**DIANE K. CLAY
CITY CLERK**