

City Council Minutes  
June 28, 2021

The meeting was called to order in the Council meeting room at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor JD Hegwood. Present were Lance DeLissa, Mitch Brenner, Roberto Holguin, Brian Kroth and George Lucas. Also, present were City Administrator Dean Cordes, City Attorney Clay Kuhns and City Clerk Janet Gleason. Visitors were Bobbi Allison, Tom Kuhns, Mike Gillen, Randi Vanderpool, Anthony Schmidt, Jeff Mather, Mike Godfrey and Doug Ritter.

There was no public comment.

Sheriff Ritter presented a proposal to the Council for consolidation of law enforcement services. The costs presented were based on the county current average deputy wages and benefits as well as vehicle costs. Ritter expressed confidence the officers would write tickets and keep the municipal court alive. They would emphasize traffic control as well as patrol city streets. He would consider the possible transfer of equipment as part of the contract. He proposed that the contract for services should be reviewed at least every four years to adjust for inflation. Attorney Kuhns commented on the importance of the details of the contract and there would be no guarantees in the personnel or elements of control.

Cordes stressed the need to consider the budget in making a decision. In 2014 the Police Department budget was \$275,000.00 and the 2021 Police budget was \$350,000.00. That amount does not include the cost of employee benefits or vehicle costs paid from the public safety fund. In 2014 the public safety fund was one mill, in 2021 it was 4.4 mills. The city has been subsidizing the police department from other funds when they are over budget and cannot continue to delay other projects. In addition to current projects (power plant repairs, water line projects, stoplight repairs) there are dilapidated houses that need to be taken care of and the pool needs attention. Cordes does not like the idea of raising taxes, but spending continues to increase and at some point, cuts must be made. Cordes stressed that the city has been at 84 mills since 2014 but that is because of the increase in valuations. Gleason reviewed police department expenses from 2013 to June of 2021. The estimated cost of \$60,254.59 to upgrade the police radio system was also included. Kroth asked if the county would be passing any of the costs of upgrading their radio system to the city. Ritter stated that would be a County Commissioner decision and could be a possibility. Kroth stated he was just trying to anticipate additional expenses to the city. Council discussed various ideas for coverage with Ritter. Ritter commented that a member of the community contacted him with concerns about traffic at the stoplight. As a result, Sheriff Officers are now patrolling in the stoplight area for a part of each shift. Cordes is waiting on the Kansas Department of Transportation for approval to put delineators at the stoplight. Ritter encouraged anyone to contact him if they have further questions and would be willing back to the council to answer more questions.

Ritter encouraged the Council to take time to decide and contact him if they have any questions. Cordes asked if Ritter would be willing to attend council meetings. Ritter stated that he felt it would be important to attend and communicate with the council.

Kroth asked Attorney Kuhns “if the Council did this (consolidate), Kuhns would do what he does, and Randi would continue to do what she does”? Kuhns said “yes, but Randi would be the most effected”. Vanderpool stated that most of her job is related to municipal court. She said a lot of money was spent on digital ticketing and it made her job much easier. Currently the county does not use digital ticketing. Attorney Kuhns mentioned this was just one example of the “minutia” involved in a decision and there will be many questions to ask and details to work out.

Kroth asked Vanderpool how many “things” the police department is paying subscriptions for. She will make a list for the Council.

Kroth also asked about the scanning of police records. Vanderpool stated that she has been working on digitizing them and has done from the mid 1980’s to 2005 so she is still working on it.

Mather asked how Animal Control would be handled. Cordes stated that Animal Control was under the City Office in the past and that would be an option.

Attorney Kuhns explained to the Council that Sheriff Officers are sworn to uphold the laws of the State of Kansas and their job is not to enforce ordinances. Currently if a county officer cites someone for speeding in the city limits it would be issued to district court. Attorney Kuhns stated that part of the agreement would have to allow Sheriff Officers to issue citations for municipal tickets. He stated the Council would need to know exactly what they were agreeing on and how it would be set up. Contracts will always have vagueness and Council will need to consider what level of control they want and what they are giving up. One concern is that every four years there is the possibility of change in the Sheriff’s office.

Mayor Hegwood stressed the importance of knowing ALL the details in making a decision. Kroth asked if Kuhns could make a list of things council will need to consider. DeLissa asked about reviewing contracts from other cities, Gleason will make a request on the list-serve. Kuhns also suggested the Council visit with other communities who have contracted with their County Sheriff department.

DeLissa asked how many code enforcement issues the city officers had dealt with in the last year. Attorney Kuhns stated that he has not seen any but that does not mean the officers had not dealt with any—just that they had not come to the attorney. Vanderpool stated that she sends letters, and the issue is usually taken care of. She does not keep a list of how many have been sent.

Minutes of the June 14 regular meeting, joint special meeting and special council meetings on June 21 were all approved as written.

Motion by DeLissa, second by Kroth to approve Building Permit #21012. Motion carried with all in favor, Brenner abstained.

Council discussed the costs of lifeguard certification and reviewed the area lifeguard wages presented at the last meeting. Motion by Kroth, second by DeLissa to grant summer help a \$1.00/hour increase, raise the starting wage for all new employees to \$9.50 and continue increasing returning summer employees \$.50/year. Motion carried with all in favor. Consensus of Council was not to increase the manager contracted wages

Cordes consulted Thomas Miller regarding the damages to Terry Cox’s vehicle and he could not say what had happened. Cox did not contact the city at the time of the incident or request Council approval prior to having the repairs completed. Consensus of council was not to reimburse Cox.

Cordes would like Council to look at the pool at the next meeting. Kroth requested Cordes make a list of needed repairs. Cordes contacted the City Manager of Montezuma regarding the new pool there. The cost was nearly \$1.6 million.

Council reviewed and approved the advertisement copy for a Police Chief. Cordes will write a similar one for an officer. Cordes will submit the ad to the Kansas Peace Officers Association site.

Gleason reported that the website is now active. The link to the Consumer Confidence Report was printed on the monthly utility bills as well as posted at the City Office, County Courthouse and Meade County Health Department.

Hangar 15 is used as a “guest” hangar at a rental cost of \$10.00/day. Gleason had a request for Hangar 21. Council approved Hangar 21 could be use subject to availability at a cost of \$15.00/day and a refundable key deposit of \$10.00.

Kroth expressed the need to clarify the police officer pay scale as well as how officer pay is to be handled during and after completion of the officer training program. Kroth also asked if the Buddy Punch system keeps a record of officer hours. Vanderpool stated that “when Michael was changing everything, he accidentally hit delete instead of deactivate on Anthony. He has his start date and everything, but all his hours are gone.” “The only hours they have are the hard copy that Janet has.”

Motion by Lucas, second by DeLissa to increase Anthony Schmidt to the 2-year rate as a certified officer of \$19.03. Motion carried with all in favor.

Attorney Kuhns has reviewed the KMEA lineman contract and would like more clarity in some areas of the contract.

Frank Penner is still waiting on supplies, so the water line project has not started yet.

Attorney Kuhns will present more information to the Council regarding the Neighborhood Revitalization Program at the next meeting.

Motion by DeLissa, second by Brenner to enter into executive session for Personnel Matters of Non-elected Personnel for 10 minutes to meet back in this same room. Motion carried with all in favor. After executive session no action was taken.

Motion by Brenner, second by Kroth to discontinue the use of the Buddy Punch system and purchase a time clock for the Police Department. Motion carried with all in favor.

Motion by Kroth, second by Holguin to adjourn. Motion carried with all in favor.

ATTEST:

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J.D. Hegwood, Mayor

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Janet Gleason, Clerk