

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Iola was held on January 25, 2016, at 6:00 p.m., at the Riverside Park Community Building, 510 Park Avenue, Iola, Kansas.

## **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Council President Becker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

## **ROLL CALL**

Council Members, Sigg, Ford, Zornes, Becker, Wells, A. Franklin, Shaughnessy and B. Franklin were present. Also present were Administrator Slaugh, Assistant Administrator Schinstock, and City Clerk Hutton. Absent was Mayor Wicoff.

Trudy Rice, with Kansas PRIDE Inc., and Carla Nemecek, with K-State Research and Extension were in attendance to present the Community of Excellence award for the years 2016-2018, to the CITF/PRIDE Committee. The PRIDE program is a partnership between the Kansas Department of Commerce, K-State Research and Extension and Kansas PRIDE Inc. The PRIDE organization has been around for 46 years. The Community of Excellence award allows the group to solicit grants from the organization. Two grants have been awarded thru the PRIDE organization for the disc golf course and the directional signs around town.

## **REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chuck Richie addressed the council about his concerns of putting crosswalks at the intersection on South First and Madison Avenue. He feels this would be dangerous and potentially cause accidents. Mr. Richie is in favor of a crosswalk on S. Oak and Madison Avenue.

Mr. Richie doesn't favor decreasing the number of lanes around the curve to two lanes and adding a bicycle lane. Several cars use more than one lane while going around the curve and some even switch lanes in the process.

Donna Houser reminded the council members that See, Hear, Iola is this Friday.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. Minutes Approval**

- January 11, 2016

### **B. Appropriations Approval – 2016-02**

### **C. Personnel Action**

- Jeremy Ellington – Fire Department – Annual Evaluation

- **Danielle McNaught – Fire Department – Annual Evaluation**
- **Caitlyn Callaway – Fire Department – New Hire**

Council Member B. Franklin asked about the payment to Cottonwood Neosho River for the assurance district 2016 assessment. Administrator Slaugh stated that several cities are a part of this group is for research, development and stabilization. The water we pull from the Neosho River for our drinking water.

Council Member B. Franklin inquired about the payment made to Kansas Municipal Utilities. Administrator Slaugh stated that this is a membership fee that provides the city with resources for training and resources. The board voted to increase the membership dues this year to help pay for the new training facility.

Council Member B. Franklin asked about the payment to Kansas Municipal Energy for hydro power. Administrator Slaugh stated that the city buys a small amount of hydro power to add to our power grid.

Council Member B. Franklin asked about the payment to Cogent Inc., for replacement of the oil pump. Administrator Slaugh stated that this was to replace the oil pump on the Wartsila Engine #2. Motion made by Council Member Wells to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Council Member Zornes. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Van Scoyoc Committee Update – Jerry Dreher** – Committee Members Jerry Dreher, Ryan Sparks and Steve French gave an update to the council about the meetings they have had since the committee was appointed by the city council. They stated that Van Scoyoc has been instrumental in assisting the city with obtaining funding during the flood, including redirecting funds from the power plant to the reconstruction of the swimming pool, library remodeling and lagoon improvements. The committee feels like Van Scoyoc would be beneficial if someone were to stay in contact with them on a continual basis.

Council Member Ford wondered if we could get Van Scoyoc to help find funding for storm shelters. If we give them a list of what our needs are and tell them to hunt for funding for us.

The group went to Washington D.C. in November to meet with Van Scoyoc. Steve French stated that while in Washington, D.C. he asked Van Scoyoc about funding for State Street. He was told that there are FEMA dollars for an engineering study.

Council Member A. Franklin asked if there had been any follow up or progress since the committee started. What can they show us that make them worth the money? Did they identify anything on the list that they could help with?

Steve French made a comment that Van Scoyoc noted that with the Gates expansion the city could have gone after some CDBG funds.

Council Member Sigg stated that if Van Scoyoc is not going after the money he would rather hire an employee to go after the money.

Ryan Sparks noted that they are a part-time committee. They can't devote the time that is needed to keep them working for the city. He noted that there are low interest rate bonds available. The question has to be what the city is willing to match and put the bond rating in jeopardy for.

Council Member Sigg asked if Van Scoyoc worked on an on call basis. Administrator Slaugh stated that they do not.

Council Member Wells stated that the committee was to be in place for a year. They have six months left. We should give them a new charge to go after the items on the list we prioritize. Let's see if Van Scoyoc can get us some funding for these projects. Ryan Sparks commented that as a part time committee they would not have the time to devote to staying in contact with them.

Administrator Slaugh noted that FEMA doesn't respond to ongoing grant applications from lobbyists.

Council Member A. Franklin stated that if we give them ideas, would they find grants?

Council Member Wells asked how much money are we willing to give them the authority to go after.

