

March 7, 2018

The Norton City Council met in regular session Wednesday, March 7, 2018, at 5:30 p.m., with Mayor Jim Miller presiding. Council members present were Jerry Jones, Dennis Gilhousen, Chriss McDiffett, Gary Lacy, and Ron Briery. Mark Dewees was absent. Others present were Eric Hethcoat, Justine Benoit, Tyler Burns, J.P. Metzler, Chris Murphy, Robert Bowman, Dan Sisk, Kaleb Tuxhorn, Gerry Cullumber, Karen Griffiths, and Darla Ellis.

Chief Cullumber led those present in the Flag Salute. Chris Murphy gave the invocation.

Motion was made by Ron Briery and seconded by Dennis Gilhousen to approve the February 21, 2018 city council meeting minutes as written. Vote taken. Motion carried.

No building permits were presented.

Tyler Burns was present to request the City's assistance with the drag races on July 7, as they have done in the past. He will meet with the Airport Board to get their approval. The airport property would need to be mowed prior to, and bleachers and trash cans moved to the event. In the past, the police department has also ran radar during the races. Motion was made by Ron Briery and seconded by Jerry Jones to provide assistance for the drag races, contingent upon approval from the Airport Board. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Eric Hethcoat of BG Consultants and Justine Benoit of NWKP&DC were present to report on the bid opening for the CDBG electric distribution project. Only one bid was received and it was significantly higher than the engineer's estimate. The Engineer's estimate for the base bid was \$776,500, and the actual base bid received was \$1,846,636. The Engineer's estimate for all Alternates was \$190,500 and the actual bid for all Alternates was \$452,066. The total difference between the Engineer's estimate and the actual bid received was \$1,331,702. Eric recommended to reject the bid and put the project back out for bid again in April, moving some base bid items to alternate bid items. Notice of award must be done by May 1, per the requirements of the CDBG contract.

Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Gary Lacy to reject the total bid from Integrated Power Company of North Platte, Nebraska, and authorize the Engineer and others involved in the project to make modifications to the plan documents by moving some base bid items to alternate bid items, and have it redesigned in a timely matter to allow the project to be rebid in April. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Karen Griffiths reported 26 signatures have been obtained from the 38 property owners for the petition in favor of pursuing the proposed street improvements for Valley Vista, Woods, Wilberforce and Brown, which is over the 51% required to proceed. The petition was filed with the City Clerk on February 28, 2018.

JP Metzler said the project design is almost complete and he has a revised cost estimate which includes inspection and a 15% contingency. He would like to meet with the Street Committee to decide on bid dates and a construction schedule, and meet with some residents in the area to talk about phasing details. He stated there has been concern regarding truck traffic in some areas, and they have designed those areas above the recommendations to handle the heavy traffic.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Gary Lacy to approve the petition in favor of pursuing the proposed street improvement project, filed with the City Clerk on February 28, 2018. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Gary Lacy to approve Resolution #4-2018, determining the advisability of making certain internal improvements in the City of Norton; making certain findings with respect thereto; and authorizing and providing for making the street improvements in accordance with such findings. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Chief of Police Gerry Cullumber stated there will be a Public Auction at the City impound lot on March 10 at 10 a.m. to sell some surplus and abandoned vehicles. He will also be putting some vehicles on PurpleWave in the near future. He reported on a new Fix it or Ticket program where officers will be issuing citations for broken or damaged headlights, taillights, side mirrors, tag lights and window tinting. The ticket will be dismissed if the violation is fixed within 30 days. If it is not fixed in 30 days, it then goes to municipal court. Chief Cullumber stated his department is focusing on giving a positive image for the Norton police department and he recently presented a lecture for the crisis prevention center in Hays which was very well received.

Chief Cullumber introduced Kaleb Tuxhorn from Minden, Nebraska, who started employment with the Norton Police Department on Tuesday. He stated Jacob Stenka from Hebron, Nebraska has also been hired and will start on March 17. His department will then be back to full staff.

Motion was made by Jerry Jones and seconded by Dennis Gilhousen to approve Resolution #5-2018, adopting support for the Norton Community Garden Coalition. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Jerry Jones and seconded by Ron Briery to approve the purchase of a covered drift-control sprayer attachment for the grasshopper mower from Engel's Sales and Service for the parks

department at a cost of \$6,030, to be used for spraying parks, streets and right of ways from 01.16.469. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ron Briery and seconded by Jerry Jones to approve the bid of \$32,307.84 from Weis Fire & Safety Equipment Company for 18 sets of bunker gear for the fire department. This was a budgeted expense from 01.12.463. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ron Briery and seconded by Jerry Jones to send one year written notice to Norton County, as per Section G of the Agreement for Communication and Jail Services dated November 15, 2004, with a request that the terms of the agreement be renegotiated. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Jerry Jones and seconded by Ron Briery to approve a \$150 donation to Norton Post Prom to be paid from line item 16.16.283. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Gary Lacy to pay Sloan's Plumbing for their work at Brooks Motel as a result of the sewer backup which occurred in January, and have the City Attorney send a demand letter to AT&T, who had bored through the sewer main, notifying them that they must reimburse the City for damages and repair the sewer main promptly. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Dennis Gilhousen to authorize the City Clerk to begin negotiations for the employment of a candidate for the City Administrator position. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Dennis Gilhousen to advertise for the vacant maintenance position in the Public Works department. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ron Briery and seconded by Jerry Jones to approve Appropriating Ordinance #5 as a whole. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ron Briery to adjourn. Council adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Mayor: _____
James L. Miller