CITY OF LA HARPE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT OTHERS PRESENT

Austin Lee Acting Mayor, Sharlyn Thompson

Danny Ware Jr City Clerk, Michelle Altis

Cynthia Carr City Code/animal Control, Penny Miller

Ron Knavel Water Rep, Roy Caler

Police Chief, Joe Stotler

City Maintenance, Gentry Dougherty

**Call to order**

Acting Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance with 4 members present. Mayor Crowell was absent.

**Approval of Agenda**

Austin Lee requested an executive session on policies to be added at the end of meeting. Danny Ware Jr requested non-elected personnel be added as well. Ron Knavel made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Austin Lee seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**Approval of Minutes**

Danny Ware Jr made the motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on August 9, 2023, and the special meeting on August 8, 2023 as presented. Cynthia Carr seconded but mentioned some spelling errors. Motion carried 4-0.

**CITIZENS CALL FOR BUSINESS**

1. Savannah Flory expressed frustrations on the sewer charge on her meter that does nothing but water a garden. She stated she didn’t have a problem paying a higher meter fee but to pay $140 in sewer fees for water that does not go down the sewer is crazy. Sharlyn Thompson stated the council voted to set it up that way and you can either pay or have it turned off. Cynthia Carr suggested the council readdress this because there are a few others with the same complaint. Austin Lee suggested Savannah come back next month, hoping the council will have a better solution.
2. Raymond Maloney asked what the city was charging per gallon of water now. Michelle stated $.00525. Ray stated he had some concerns on what the city was proposing to charge outside users and feels we already contribute to the city because we pay more than those in town. Danny Ware Jr stated, the $5.00 extra dollars you pay does not even cover payroll. We have supplies to buy, employees to pay, classes they are required to attend. We have a $130,000 plus water tower project that needs to be addressed next year. Danny suggested to Ray, if you don’t want to pay for water, you could always buy from someone else. Ray Maloney stated, you are on the right track, just seems like you are penalizing your rural users.
3. Lane Porter understood the city needed to raise water rates but asked why the city could just raise his rate and not install a master meter. Danny Ware Jr stated, the water purchase comes from the city limits. The water should have never left the city limits, those needing water outside of city limits will have to come to our city limits and that is where the master meters come in to play. He stated, if it would have been done like it was supposed to be a long time ago, we wouldn’t be going through all of this. Sharlyn Thompson reminded, it’s a legality issue to make sure they are all the same. Lane asked about annexing his property and Austin Lee stated, that it would cost the city a lot of money to do so.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. No unfinished business to discuss.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Sewer Grant, Michelle shared a letter from KDHE stating the city will not be receiving the sewer infrastructure grant. The mayor has been contacted by Bruce Boetcher, with BG Consultants, wanting to know if the city still wants to move forward on the project or wait. He would like to meet in a meeting, if needed, to discuss. Michelle stated she would keep the council posted on that.
2. Smoke Test, Danny Ware Jr asked why the smoke test isn’t getting done, KRWA stated they needed it to be dry, and it’s been dry. He said, we need to get the smoke test done, especially now if we didn’t get the grant, that way if there are issues our crew has time to get them fixed. Cynthia Carr stated, I thought we already decided to move forward with this. Michelle said she would contact Bruce and find out what needs to be done.
3. Water user in town, Danny Ware Jr shared, it has come to our attention that Kendra Michael has been paying outside of city limits while her property is ion city limits. Michelle stated, yes that is correct. I worked with the county appraiser to get our city limits fixed and she shared to ordinance number, 1724 and 1725, that was passed in July of 1997 that made her property part of our city limits. Kendra has lived there since August 31, 2011 to present and has been paying the $5.00 the entire time. The city owes her $720.00 on the over charge of her water. Danny Ware Jr made the motion to credit Kendra’s account the $720.00 she is owed for paying the outside user fee. Austin Lee seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

1. Fred Works, City Attorney – Absent from meeting.
2. Roy Caler, Water Representative – Nothing to report.
3. Joe Stotler, Police Chief – Shared his monthly time cards. Stated he worked the Labor Day weekend and had numerous stops. For the month he had; 101 traffic stops, 2 DUI’s, 4 other arrest and numerous other tickets. He shared that he was awarded a bronze certificate for traffic safety.
4. Penny Miller, Code/Animal Control – Shared her monthly reports. The council was presented 4 bids to replace the transmission in the Explorer. Austin Lee made the motion to accept Mike Manbeck’s bid for $3,000.00. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Cynthia Carr expressed concerns about the old church across the street asking; have they received a letter or been cited for the building; the roof looks awful. Penny Miller stated she recently sent them a letter. Savannah Flory asked about all the animals across from her property, stating there are at least 5 cows, several goats and chickens. Council stated he is in violation of our ordinance and needs to be in compliance. Penny stated she was waiting on Fred but would talk to them.
5. Marc Waggoner, Fire Chief- Absent from meeting but shared the meeting minutes: The LaHarpe Volunteer Fire Department met for the monthly meeting. Present: Matthew Waggoner, Josh Sparks, Marc Waggoner Sr., Bill Gay, Dennis Sidebottom, Kiefer Endicott, Gentry Dougherty, Meghan Sparks & Ronald Splector. Absent was Pamela Waggoner. La Harpe firefighters started meeting by getting pictures taken for newspaper. Then we took the trucks out and ran them, then returned to barn and adjourned the meeting. In October, we will be flushing the fire hydrants.
6. Maintenance Department –The workorders and Dereck’s progress report were shared. Michelle shared a new quote on poles, stating; had to bring it back because these were over the limit. Michelle also shared, the city has 9 – 35’ and 2 – 40’ poles. She mentioned that Dereck will be sitting 4 poles in October but those are out of the inventory already. The council agreed, the city should wait on ordering any more poles right now. Michelle mentioned that Dereck thought he might be able to piggy back on another town’s order to save the city a little money. The council agreed to wait a while. Michelle mentioned the mayor had Dereck order 2 master meters for the outside water users for $7,328.80. Austin Lee stated she can’t do that without approval. Danny ware Jr made the motion to cancel the order. Cynthia Carr seconded. Cynthia stated, we don’t need a master meter for Frankie Chapman, just move her meter to our city limits and before we make any more purchases, we need to reevaluate what we have going on. Motion carried 4-0.
7. Michelle Altis, City Clerk – Nothing to discuss.

**DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS –**

Acting mayor, Sharlyn Thompson requested a motion to go into executive session 20 minutes for city policies and non-elected personnel with Michelle invited. Austin Lee made the motion to go into executive session 15 minutes for city policies and non-elected personnel with Michelle invited. Danny Ware Jr seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Austin Lee made the motion to go back into executive session 20 minutes for city policies and non-elected personnel with Michelle invited. Danny Ware Jr seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

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

**APPROVAL OF BILLS**

Danny Ware Jr made a motion to approve bills as presented but do not pay the county bill right now. Austin Lee seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Danny Ware Jr made the motion to adjourn. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Adjourned at 9:20 pm.

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City ClerkMayor