

CITY OF IOLA

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A regular meeting of the City Council of Iola was held on January 24, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., at the Park Community Building 510 Park Avenue Iola, Kansas.

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

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

Mayor French, Council Members Peterson, Peters, D’Albini, Slaugh, Kinder, and Lohman were present. Also present were Administrator Rehder, Assistant City Administrator Schinstock, and City Clerk Hutton. Absent was Council Member Wicoff. There is a vacancy in Ward 4.

**REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Persons who wish to address the City Council regarding items on the agenda may do so as that agenda item is called. Persons who wish to address the City Council regarding items not on the agenda and under the jurisdiction of the City Council may do so when called upon by the Mayor. Comments on personnel matters and matters pending in court or with other outside tribunals are not permitted. Speakers are limited to three minutes. Any presentation is for information purposes only. No action will be taken.*

No public comments were made.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes Approval**
  - **January 10, 2022, Council Meeting**
- B. Appropriations Approval**
- C. Board Re-Appointment - KMEA - Mike Phillips and Corey Schinstock**

Council Member Slaugh made a motion to approve the consent agenda with a correction on the minute's page 2 her to him. Motion seconded by Council Member Kinder. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**A. EMC Insurance Renewal - Debbie Taiclet-** EMC Insurance Agent Debbie Taiclet presented to the Council the renewal for the liability, workman's comp, and vehicles. She noted while the workman's compensation experience mod has gone from 1.16 to .91 the property replacement costs have increased. The overall increase for the policy is 2%.

Ms. Taiclet noted that Employers is still participating in the dividend check program. In the last five years, The City of Iola has received over \$375,000.

Motion made by Council Member Peterson to approve the renewal of the 2022-2023 insurance premium with EMC Insurance administered by Iola Insurance Associates in; the amount of \$496,071.00. Motion seconded by Council Member D'Albini. All in favor. Motion carried.

**B. KwikKom Communications Request -** KwikKom Representatives, Eric Vogel, and Zach Peres were present to answer questions and discuss their proposal.

KwikKom is requesting \$320,035 from the City of Iola as a 50% match to complete a \$640,070 fiber-optic infrastructure that could potentially reach 1,782 resident units as well as over 100 businesses.

KwikKom is requesting the money from the COVID relief federal funds the City of Iola received.

Council Member Kinder stated that he is interested in KwikKom expanding the service which would enable Iola to offer fiber-optic to potential businesses.

Council Member D'Albini asked about the pockets of the City that would not have access to the service. Mr. Vogel stated that currently the pocket areas represent non-inhabited areas., and parts of City buildings that KwikKom will install an L2 connection for better service.

Council Member D'Albini asked about a recent occurrence where fiber-optic cables were cut and several individuals lost service. Mr. