

August 17, 2016

The Norton City Council met in regular session Wednesday, August 17, 2016, at 5:30 p.m., with Council President Jerry Jones presiding. Other council members present were Dennis Gilhousen, Jeff Urban, Chriss McDiffett and Gary Lacy. Mayor Corns and Ron Briery were absent. Others present were Bev Kohfeld, Ronnie Kent, Nancy Kent, Connie Miller, Deanna Braun, Jen Hauser, Patrick Hall, Jill Hall, David Brehmer, Sara Brehmer, Norma Browne, Brian Thompson, Robert Bowman, Dana Paxton, Brock Blackstone, Crystal Richard, Amanda Dreher, Frank Dreher, Carolin Dreher, Mark Dreher, Sherry Dreher, Matthew Dreher, Eric Dreher, Ryan Sargent, Mark Dewees, Jacob Hess, Jody Enfield, Jeff Wolf, Jamie Amlong, Dan Bainter, Cameron Archer, Ron Ridley, Karen Griffiths, Chad Buckley and Darla Ellis.

Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Gary Lacy to approve the August 3, 2016, council meeting minutes as written. Vote taken. Motion carried.

The following building permits were presented:

Chris Davis - \$10,000 - Construct garage at 511 E. Washington

Service Oil - \$ 7,553 – Reroofing at 101 E. Holme

Larry Donahey - \$ 3,000 – Dwelling Addition at 1010 Hartford Ave.

BJ Tallent - \$ 5,190 – Reroofing at 609 W. Washington

Chief of Police Ron Ridley introduced the new employees in the Police Department. Brock Blackstone, Police Officer II, is a certified officer and began employment on August 1. Crystal Richard, Police/Court Clerk started on July 25 and was also introduced. Amanda Dreher started on July 25 and today is her 21st birthday. Chief Ridley swore her in as a new Police Officer, with her family in attendance. He stated she will attend the required Kansas Law Enforcement certification training from October to February.

Bev Kohfeld served as spokesman for a group of citizens with concerns regarding the condition of various streets in Norton. She stated the streets south and east of the Methodist Church have gotten really bad, and suggested the city officials take a walk along the streets, including Valley Vista, West Street, Woods Drive, Woodsfield, Wilmington, Wilberforce and Warsaw. She said she came to council over a year ago with her concerns, and hasn't seen any plan for improvements since she last came. She understands financing is difficult, but suggested the City look for available grants and set aside money each year. She asked if a committee could be formed with some council members and a few concerned citizens from their neighborhood. A Public Works Committee meeting will be held on August 25 at 5:00 p.m., for them to attend and discuss ideas. Chad was asked to put together suggestions and costs to consider for the meeting.

Council President Jerry Jones opened a Public Hearing to discuss the condition of the property located at 615 E. Lincoln in Norton, Kansas. The purpose of the hearing is for the owner, his or her agent, any lienholders of record, any occupant and any other parties in interest of the structures to appear and show cause why such structure should not be condemned as an unsafe or dangerous structure and ordered repaired or demolished. No property owner representatives were present at the hearing. The first notice regarding the substandard property was sent on January 16, 2016. Jeff Wolf showed slides showing the violations that still exist as of today. He recommended that the council proceed with a demolition order on the property for the structure and any personal property which remains. There were no comments from the public.

Motion was made by Jeff Urban and seconded by Chriss McDiffett to determine the structure at 615 E. Lincoln Street to be dangerous, substandard, or unfit for human habitation and direct the City Attorney to prepare a Resolution giving the owner 30 days to remove the structure and personal property. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Brian Thompson of Mapes and Miller presented the 2015 audit report, which was prepared in accordance with the Kansas Municipal Audit and Accounting Guide. He reported the City complied with all Kansas Statutes and no statutory violations or areas of non-compliance were found. He said the City is in good shape with their cash balances, and explained a new requirement of the audit report, to include the City's net pension liability regarding KPERS. Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Chriss McDiffett to accept the 2015 audit report as presented, and authorize it to be filed with the State. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Jamie Amlong reported the contact basin at the water plant was drained and cleaned on Monday evening. Jamie, Joyce Garrison, Drew Eagleburger, William Steck, Dan Bainter, Dan Sisk, Brad Nuzum and Logan Keiswetter worked through the night to drain, clean and disinfect the tank. The plant was filled with water and back in operation by 7:50 a.m. Everyone worked hard and it went very well. The Council expressed their appreciation for the team effort from the various department employees.

