

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Iola was held on January 26, 2015, at 6:00 p.m., at the Riverside Park Community Building, 510 Park Avenue, Iola, Kansas.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

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

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes Approval - January 12, 2015

B. Appropriations Approval – 2015-02

C. Personnel Action

- **Sarah McDaniel – Fire/EMS Department – Resignation**
- **Kenneth Powell – Fire/EMS Department – Six Month Evaluation**
- **Jeremy Ellington – Fire/EMS Department – Twelve Month Evaluation**
- **Ryan Latta – Recreation – Six Month Evaluation**
- **Danny McKarnin – Electric Generation – End of Probation Period**

D. Board Appointments

- **Mary Lou Chard – Library Board**

Administrator Slaugh wanted to add rehire of billing clerk/assistant city clerk under personnel actions. Motion made by Council Member Wells to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion seconded by Council Member Zornes. All in favor. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Electric & Gas Utility Rates - While the electric utility fund is solvent and doing well, there is still concern over the depletion of reserves. The reserve fund at the end of December 2014 was \$1,099,313. For a fund with projected expenditures of \$12.2 million or approximately \$1.0 million per month, that leaves little reserve to handle regular cash flow. Administrator Slaugh noted that there are a few different ways to

increase the reserve balance. With an increase in just the meter charge the residential customers would be affected more than the commercial and industrial users, an increase in the ECA would affect the larger users more than the average residential customer. The reserve amount fluctuates during the year, however if the reserve falls below \$1 million at any time it is possible expenses may not be met. Administrator Slaugh wanted the council's opinion on what they thought would be the best way to handle an increase. Council Member French noted that a meter charge is guaranteed income. A slight increase in usage charges would hit every customer. Mayor Wicoff would like to see a profit and loss statement to help the council determine what kind of profit we have to work with. He wondered if we could find a way to spend less instead of increasing rates. Council Member Wells stated that he would favor a slight increase around \$2.00 on the meter charge and then a small increase in the ECA. Council Member Becker stated that the city saved the industries approximately \$100,000 in 2014 by switching to the Southwest Power Pool from the Kansas Power Pool. Administrator Slaugh noted that the transfers out of the electric fund add up to about \$2.5 million with a million of that going to equipment reserve for future purchase of generation. The projects over the last couple of years including installing catalyst to the Wartsila and EMD engines have depleted reserves because they were large ticket items. Economic Development projects taken out of the fund would also decrease the reserves. Council Member Wells noted that a 2% increase in the ECA and a small meter increase would be a modest increase since the city hasn't had an increase since 2006. These small increases would help to keep the mill levy down over time. Council Member Becker noted that an increase in the ECA would be the most overall fair way to raise the funds. Council Member French noted that we need to look at the future and increase generation so we can keep costs down. Obtaining future generation with a cooling system that would allow the city to generate in winter months would also keep costs down. Council Member Ford noted that a meter increase in industrial users is not going to affect the customer base at all need to make sure the percentage is equal for the different customer types. Mayor Wicoff asked how the city can charge less than Westar. Administrator Slaugh noted that municipal entities pay their employees less. The city can purchase from Westar at a lower rate because of our own generation and the excess capacity that we purchase from other members of the pool. The consensus of the council is to have Administrator Slaugh bring back different options for rate increase with a split in meter charge and ECA.

ROUNDTABLE

A. Municipal Code Review - Staff continues an effort to review the entire Municipal Code for the City of Iola. Administrator Slaugh noted that the city will continue to use Municode for the 2014 ordinance updates. Administrator Slaugh stated that he will bring back options for codifying the ordinances at a later meeting.

B. EMS -2014 Year in Review - Administrator Slaugh noted that the department is functioning well and that the finances came out well at year end. There is a deficit over the \$272,000 specified in the supplemental agreement with Allen County of

\$16,000. Administrator Slaugh stated that he didn't plan on asking the county for the \$8,000, half of the deficit, which is the amount per the contract that they are obligated to pay the city. He noted that the department morale is down due in part to the conversations between the city and county over the last year about the department. Payroll will start keeping track of overtime for call back so that we can trend when the greatest overtime is used. The department would like to get staffing levels up to ten employees per shift to allow for times when individuals are off duty for various reasons. Administrator Slaugh stated that at an average of \$50,000 per staff member the \$150,000 total to staff the ten per shift would not decrease the overtime costs. Fire Chief Tim Thyer read the attached letter to council explaining the staffing desires and requirements to keep all of the employees safe and assure there is backup if another call comes in while the others are out on a call. Council Member French asked if incentives were given to attract new employees since we see to have an issue with getting applicants. The city does not currently have an incentive program. Council member Ford asked where vacancies are advertised. She noted it is important to use the organizations that are fire and EMS related and also schools where they provide relevant training. Chief Thyer assured the council that they were taking advantage of these avenues. Council Member Wells stated that he would like the department to slowly build up to the ten per shift staffing and see how it goes with nine on a shift and possibly changing a shift to accommodate vacancies in the middle of the day.

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

A. Mayor Wicoff –

- None

B. Council Member Wells–

- Thanked the EMS/Fire department employees for being patient during the negotiation stages between the city and the county to work out a contract.

C. Council Member Ford –

- None

D. Council Member Franklin–

- Sidewalk is looking great. A lot of people are using it.

E. Council Member Shaughnessy –

- Absent

F. Council Member Becker –

- None

G. Council Member Myrick –

- None

H. Council Member Zornes –

- Thanked the fire/EMS department employees.
- The sidewalk looks great.

I. Council Member French –

- None

J. Administrator Slauch –

- Thanked Roberta Shirley for her many years of service to the tree board since 2000. Roberta is resigning her position leaving an opening on the tree board.
- Staff is still working on the tower agreement for companies using facilities for antennas.
- Had a meeting with school officials on the Safe Routes to Schools. Will hand out surveys at the schools and continue with the process.

DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. Monday February 9th, 2015

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. Monday February 23rd, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

7:20p.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.

Approved by the City Council of the City of Iola, Kansas this 9th day of February 2015.

Mayor, Joel Wicoff

City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton