CITY OF LA HARPE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 8, 2023

REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT OTHERS PRESENT

Austin Lee Mayor, Ella Mae Crowell

Ron Knavel City Clerk, Michelle Altis

Cynthia Carr City Code/animal Control, Penny Miller

Sharlyn Thompson Police Chief, Joe Stotler

Danny Ware Jr Fire Chief, Marc Waggoner

Water Rep, Roy Caler

**Call to order**

Mayor Crowell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance with 5 members present.

**Approval of Agenda**

Austin Lee requested code be added under new business. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

**Approval of Minutes**

Cynthia Carr mentioned line-item “A” under new business was recorded incorrectly and should state Cynthia Carr seconded instead of Sharlyn Thompson. Michelle will get it corrected and send out corrected minutes. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to approve the minutes after correction from the regular meeting on February 8, 2023. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

**CITIZENS CALL FOR BUSINESS**

1. Mike Maloney expressed concerns over his high sewer charge raising from $32.00 a month to $120.00 a month and about 10,000 gallons of that water goes to watering my cows and would like to come up with some sort of solution. Mayor Crowell stated we approved one business because of its nature. Sharlyn Thompson expressed concern about monitoring it if it wasn’t actually going into our sewer. Danny Ware Jr suggested a meter for water the cows only and instead of a meter charge bill for usage only. Mayor Crowell stated we would have to charge something for reading and suggested Mike wait until they meet with the attorney in a special meeting at the end of the month. Mike stated he would install the meter. Michelle will get pricing for Mike and let him know before the next meeting.
2. Raymond Maloney asked about water rates on the rural customers. Mayor Crowell stated nothing has happened yest but before it does you will be notified of a special town hall meeting covering that issue.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. CDL Classes – Mayor Crowell shared pricing for schooling to obtain a CDL was over $5,500.00. We can send Dereck for $250.00, a one-day class, and he would be a certified instructor which would allow Gentry to get his driving hours in. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to send Dereck and Gentry to the CDL classes in McPherson. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-1 with Cynthia Carr opposing.
2. Vandalism at city hall – Austin Lee mentioned the city was giving superior builders until March 1, 2023 to get something started or it would go out for bids again. Austin would like to have bids by April 12, 2023. Mayor Crowell stated Danny Ware Jr could rebid it if interested.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. PWWD#5 water rate increase – Mayor Crowell shared a letter from public wholesale stating the city water was going up $.50 for 1,000 gallons effective March 20, 2023 billing and suggested the city increase the water by $.60 for 1,000 gallons. Austin Lee made the motion to increase the city water by $.50 per 1,000 not to exceed an additional $.50 in the next 6 months. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 3-2 with Cynthia Carr and Sharlyn Thompson objecting.
2. Ditches – Austin Lee expressed concerns about spending money getting the roads fixed but our ditches are still holding water, we need to fix those ditches that flood. Mayor Crowell stated the county will help us with the ditch work at no extra charge, so they will be fixed. Ron Knavel stated a whistle was clogged on Jefferson between 5th and 6th street. Mayor Crowell asked the fire chief to look at that whistle. Raymond Maloney stated he would sale the city whistles by the pound to help cut costs.
3. Risers and Lids – Mayor Crowell shared 2 bids; Winwater came in at $60,120.00 and Core & Main came in at $60,069.57, we have the $30,000.00 from USDA to help with the price and can also use a little out of streets. Ron Knavel suggested having Ray’s Metal Depot make a lid to see if it would fit and if so, we would have some spares. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to go with Core & Main for $60,069.57 and what we don’t use return for credit. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
4. KMEA Board of Directors – Michelle stated last year Sharlyn was voted as director #1 and Ron was voted director #2. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to nominate Sharlyn and Ron to be on the KMEA board. Austin Lee seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
5. Cox Cable – Mayor Crowell shared a letter from Cox about the expansion of their service. Fred had shared a note stating this was required notice to the city that Cox has approval to expand in the La Harpe area. La Harpe will supply a franchise agreement and set a franchise fee, an ordinance would have to be published. Mayor Crowell stated nothing is taking place right now, just wanted you all aware of it.
6. Delinquent property tax sale – Penny Miller stated the La Harpe addresses are listed in her report. Cynthia Carr suggested we look at the lots and see if they would fit into our plans. Cynthia stated, the property at 811 S. Washington would benefit the city with it being next to our city buildings. Mayor Crowell suggested we find out when the sale is and then we can set a price and see what we can get done.
7. Code – Austin Lee expressed concerns of code issues not being address or changing. You walk around La Harpe and you see the same code violations sitting there for months. Sharlyn Thompson mentioned that a few properties are still active court cases. Joe Stotler suggested him and Penny get together, drive the town and start sending out warnings, together we can get things cleaned up. Mayor Crowell stated she has Joe working on the vehicles around town because it is easier for him to obtain the needed information.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

1. Fred Works, City Attorney – Absent for meeting
2. Roy Caler, Water Representative – Nothing to report
3. Joe Stotler, Police Chief – Shared his monthly time cards and report. He mentioned he had complaints on Jake breaks on the highway and didn’t know if the city would like to look into it. Mayor Crowell suggested he get with Fred and report back to us.
4. Penny Miller, Code/Animal Control – Shared her monthly reports.
5. Marc Waggoner, Fire Chief- Shared the meeting minutes: The La Harpe Volunteer Fire Department met for the monthly meeting. Present was; Dennis Sidebottom, Josh Sparks, Matthew Waggoner, Marc Waggoner Sr., Meghan Sparks and Bill Gay. On February 12th met with Allen County rural fire and did car burn and scott pack training, was very informative on older cars. The on March 5th had meeting and updated our own training on fire procedures on house fires and will continue smoke training for firefighters. Marc stated he has plenty of hose. Ron Knavel asked what the clearance was around a house, Marc said the state limit is 12 feet but I prefer a 15 foot clearing. Marc asked if the council had looked into the budget about purchasing an exhaust fan. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to purchase a 24 inch exhaust fan, not to exceed $2,200.00 and take it out of the general fund until we have the new budget then we can move that amount out of fire and put back in the general fund. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 5-0.
6. Maintenance Department –The workorders were shared. Mayor Crowell mentioned, Dereck is starting hands on classes and the class scheduled for next month may be here in La Harpe. Austin Lee asked if the books were being rotated and not read by he same person each month. Mayor Crowell stated they should be rotating; Penny has been training Gentry but I think they are done so she will come off of reading books and Larry’s mowing will start in the next month or so.
7. Michelle Altis, City Clerk – Reminded the Mayor of the employee evaluations. Mayor Crowell stated we have 4 evaluations coming up and I thought it might be easier in a special meeting, I just need to know which day works best. After discussion council agreed to meet April 5, 2023 at 6:00pm for a special meeting.

**DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS –**

Mayor Crowell requested a motion to go into executive session on non-elected personnel for 10 minutes. Danny Ware Jr made a motion to go into executive session on non-elected personnel for 10 minutes. Austin Lee seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

**TREASURER’S REPORT –** File for audit.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS**

Danny Ware Jr made a motion to approve bills as presented. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Danny Ware Jr made the motion to adjourn. Austin Lee seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Adjourned at 8:51 pm.

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City ClerkMayor