CITY OF LA HARPE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

JANUARY 10, 2024

REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT OTHERS PRESENT

Danny Ware Jr Mayor, Ella Mae Crowell

Sharlyn Thompson City Clerk, Michelle Altis

Cynthia Carr Police Chief, Joe Stotler

Ron Knavel Water Rep, Roy Caler

Code & Animal Control, Penny Miller

**Call to order**

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

**Approval of Agenda**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on December 13, 2023 and the special meeting December 28, 2023 as presented. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**CITIZENS CALL FOR BUSINESS**

1. Chad Smith and Sarah Lassman approached council requesting beer to be allowed at a fundraiser they are hosting for Aaron Mann on January 27th. Sharlyn Thompson stated she was worried about the beer and the reflection on the city. Sarah stated this fundraiser is for a good cause and people will be very respectful. Danny Ware Jr suggested we find out our coverage for this request. Mayor Crowell stated we will find out and let you know.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No business discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Swearing in newly elected council members and mayor – Danny Ware Jr was sworn in as a council member and Ella Mae Crowell was sworn in as mayor. Both were sworn in before the meeting. The clerk will swear in Austin Lee at a later date.
2. Cox Communications – Megan Bottenberg attended by phone but had 3 representatives in the audience; Jesse Lazzers, John Taylor and Tara Albin to answer any questions. Megan stated that Cox has been a family-owned company for the past 125 years, we strive to take care of the communities we serve. Cox committed $4 million in private dollars to bring broad band to Kansas. We have over 10,000 miles throughout Kansas with the majority being fiber and Cox is wanting to bring fiber to La Harpe at 2G speed. Cox offers Internet, voice, video and business services with all very affordable programs. Cox deploys fiber lines in the city right-of-ways and any work will be restored, which is required by state law. In 2022 Cox was approved by the KCC to build in La Harpe. In the franchise agreement, Megan noted, you will see the right-of-way rules and processes. La Harpe can choose a franchise fee of up to 5%. Danny suggested the council discuss the franchise fee later in meeting. Mayor Crowell thanked all Cox representatives and told them the city would be in touch.
3. Meter maintenance fee: West – Ray Maloney asked the council if they would consider taking the $20.00 fee off of them stating if it’s a city line to serve Gas or Gas to serve La Harpe then that’s who needs to be responsible for the line. Sharlyn Thompson mentioned, this isn’t set in stone, if something does change, we can always reevaluate the fund. Danny Ware Jr reminded Ray the fee does not come to the city. Only way city uses that money is to repair a break. He stated, if later in the future you all decide to go to Gas for water, the fee will be refunded back to the customer. Ray asked if the city will know if they are losing water on that line, Mayor Crowell stated a master meter will be installed at city limits to help recognize any discrepancies.
4. BCBS 125 Flex Plan – Mayor Crowell stated she need a motion to authorize her to sign this form. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to authorize the mayor to sign the renewal. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
5. Wings of Warrior Sponsorship – No action taken.
6. Shredding – Joe asked for permission to shred more documents. Sharlyn Thompson granted his request, not to exceed $300.00. Danny Ware Jr. seconded. Motion carried 4-0.
7. Employee Handbook – Mayor Crowell stated some minor verbiage needed to be changed in thew handbook regarding overtime pay and holidays. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to make changes as presented. Cynthia Carr 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. Had nothing else to report.
4. Penny Miller, Code/Animal Control –Shared her monthly reports. Had nothing else to report
5. Marc Waggoner, Fire Chief- Absent from meeting. Danny Ware Jr asked where we were with the fire hydrants and do we have all the parts. Mayor Crowell stated there were 8 to 10, according to Dereck, they are workable just need new parts. Mayor Crowell stated the city will fix them as Dereck and Larry were taught how to do so.
6. Maintenance Department –The workorders and Dereck’s progress report were shared. Mayor Crowell stated Dereck is requesting poles, he stated we were down to 6 poles, and looking at about $500.00 a pole with shipping. I would like to give him $7,500.00 to get the poles needed. Danny Ware Jr asked why the council didn’t get a bid, I’m not comfortable knowing what $7,500.00 will get us. Some companies will give discounted rates on ordering more poles at one time. Ron Knavel suggested Dereck get pricing on poles needed and Michelle can email the quotes to us to decide if he needs them before next meeting. Cynthia Carr asked if the bucket truck was fixed. Mayor Crowell said the truck needs new knuckles which would be around $4,000.00 but they’re about 6 weeks out.
7. Michelle Altis, City Clerk – Nothing to report.

**DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS –**

Mayor Crowell requested a motion to go into executive session on non-elected personnel. Danny Ware Jr made a motion to go into executive session for 15 minutes on non-elected personnel with Joe invited. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Danny Ware Jr made a motion to stay in executive session for an additional15 minutes on non-elected personnel with Joe invited. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

After returning to regular session, Danny Ware Jr made the motion to make the franchise fee for Cox Communications 5%. Ron Knavel 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. Sharlyn Thompson seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Danny Ware Jr made the motion to adjourn. Cynthia Carr seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Adjourned at 8:56 pm.

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City ClerkMayor