Council Member Sigg stated that we stopped replacement of gas and water lines on the south side of town to cut spending and yet we are willing to give away \$45,000 a year for Van Scoyoc to go after grant money that isn't available

Administrator Slaugh stated that the list was given to Van Scoyoc and they responded that they would not be able to help with the items on the list. Most of these are administered by the state and therefore Van Scoyoc would not be able to help with. Van Scoyoc has helped with THRIVE and Iola Industries projects but not City of Iola projects.

Council member Wells stated that the \$400,000 we pay to Chanute for generation capacity could be used to finance bonds to pay for new generation. With the low interest rates on bonds right now we could end up saving money in the long run. This is a good time to build up energy stores while the market is down.

Motion made by Council Member Sigg to discontinue support of Van Scoyoc. Motion seconded by Council Member A. Franklin.

Council Member A. Franklin stated that the committee has had six to eight meetings and no one can tell us what they have helped the city with.

Council Member Sigg stated that he would rather the city pay an employee to find grants and go after them. Administrator Slaugh stated that the city can apply for CDBG grants thru the state if the city qualifies for low to moderate income.

Council Member A. Franklin asked about the November 9<sup>th</sup> trip to Washington D.C. and what it was for. Steve French noted that the trip was an opportunity for them to see what Van Scoyoc can do for the city. They stated they could find funding for engineer study for State Street and the levy around the park.

Jim Gilpin stated as an observer the administrator doesn't support the lobbyists so he doesn't utilize them. Administrator Slaugh noted that he doesn't support paying the lobbyists when the \$428,904 could be better utilized for projects within the city.

Steve French asked why the city didn't get CDBG funding for the Gates expansion. Administrator Slaugh stated that Gates can complete the paperwork and apply for a CDBG grant thru the Department of Commerce for an Economic Development grant. It is rare that a city is awarded grant money for electric improvements. It is more likely to receive CDBG grants for water and sewer improvements.

Ryan Sparks stated that maybe the mayor could prioritize the needs and wishes for a full time employee to work with Van Scoyoc.

Council Member Shaughnessy noted that if THRIVE and the county benefit from Van Scoyoc's services then maybe the three groups could team up to benefit the entire county, with all groups helping to pay for their services.

Council Member Wells stated that the vote needed to be taken.

David Toland stated that he has used Van Scoyoc for the fiber optic planning stage throughout the county. The November D.C. trip was to meet with the correct people to get the project moving along. He stated that THRIVE doesn't profit from using Van Scoyoc but they utilize them because no one else is using them.

Council Member Wells stated that it doesn't make sense for the city to pay THRIVE for economic development duties and then have them pay part of Van Scoyoc's fee.

Council Member B. Franklin stated that the large part of the county would benefit if fiber optic plan goes through.

David Toland stated that the overall question the council should ask themselves is do you want to continue with more projects within the city or manage the city's decline. You have to be creative and do what other communities don't do.

Council Member Ford stated that we haven't utilized Van Scoyoc. We need to work with them to have them find that extra funding that is out there. It is the responsibility of city staff to make contact with them to get them headed in the right direction.

Administrator Slaugh reminded the council that they had made the decision after the engineering review was completed not to follow through with the levy project because of the cost.

David Toland informed the council that Steve French and Corey Schinstock are the city representatives for the Economic Development Committee and they get reports of the progress that could be passed out to the council.

Council Member Wells called for orders of the day.

A vote was taken on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion was Council Members Sigg and A. Franklin. Voting against the motion was Council Members Becker, B. Franklin, Zornes, Wells and Ford. Abstaining from the vote was Council Member Shaughnessy. Motion failed.

## **ROUNDTABLE**

**A. 2016 Project Preview** –Administrator Slaugh presented the 2016 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list.

Council Member Wells stated that since some of the current council members have not attended a strategic planning session before the council should have one.

Motion made by Council Member Wells and seconded by Council Member B. Franklin to table approving the capital projects list until a strategic planning session is held. It was decided to hold the Strategic Planning session on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Council Member B. Franklin would like to have the closed projects listed together and separate from the current ones. The funding source would be helpful for each project also. All in favor. Motion carried.

**B. City Administrator Hiring Process** – Bids were solicited with three firms responding. The rates were as follows: Art Davis, Waters & Company at a cost of \$22,500 all inclusive, League of Kansas Municipalities at a cost of \$4,589 plus advertising costs, and Jason Gray, J.D. Gray Group at a cost of \$26,500 all inclusive. Council Member Ford stated that city staff completed the process before why not use them again. Council Members B. Franklin and A. Franklin both thought an outside firm

would be best. Motion made by Council Member B. Franklin and seconded by Council Member Wells to use the League of Kansas Municipalities in the search process of a new city administrator. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Economic Development Contract** – The agreement with Thrive Allen County, as economic development director, is up for renewal. The last time this was brought before the city council in July 2015 was for the intent of getting a signed copy of the agreement between the City, Allen County and Iola Industries. The document was lost in circulation.

