

CITY OF IOLA

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08/11/2014

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Iola was held on August 11, 2014, at 6:00 p.m., at the Riverside Park Community Building, 510 Park Avenue, Iola, Kansas.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Joel Wicoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Wicoff, Council Members Zornes, Becker, Franklin, Myrick and French were present. Also present were Administrator Slaugh, Assistant Administrator Schinstock, and City Clerk Hutton. Absent were Council Member Wells, Shaughnessy, and Ford.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Council Member Franklin and seconded by Council Member Becker to approve the agenda adding Teresa Longbotham, candidate for Planning Commission member to the consent agenda item D and Ordinance 3434 Library mill levy to item 9 C. All in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Craig Abbott stated that the city does not have the population nor the industry that it had twenty years ago. The city has the same number of employees and equipment as it did 20 years ago. Need to decide if it is necessary to continue with the same services for example chip and seal in the flooded area.

Donna Houser stated that the grant application for the disc golf course has been submitted. The CITF group is looking at applying for a highway signage grant in the near future.

Sharon Boan stated that the downtown buildings are looking great. A visitor was in town the other day and he took a two hour tour of the town. He said the town looked very nice and he was impressed with the way it had been cared for.

Kelly Rouse asked the council not to approve her termination.

David Toland updated the council on the current VA project. The VA State Director is coming to Iola in the near future. He encouraged the council to not cut VanScoyoc from the budget the city has had a long term return on investment. Council Member French asked Mr. Toland to comment on the fact that there is money being released by the federal government that the city could go after. Mr. Toland stated that Van Scoyoc commented that there is money for infrastructure for an industrial park and they could be beneficial in us making the contacts to apply for these dollars.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes Approval - July 28, 2014

B. Appropriations Approval – 2014-15

C. Personnel Action

- **John Ross – Purchasing – Annual**
- **Ryan Chapman – Fire/EMS – 12 Month**
- **Brian Fees – Police – Annual**
- **Brian Plumlee – Police – Annual**
- **Tammy Womelsdorf – Meter Reader – Annual**
- **James Boeken – Sanitation – 12 Month**
- **Robert Droessler Jr, - Street/Alley – 12 Month**
- **Angela Huff – Clerk – Annual**
- **Jessica Fosdick – Clerk – Resignation**
- **Kelly Rouse – Electric Distribution – Termination**

D. Appointment to Planning Commission

- **Teresa Longbotham**

Executive Session – Non-Elected Personnel - Motion made by Council Member French and seconded by Council Member Becker to adjourn into executive session to discuss Non-Elected Personnel / Consent Agenda item. All in favor. Motion carried. Present Mayor, Council, Attorney Johnson and Administrator Slaugh. The regular meeting will resume at 6:22 p.m.

Executive Session – Non-Elected Personnel - Motion made by Council Member Myrick and seconded by Council Member Zornes to adjourn into executive session to discuss Non-Elected Personnel / Consent Agenda item. All in favor. Motion carried. Present Mayor, Council, Attorney Johnson and Administrator Slaugh. The regular meeting will resume at 6:27 p.m.

Motion made by Council Member French to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Council Member Becker. All in favor. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Animal Control - Discussions

Wild Animals – Administrator Slaugh noted that there are citizens in the area and they have licenses to dispose of the animals per Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. Council Member French stated that there is a lot more fox and coyotes taking up residency inside of the city limits. There are older citizens that can't afford the cost of a private contractor. The city needs to get proactive in assisting those individuals with this situation. He would like to see money budgeted for one year to see how it goes. Council Member Myrick stated he understood where Council Member French was coming from; however where do we stop providing money for services. Mother nature is part of living here and the wildlife is a part of it. Motion made by Council Member French to budget

up to \$2,000 for the budget year 2015 to contract with a licensed trapper to trap small and large fur bearing animals that have taken up residency within the city limits. Motion was seconded by Council Member Becker. All in favor. Motion carried.

