

Downs City Council met in regular session on Monday, August 7, 2023, 5:30 p.m., at City Hall. Mayor Vienna Janis called the meeting to order and led in the flag salute. Council members present: Charlie Stevens, Joyce Hake, John Cordill, Devin Renken and Heather Hancock. Others present: Evan Joy, Richard Judd, Bruce Berkley, Harry Colburn, and Miranda Robinson.

Heather moved, seconded by Devin, to approve regular meeting minutes from July 17, 2023. Motion carried.

In staff reports, animal control officer Richard Judd reported that he removed one raccoon from the city and the two reports about chickens in town have been taken care of. He also told the council that he will be stepping down due to health reasons. Council suggested the position be advertised on facebook and talk with current employees.

Code Enforcement officer Harry Colburn reported to council that there were four properties that were mowed and could be sent for special assessments.

City Attorney Bruce Berkley reported that he had contacted the members of the planning and zoning commission. They are going to hold a regular meeting this month. Clerk Robinson will get those notices out in the mail this week.

In the water and sewer report Harry Colburn stated he needed to order another load of brine salt for the water plant. This order would be 20 tons costing roughly \$4,626 including delivery. Heather moved, seconded by John, to allow Harry to purchase 20 tons of brine salt not to exceed \$4,627. Motion carried.

Colburn reported that he is going to have to hire Dalton Remus to do excavating in the coming weeks so he is able to bore for new water lines. This week they are working on a line on Delaware Street. They plan to start putting in meter pits in places that haven't yet been done. The crew will then work on getting old meters out of basements if they have a pit already installed. Colburn also reported that Cummins came to install the new vibration kit at the sewer lift station generator but it was the wrong one. Cummins would not charge the city extra and will be back to install the correct one once it comes in.

City Superintendent Harry Colburn reported to the council on the packer he was watching on purplewave from the previous meeting. The packer was at \$2,900 and it would cost \$1,000 for the packer to be picked up and brought back to Downs. Discussion was held concerning the state of the current packer and what the plans are for chip sealing in the next year. Colburn stated they finished chip sealing for this year and plan to skip next year. Council requested Colburn to keep watching auctions and not purchase the packer. Colburn would like to see funds go towards fixing curb and guttering around town next year. It was discussed to get quotes from a couple contractors to work on the curb and gutter on west Railroad Street.

The last day for the pool to be open this season is August 13. The crew will start draining the pool that Monday. They will need to do some plumbing work before winterizing the pool. The crew worked on picking up and removing tree branches and limbs after the weekend's storm.

Colburn received a complaint concerning a headstone being damaged at the cemetery. He was in contact with the family and would work with them to get it fixed.

Colburn also reported that Bruce Berkley was helping to remove salt from the old water plant so the tank could be sold. Berkley was going to put some of the salt on the volleyball court area and the little kids park to help kill the weeds and prevent them from growing back.

City Clerk Miranda Robinson reminded council that the next regular meeting will also be the revenue neutral rate hearing and 2024 budget hearing. There were monthly financial reports in the packets from July. Clerk Robinson reported she was approached by Archive Social from Civic Plus concerning the archive of the City's social media posts. Council discussed different options and decided against using this company and their product.

In new business, the council reviewed a request to use Marie Thomas Trust Funds to purchase new pool toys by pool manager Kelli Hennes. Joyce moved, seconded by Heather, to approve the request. Motion carried. The City Clerk would let Hennes know and order the toys for next season.

Mayor Janis opened and read aloud the one sealed bid that was received for the city property located at 619 Peterman St. Devin moved, seconded by Joyce, to accept the bid. Motion carried. Heather abstained.

Council reviewed the vehicle restoration permit application submitted by Preston DeBolt. Joyce moved, seconded by John, to approve the permit. Motion carried. Devin abstained.

Council received a letter from members of the Knight Club requesting picnic tables be moved to the roadside park for their pancake picnic on Sunday August 13. Colburn stated they will move tables on Friday afternoon.

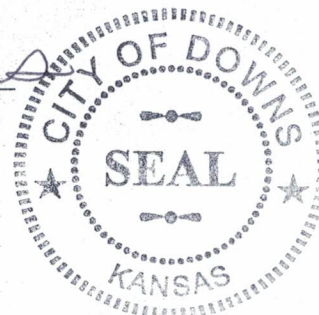
In old business, the council discussed increasing water rates based on a proposed rate table. City attorney Berkley will prepare a new ordinance to be reviewed at the next regular council meeting with increased rates. Council suggested that City Clerk Robinson post on the water bills after the ordinance passes that rates will be increasing.

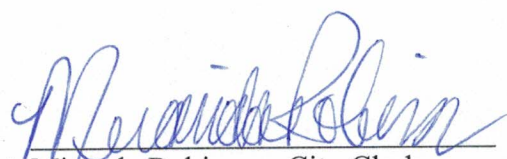
Heather brought to the council's attention that OCCF may have funds to help the city complete the HAT (Housing Assessment Tool), and she will report back to them at their next meeting.

Joyce moved, seconded by Devin, to approve vouchers and payroll as presented. Motion carried.

Joyce moved, seconded by Devin, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.


Vienna Janis, Mayor




Miranda Robinson, City Clerk