Chief Ridley stated the First Responders Appreciation Barbecue event at Elmwood Park has been rescheduled from August 27 to September 24 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., due to a scheduling conflict.

Chief Ridley requested a Public Safety Committee meeting to discuss some issues regarding the Police and Court Clerk duties. A meeting was scheduled for August 23 at 5:00 p.m.

Chad Buckley reported on activity of the various city crews, and stated another large pour was done on the Highway 36 project. Smoky Hill gave a quote to concrete the eastbound lane west of West Street. There was discussion of whether the City or KDOT could tear it out, to save some money. Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Gary Lacy to have the City Administrator pursue tearing out and concreting the eastbound lane west of West Street. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Chad stated BG Consultants made the recommended design changes to the sidewalk alignment on Crane Street for the CDBG street project. They will advertise for bids starting next week, and the bid opening is scheduled for September 21.

The intersection east of Carquest has been completed and council discussed when to remove the barricades. Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Jeff Urban to open the intersection on Monday, August 22, to allow sufficient time for the concrete to cure. Vote taken. Motion carried.

A sidewalk replacement request has been received for 211 E. Main Street, and will be discussed by the Public Works Committee.

Motion was made by Gary Lacy and seconded by Chriss McDiffett to approve the agreement with BG Consultants, Inc. to prepare a Preliminary Engineering Report for the City of Norton 2017 CDBG Electrical System Improvements, at a cost of \$6,200. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett and seconded by Dennis Gilhousen to raise the City's maximum contribution for health insurance premiums by the percentage necessary to keep the grandfathered status with Blue Cross and Blue Shield. The premiums increased by an average of 6.5% and will go into effect on October 1. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Chad stated Larry King with TOPS has requested the use of the racetrack area in Elmwood Park on September 10, for a walkathon to celebrate the group's 50th anniversary. Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Gary Lacy to approve the request. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Dennis Gilhousen stated the Parks Committee met in Elmwood Park to discuss the possible use of the old parks storage building east of the football field by the Norton County Community Services Association. No recommendations are being made at this time; the request will be discussed further.

Mick Miller discussed a proposal with the Parks Committee to enclose the merry-go-round in Elmwood Park. The request was approved by the City Council on August 18, 2010, but has not been done. The proposed enclosure will have 5 roll-up doors around the perimeter, and a concrete slab will extend 3 feet beyond the enclosure to allow for mowing around it. New Age has agreed to pay for the expense of the merry-go-round enclosure, and there will be no cost to the City.

Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Jeff Urban to allow the Frisbee Golf Association to install a new Frisbee golf tee and hole on the west side of Elmwood Park. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Rose Garrison would like to apply for a grant for downtown beautification, to purchase planters for flowers in the downtown area to use when the pods are removed. Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Gary Lacy to approve her request to apply for a grant on behalf of the City for continued beautification in the downtown area. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Dennis Gilhousen stated the Aquatic Center is now closed except on weekends until Labor Day. It will be open from 1-8 on Saturdays and Sundays and from 1-5 on Labor Day, September 5. He stated he regrets that there was not more advance notification given to the public, but there is a lack of guards available due to the start of school activities and those leaving for college.

Jamie Amlong discussed testing equipment he presented to the Utility Committee, which will upgrade the current testing equipment used to perform state mandated tests at the water plant and wastewater plant. They will keep the old equipment to have as a backup. He stated the new equipment will save 4-5 man hours per day. This new equipment will eliminate the chance of operator error.

Motion was made by Dennis Gilhousen and seconded by Chriss McDiffett to approve Appropriating Ordinance #16 as a whole. Vote taken. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Chriss McDiffett to adjourn. Council adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Council President: _____
Jerry Jones