Care of Animals – Council Member French stated that the section of the ordinance that states domesticated animals cannot be kept within 200 feet of another dwelling needs to be updated. Bill Maness stated that the city should not allow tethering of animals due to the fact that the animal has to exercise, eat and defecate within the confines of the tether. If they wrap themselves around an object such as a tree that gives them even less room to do all of these things. Council Member French stated that if the animal wraps himself around a tree or another object he wouldn't be able to get to his food and water until the owner comes home possibly hours later. Motion made by Council Member Zornes and seconded by Council Member Myrick to direct staff to prepare an ordinance to make changes as presented and bring back to the council for approval. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Emergency Medical Services Funding – Discussions – Council Member Becker stated that the city is running an excellent service. When the county ran the service it cost \$1.368 million. The city has shown a savings overall however; the citizens of Iola should not be bearing the total cost of the county wide service. The county has collected a tax levy for the service and they should turn it over to the city to run the service. Administrator Slaugh noted that the city offered to provide additional funding of \$189,000 with the stipulation the city has to pay it back if they discontinue running the service. Council Member French stated that the agreement needs to be clearer to continue to operate with current funding and cannot continue to provide the service spelled out in the contract without more funding. We should give our six month notice, continue to negotiate, and come to an amicable agreement on the funding. Council Member Franklin stated she is not in favor of a \$5.00 fee on utility bills or a tax increase to run the countywide service. Council Member Myrick stated that the city is paying for a countywide service that the county should be paying for as a whole. Council Member French stated that we need to be looking at the county as a whole. We cannot continue as we are. Administrator Slaugh stated that we are in the position to continue to operate the service however; we cannot continue to take away from reserve funds. If we put a surcharge on the utility bills we can implement it right away. Mayor Wicoff stated that the council needs to look past the financial aspect and look at it as a situation that we have overcome. It is more efficient, run better on average which is worth more than the money. We currently have control over our own destiny. If we break the contract the county will be forced to tax Allen County citizens. It will be the city's fault that they didn't try it for a longer term. When negotiating a contract neither party gets everything they want. We need to set a goal and over time become more efficient. Look at it as taking care of our neighbors. We are over ½ the county in population. We need to take the steps to make this work. Council Member Myrick asked if we had spoken to the other cities about putting a surcharge on their utility bills to help fund the service. Administrator Slaugh stated we have not. A tentative joint meeting has been set up for

August 26th to discuss how the service is running and what shape the finances are in at that time. Council Member Zornes stated that we should renegotiate without giving notice. We have received rave reviews from the county on the way the service is being run. We just need them to cooperate to continue to fund the service.

Executive Session – Contract Negotiations - Motion made by Council Member French and seconded by Council Member Franklin to adjourn into executive session to discuss contract negotiations/ EMS Service. All in favor. Motion carried. Present Mayor, Council, Attorney Johnson and Administrator Slaugh. The regular meeting will resume at 7:42 p.m.

Administrator Slaugh stated that his proposal is to try to address their reservations about the finances being used for fire versus EMS and continue to offer the service with a \$5.00 surcharge on the utility bills. H stated we could remove the six mill increase from the 2015 proposed budget and get actual numbers to negotiate with the county. Council Member French stated that we can put the surcharge on with a December 31, 2014 end date, renegotiate a more amicable contract. If expenses cannot be cut the city will have to fund it this year by taking from reserves. Council Member Zornes stated she is in favor of the surcharge to take care of the immediate needs for this year. Council member Myrick stated that he has told his constituents that he will not vote on a surcharge on the utility bill. He is in favor of option #1 and recommendation #3. Mayor Wicoff stated that it would be easier to add a \$5.00 surcharge and then later remove the \$5.00 surcharge than to increase the mill levy. Motion made by Council Member French and seconded by Council Member Becker to put a \$5.00 surcharge on electric customers utility bills to help fund the deficit for 2014, give the county six month notice to terminate the contract and continue to renegotiate the contract. Voting in favor of the motion were council members: Becker, Franklin and French. Voting against the motion were council members: Myrick and Zornes. Motion passed by a majority vote.

C. Pay Compensation Study – Discussions - Administrator Slaugh noted that the Employee Task Force reviewed the pay compensation study. The task force was in favor of using cash reserves within the Employee Insurance Fund to fund the first year of the study and have the council review options for the second and third year.

Administrator Slaugh reiterated the reason for doing the study was that the council wanted to add pay for the EMS Director and other employees. The Employee Insurance Fund currently has a balance of \$562,671. The financial policy states that there should be a 3 – 6 month reserve for capital which would be approximately \$300,000. Council Member French stated he had suggested that the benefit package be considered when looking at employee's overall pay plus the added extras like coffee, paper plates, tools, uniforms etc. The pay compensation adjustment to the pay scale would be in addition to the COLA. Council Member French asked about some comments made at the Employee Task Force meeting about some of the employees pay grade dropping. Administrator Slaugh noted that the employee will not lose money. If the position comes open in the future the new hire will start at the lower pay grade. Council Member French stated that