There is also a draft scope of services. Action to revise or make “official” instead of “draft” was deferred until the end of 2015.

David Toland stated that he is okay with the scope of services. He noted that he should not be the one to sign it since he is only an employee of Thrive Allen County. He would like to have it approved by the Thrive Board, the County Commissioners, Iola Industries and the City Council.

He has asked in the past for the city web site to contain an economic development tab that would take prospective businesses to Thrive Allen County. City Administrator Slaugh didn't remember this request and will consider it.

Council Member Shaughnessy stated that he would like Van Scoyoc to be used and paid for countywide. David Toland stated that he would be willing to ask the county commissioners if they would be willing to help fund Van Scoyoc. If they are utilized properly they could benefit all of us.

Council Member A. Franklin stated there seems to be a disconnect with item 4 of the scope of services, which states that the economic development individual would coordinate all proposed incentive offers with the city council prior to suggesting them to prospective clients. Thrive needs to work with the city administrator so that city officials, including the council, is aware of what is going on. David Toland stated that Assistant Administrator Schinstock attends the board meetings and is given a report that could be passed onto the council.

David Toland stated that he and City Administrator Slaugh have a difference in philosophy. He stated that ultimately it is the council's decision to authorize incentives.

Motion made by Council Member Wells and seconded by Council Member B. Franklin to table this item until the February 8<sup>th</sup> meeting after the contract can be discussed and reviewed by the other entities involved. All in favor. Motion carried.

**B. Electric and Water Rates - Discussions** – Administrator Slauch stated that he would like to defer action on this item until we meet with our energy consultants.

Council Member B. Franklin stated that staff should talk to large industries about the increase.

Council Member Ford wondered if we could do a different cost adjustment for residential and industrial.

Council Member A. Franklin would like the council to have the same thought process when proposing a cost increase for citizens as well as businesses. It may be time to make cuts.

Council Member Wells stated that he would like the council to review the cost of building up generation.

Council Member Sigg thinks that the electric fund is rebounding. The water fund is not capable of making the loan payment and staying out of the red without an increase. He wondered if we could assess the charges for the Gates project.

Motion made by Council Member Wells and seconded by Council Member B. Franklin to defer the item until more information is obtained. All in favor. Motion carried

**C. Oak Street Crosswalk - Discussions** - Assistant Administrator Schinstock stated that the cost of lighted signs was very high, therefore he presented the cost of just regular crosswalk signs. It was noted that education needs to be done at the schools to encourage kids to cross at the crosswalk because it is the safest place to cross. It was asked if the speed limit could be changed on that road. Assistant Administrator Schinstock stated he would have to check with KDOT and get their approval.

Council Member A. Franklin stated that the council could budget in the future out of the sidewalk fund for lighted signs.

Motion made by Council Member Ford and seconded by Council Member Wells to move forward with the crosswalk at Oak and Madison Streets. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

### **A. Mayor Wicoff –**

- Absent

### **B. Council Member Wells–**

- Appreciated Tracy Keagle and all the volunteers that helped with the Santa Toy Shop.

- Had been contacted by a resident about putting a handicap spot in front of the Iola Pharmacy and clearing the ice in the gutter.

**C. Council Member Ford –**

- Asked about the progress on the handicap spot by the special needs playground.
- Wondered if the city could institute assessing certain costs to those individuals that the police department has to put in jail and / or fingerprint for court. Other towns have an ordinance that assesses these costs onto the person's court costs.

**D. Council Member B. Franklin–**

- Appreciated Tracy Keagle organizing the tree decorations around the square at Christmas time.
- Would like to form a committee from the public to participate in the administrator interview process.

**E. Council Member Shaughnessy –**

- None

**F. Council Member Becker –**

- None

**G. Council Member Sigg –**

- Thanked the members of the public that had contacted him about items on the agenda.
- Would like to look into charging all credit card customers the service charge fees. Staff will report at a later meeting.
- He would like to see the county help pay the cost of Van Scoyoc .

**H. Council Member Zornes –**

- None.

**I. Council Member A. Franklin –**

- He encouraged staff to continue looking for the small stuff to tighten our belts and become more fiscally responsible.
- As elected officials it is not easy to handle some of the tasks that come to us. He appreciates that everyone was able to talk through the process and work together while at the same time respecting each other.

**J. Administrator Slaugh –**

- None

**DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**ADJOURNMENT**

**8:14 p.m.** Motion made by Council Member Wells and seconded by Council Member B. Franklin to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approved by the City Council of the City of Iola, Kansas this 8<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016.

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Mayor, Joel Wicoff

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City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton