

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 22, 2022 CITY COMMISSION MEETING

The City Commission of the city of Holton met at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall on Tuesday evening, February 22, 2022. Commissioners Mike Meerpohl, Eric Bjelland and Marilyn Watkins were present. Tim Morris and Mayor Bob Dieckmann were absent.

Mike Meerpohl called the regular meeting to order.

Minutes of the February 7, 2022 meeting were approved as written.

APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE: Claims against the city of Holton between February 8, 2022 and February 22, 2022 were presented to the commission for their approval. After careful consideration, said claims were approved and given the title Appropriation Ordinance 2303. Eric Bjelland moved and Marilyn Watkins seconded the motion for their approval. Vote thereon: all; yes.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS: Each year employees are recognized for their service to the city. This year's recipients include: 30 years of service – Greg Tanking and Gary Marney; 25 years of service – Kerwin McKee; 20 years of service – Jerry Tudor, Michael Elliott, and Steve Frederick; 5 years of service – Rob Snavely, Shawn LeHotta, and Jarod Golden. Commissioners commended the employees for their dedication to the city. Greg Tanking, Street Superintendent, also introduced his newest employee, Jayger Carson-Frederick. Carson-Frederick started with the Street Department that day. He previously worked for the Street Department under their summer brick program while in high school.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM: Erika Allen spoke to the commission about the possibility of applying for the Transportation Alternatives Program grant to possibly get a sidewalk along Arizona Avenue (U. S. Highway 75) from Banner Road to 6th Street. She would like to see some kind of overhead crossing or under for pedestrian and bicycles to get across the road, but knows this is not workable currently. The way this project works, if you put in the project and get the grant, KDOT will engineer the project. Marilyn Watkins made a motion to approve filing the project concept form to start the application process for the Transportation Alternatives Program. Eric Bjelland seconded the motion. Vote thereon: all; yes.

ACCOUNT ABATEMENT: City staff has been working to remove old unrecoverable accounts from our system. Commissioners were presented with a list of accounts from customers who were deceased. Eric Bjelland made a motion to approve the abatement list. Marilyn Watkins seconded the motion. Vote thereon: all; yes.

KMEA DIRECTOR #2: It is time to renew our appointment for Director #2 position on the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency (KMEA) board of directors. This appointment is currently held by Ira Harrison. Marilyn Watkins made the motion to approve Ira Harrison as Director #2 on the KMEA board of directors. Eric Bjelland seconded the motion. Vote thereon: all; yes.

Kerwin McKee, City Manager, reported that the city would be renting a saw for the skid steer recently purchased for the Distribution Department. They will be assisting the Park Department in removing tree stumps in the parks.

Marilyn Watkins commented that Banner Road is really bad and we need to do something to repair it sooner rather than later. McKee said the Street Department would be working on it, however, it isn't really street repair season, so we will need to wait for the weather to improve.

Mike Meerpohl asked about recent job offers and that were turned down. Corey Schuetz, Distribution Foreman, spoke to this topic. He said that they had two very good interviews, and the prospective employees had accepted the position until they learned what they would be paid. Schuetz said that we have a problem because in the lineman's field of work, someone can just go down the road and make a lot more money. The pay scale we have in place creates issues with keeping employees. Most will take the job, get the needed experience, then go work for someone else at a much higher pay. Also, we currently train our apprentices to be journeymen, but don't give them anything for passing their yearly exams and moving ahead in their studies.

Kerwin McKee also reported that the rules have changed on what the city can use ARPA money for, and we may be able to resurface Banner Road with those funds.

Meeting Adjourned.

Teresa Riley
City Clerk