all positions when they come open should be reviewed to see if that position could be absorbed instead of rehiring. He strongly encouraged promoting from within if the employee is qualified for the position. Administrator Slauch noted that some departments could absorb a position while others cannot. Council Member Franklin stated that in her opinion, for the area city employees are paid well and have a wonderful benefit package. She would like to see the pay study spread over five years. Council Member French stated that he is glad the study was done so we know where we stand. Since the cost can be taken out of the employee insurance fund that makes it easier to approve the increase for the first year and review it again for the second and third year. Council Member Myrick stated he would like to see it be spread over a five year period instead of a three year period. Motion made by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member Myrick to implement the pay study over a three year period taking the funding from the employee health insurance fund for the first year and reviewing the funding for the second and third year. All in favor. Motion carried. Council Member French made a motion and Council Member Franklin seconded the motion to instruct department heads to come up with a savings reduction with the possibility of a hiring freeze. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mayor Wicoff declared a seven minute break.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Federal Fund Exchange Contract - KDOT – Since the inception of the federal fund exchange program just a few short years back we have used these funds to support two projects in the past. These two projects were the project on U.S. 54 Highway and the annual mill and overlay project (Broadway Street) in 2013. At this time staff has not requested funds for a project this year. It is staff's desire to continue to bank the funds and put them toward preliminary engineering next fall for U.S. 54 Highway from State Street to the Jump Start travel center area. Current allocation for city use is \$67,113.90 for federal fiscal year 2014 with an exchange rate amount to be \$60,402.50 for use on city transportation projects. Motion made by Council Member Franklin and seconded by Council Member Myrick to approve KDOT annual contract agreement 455-14 and authorize the mayor to sign the necessary documents. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. 2015 Budget Public Hearing – Mayor Wicoff called the public hearing to order. Donna Houser addressed the council stating that she is worried about the excessive transfers from the utility funds. Mayor Wicoff declared the public hearing closed. Administrator Slauch stated that he recommends discontinuing the Van Scoyoc services. Council Member Franklin stated that she would like to leave them in the budget because the city has benefited from their services. Council Member Myrick agreed with leaving them in the budget. Council Member French stated that he would like to keep them on one more year and see what they can do for us with the new federal money becoming available. Motion made by Council Member Myrick and seconded by Council Member Franklin to continue to

fund Van Scoyoc for the 2015 budget. All in favor. Motion carried. Council Member French stated that the water rates had not been increased for seven years. When the utility rates are not increased every year or two a larger increase has to be done. Administrator Slaugh noted that the gas and electric rates are based on the cost of commodities and increases as do those costs. The water on the other hand is just charged a set amount for each unit. Council Member French wondered why city staff could not maintain the Flewharty annex since they are already maintaining other city buildings. Administrator Slaugh stated that the Library is considered an enterprise fund and the more subsidizing the city does takes away their responsibility to maintain their own buildings. When the house was offered Roger Carswell, Director of the Library, only wanted the property not the house. Over time it has become a liability. How long do you continue to pour money into a structure until you decide it is not worth the cost? The city can turn it over to the school district since they are the trustees for the Bowlus. At that time the school can decide to tear down the house if they desire. Council Member Franklin stated that the house is not used as often as it should be with the continued cost of upkeep. Motion made by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member French to approve the proposed 2015 budget lowering the mill levy to 40.866, with the understanding the provisions will have to be made to support the EMS fund if the city continues providing the service. All in favor. Motion carried.

C. Mill Levy Ordinance for Library – Motion made by Council Member Franklin and seconded by Council Member Myrick to approve Ordinance 3434 increasing the mill levy for the library from 5.946 to 6.441 for the 2015 budget. All in favor. Motion carried.

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

A. Mayor Wicoff –

- None

B. Council Member Wells–

- Absent

C. Council Member Ford –

- Absent

D. Council Member Franklin–

- None

E. Council Member Shaughnessy –

- Absent

F. Council Member Becker –

- None

G. Council Member Myrick –

- Asked if the outstanding court costs are being collected. Administrator Slaugh stated that Judge Saxton has a method for collections at the end of the year that forces the individual to pay or go to jail.

H. Council Member Zornes –

- Noted that the east and south welcome signs have no lights on them.

I. Council Member French –

- Stated that hopefully next year that better communication is used between the city and the merchants for the annual chip and seal project.
- Asked if the vehicles that were towed had prior notice and if so why do we not charge those individuals the towing charge. Assistant Administrator Schinstock stated that a lower rate is charged by the towing company.
- Asked about the disagreement between the towing companies had been decided. Administrator Slaugh stated that it is a county issue and as far as he knew it was being worked on.
- Would like to see ½ price admission at the pool for the rest of the week. Motion made by Council Member Myrick and seconded by Council Member French to charge ½ price admission to the swimming pool for the remainder of the 2014 season. All in favor. Motion carried.

J. Administrator Slaugh –

- Has his evaluation information if the council would like to take care of that. The council would like to delay until the next meeting.

DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. Monday August 25th, 2014

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. Monday September 8th, 2014

ADJOURNMENT

9:37 p.m. Motion made by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member Myrick to adjourn the meeting. As the vote was unanimous, the meeting was declared adjourned.

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Approved by the City Council of the City of Iola, Kansas this 25th day of August 2014.

Mayor, Joel Wicoff

City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton