

City of Prairie Home
City Hall, 416 Highway Drive, Prairie Home, MO
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

Thursday, September 21, 2023

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL:

- Present: Jim Lachner, Mayor; Eric Kirschman, East Ward; Cindy Lenger, West Ward; Ray Weber, East Ward
- Absent: Donald Dietzel, West Ward
- Staff: Kim Force, Attorney; Ben Burch, Police Chief; Joe Odneal, Water Operator; Mary Sue Fontana, City Clerk
- Residents: Dennis Toalson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Kirschman made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Lenger seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Dennis Toalson described a sewer issue he'd experienced earlier in the summer.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Ms. Lenger made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 10 tax levy hearing and regular board meeting. Mr. Kirschman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

- Mr. Burch reported on the new hands-free cell phone law, which is secondary enforcement and penalties won't begin until 2025.
- The Board discussed several abatement-eligible properties, along with dog and noise complaints which Mr. Lachner had received. Mr. Burch will follow-up.

WATER/SEWER DEPARTMENT:

- Mr. Lachner thanked Mr. Odneal for brush-hogging the lagoon.
- Mr. Odneal reported he had contacted Ameren regarding an electrical issue at the center pivot.
- The Board discussed comments from Robert Alpers about pressure and water volume at his property.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mr. Lachner noted the engine-braking signs had been installed by MoDOT and that some street signs are in poor condition and are leaning.
- Mr. Lachner thanked the Board for talking to their constituents regarding the ditching project.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: None.

CLERK'S REPORT:

- Ms. Fontana presented the financial report. Ms. Lenger made a motion to accept the report. Mr. Kirschman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- FY23 Financial Statements. Ms. Fontana distributed copies of the annual report prepared by Evers and Company and highlighted the combined income and expense report, which will be published in the Boonville Daily News in condensed form, as required by law.
- FY23 Budget-to-Actual Statements. Ms. Fontana presented the fiscal-year-end report, showing all spending was within the total budgeted by fund, as required by the Board's budget policy.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Drainage and Street Repair Project Update.**
 - Mr. Kirschman reported Walters Construction is ready to order culvert pipe and plans to begin installations in October after the ditching is completed.
 - In response to a question received that day by Ms. Fontana, the Board confirmed the ordinance, and their intent, is that property owners are to pay for culvert and materials and the City will pay for culvert installation. As a matter of practicality for this project, the City will cover the cost of gravel, but the property owner will be responsible for the cost of asphalt, concrete, or other finishes.
- **Sidewalk Grant Application Update.** Ms. Fontana reported the Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Committee received \$11 million in requests, with \$7 million available in MoDOT grant funding. Mr. Lachner suggested the Board consider constructing smaller segments as City funds are available, if grant funding is not available.
- **County Clerk Agreement for Property Taxes.** Ms. Fontana stated the County asked for changes in the wording of the agreement to provide tax extension services at no charge to the City. Ms. Fontana presented Ordinance 272D, An Ordinance to Authorize the Revocation of all Previously-Signed Agreements with the County Clerk of Cooper County and to Authorize the Signing of a New Cooperative Agreement. Ms. Lenger made a motion to approve the ordinance. Mr. Kirschman seconded. The motion passed by roll call vote: Kirschman, yes. Weber, yes. Dietzel, yes. Lenger, yes.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Uncontested Annual Elections.** Ms. Fontana presented information related to forgoing annual board elections when the number of candidates for each office is equal to the number of available positions. This would need to be submitted to a vote of the people and, if approved, resubmitted every six years. Mr. Kirschman made a motion to put the uncontested election issue on the April 2024 ballot. Ms. Lenger seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Board briefly discussed, but chose not to pursue, an option where elected officials' terms could be longer than two years. The Board also briefly discussed an option where the City could do away with wards and aldermen would be elected at-large. The Board chose to discuss this further at another meeting.
- **New State Laws Effective August 2023.** Ms. Fontana mentioned several new laws that had gone into effect, including the hands-free cell phone law, a potential county property tax credit, and updates to Sunshine Law exemptions.

OTHER:

- Mr. Lachner reported he'd received a question from Bryan Sedgwick with the Prairie Home Coop regarding any issues the City may have with their plans to place gas pumps on their

property. The Board confirmed there were no issues. Ms. Fontana will draft a letter to Mr. Sedgwick.

- Mr. Kirschman stated an out-of-town CoMo customer informed him he had been charged Prairie Home sales tax.
- Toalson Sewer. The Board discussed Mr. Toalson's issue brought up during Public Comments. Mr. Odneal noted the Toalson sewer ties into a lateral service line which begins at the diner and includes the police department and city hall. It is thought that at one time, the first three buildings all had the same owner and the prior owner of the Toalson home tied into that lateral without City knowledge or approval.
 - Mr. Kirschman made a motion that the portion of the service line extending from 416 Highway Drive to the manhole near 410 Highway Drive be annexed as a section of the City's public sewer system, leaving the segment from the diner to City Hall as the diner's lateral. Ms. Lenger seconded. The motion passed unanimously. A resolution documenting the change will be presented at the next meeting.
 - Mr. Kirschman made a motion to reimburse the Toalsons for the cost of sewer clean out previously expended in the amount of \$350. Ms. Lenger seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Weber made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kirschman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

/s/ Mary Sue Fontana, City Clerk

/s/ James R. Lachner, Mayor