

Atwood City Council
March 19, 2020
Regular Meeting
City Hall, 7:00 PM

Atwood City Council met in **regular session** March 19, 2020 at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Janet Stice at 7:00 PM. Others present were Councilmembers Gary Fisher, Dietrich Kastens, Mark Mosley, Sandy Mulligan; City Clerk Keri Riener; City Attorney Charles Peckham; City Superintendent Rick Kramer; Rosalie Ross of the Rawlins County Square Deal. Councilman Mark Vrbas and City Police Chief Brian Withington were absent.

The **Agenda** was approved as circulated on motion of Councilman Mark Mosley, seconded by Councilman Dietrich Kastens, approved by all.

The **Minutes** of the regular meeting on February 20, 2020 and the special meeting on March 3, 2020 were approved as circulated on motion of Councilman Gary Fisher, seconded by Councilman Kastens approved by all.

The **Bills** were approved as read on motion of Councilman Kastens, seconded by Councilman Fisher, approved by all.

Public Comments: None.

Appearances:

Karla Heble, Rawlins County Health Nurse had not arrived at the meeting at this time.

Jen Melia, Atwood City Pool Manager did not appear in person. She requested for a raise in pay for the city pool manager position, from \$5,250/summer to \$7,200/summer, which will be paid monthly from June through September. Jen also committed to serve as the pool manager for the next five years. Councilman Mosley moved to approve adjusting the compensation paid to the pool manager, Jen Melia, to \$1,800 per month paid June through September, totaling \$7,200, noting that she stated plans to serve in this position for the next five years. Councilwoman Sandy Mulligan seconded, approved by all.

Karla Heble, Rawlins County Health Nurse and Local Health Officer, arrived to discuss the local impact and response to the Covid-19 Epidemic. As of March 18th, 21 cases had tested positive for Covid-19 in Kansas. By March 29th, 34 cases had tested positive in Kansas, with one local citizen hospitalized and waiting for test results. The Local Board of Health is comprised of the Rawlins County Commissioners, working with the County Health Nurse. The Health Department now has a Facebook page to post updates in an effort to keep citizens educated as more information becomes available. President Trump has recommended no gatherings over ten people, while Kansas Mayor Laura Kelly issued Executive Order 20-04, prohibiting all public or private mass gatherings of 50 or more people in a confined or enclosed space at the same time. She also issued Executive Order 20-05, temporarily suspending the practice of disconnecting utility service to Kansas citizens for non-payment.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Mayor Stice signed the proclamation designating May 1st, 2020 as Arbor Day in the City of Atwood. **Motion authorizing the mayor to sign the Arbor Day Proclamation** made by Councilman Mosley, seconded by Councilwoman Mulligan, approved by all. Councilman Fisher said that amid plan changes associated with Covid-19, Arbor Day may be celebrated a bit differently this year.

Department Reports:

City Clerk Keri Riener attended the spring City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers Association Conference March 10th – 14th. The Kansas Rural Water Conference scheduled for March 24th – March 26th has been cancelled. Simple City's user group training in Scott City on March 24th has been rescheduled for June.

City Attorney Charles Peckham has conducted routine monthly court documentation, negotiated with attorneys regarding municipal court cases and prepared a draft ordinance and policies. Charles will be speaking to Judge Ress tomorrow and will make plans for handling court activities next Wednesday.

Charles informed council he has reviewed emergency procedures for the city. The City has general power under home rule authority to respond to a crisis or emergency, such as closing facilities. Emergency actions taken cannot conflict with governor or county emergency plans. Following discussion, Councilman Kastens expressed interest in having the City Attorney draft an ordinance giving the mayor authority to act in an emergency, as there is not a city ordinance for this at this time. Charles reviewed the requirements of both the Kansas Open Meeting and Kansas Open Records Acts. The City Attorney also noted that the President of Council may act in the absence of the Mayor. He asked who might be appointed to serve as the City Emergency Management Liaison. Following discussion, Councilman Kastens volunteered to be the second contact if Councilman Mark Vrbas declined the option, but would rather not serve as the first contact since he is not always available by phone. City Clerk Keri Riener suggested Police Chief Brian Withington as the first contact since he is already in regular contact with county, state and other agencies. The mayor will contact Brian and Mark to request their service in this capacity. Councilman Kastens suggested planning a multi-agency meeting in the summer to update the dated Emergency Preparedness Plan, as it currently doesn't list many City agencies on the list of participants and the trainings listed haven't been attended in recent history.

Police Chief Brian Withington was absent, but provided his report of police department activity last month. His department worked 13 reports from February 20, 2020 to March 19, 2020. No arrests were made, 14 warnings given and 5 tickets issued. Other patrol activity included 41 public relations, 18 miscellaneous complaints and 22 business checks.

City Superintendent Rick Kramer presented his report showing the areas where the city crew has spent their time since the last meeting. They have updating the interior of the fire barn, adding lockers. The water report shows the amount of water pumped and sold for the month. The month of February showed a 12% water loss. The depth to the water in city wells has remained consistent. The probes at Well #6 and #8 are not working. The lifespan of a probe is about 8-9 years, so they were due to be replaced. Rick reviewed bids for city hall sidewalk work from Vap Construction and Weigel Construction. The amounts given were not for the same design, Councilman Kastens requested the decision to be tabled until Council could view the area to decide which plan they'd like to pursue and then get new bids for that project that could be compared. The ad for summer mowing help is in the newspaper and applications are due by April 15th. Applicants must be 16 years old and have a valid driver's license.

Council Reports:

Councilman Gary Fisher reported that the Housing Authority is continuing with remodeling projects. Tree City USA Appreciation Day has been cancelled.

Councilman Dietrich Kastens will talk to the Pool Board regarding the pool feature Rotary had planned to fund with money raised at their spring auction event since there is a high likelihood of that fundraiser being cancelled. He has communicated with Jan about moving forward in the spring and summer months with zoning and nuisances in the current environment.

Councilman Mark Mosley attended the airport board meeting. Sunflower Aero has been purchased by Nutrien Ag Solutions. This will not change the services offered, only ownership of the business. He summarized two grant projects happening at the airport that would total about \$1,400 in the city's matching 5% for airport grants. These are in addition to the annual FAA grants that are budgeted regularly so he will invite an airport representative to approach council for approval to pay for those two projects.

Councilwoman Sandy Mulligan stated Economic Development is discussing the sale of the final lot in Greason Industrial Park with Rawlins County EMS.

Councilman Mark Vrbas was absent.

Mayors Notes:

Mayor Stice will be attending a meeting with the county commissioners on March 31st. Grace Kastens plans to continue library closure as suggested by the county health nurse. The library is offering curbside delivery of checked out materials. Farmers Bank & Trust is the new trustee of the Obert Trust Fund. The city received their annual allocation, but was informed not to budget for this in the future as some tax issues need to be addressed. The Obert Funds were designated for Kelley Park and Pool use only. City Hall will remain closed to the public as recommended until further notice.

With no further business to come before Council, Councilman Kastens moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Fisher, approved by all. The **meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.**

Keri Riener, City Clerk

Janet Stice, Mayor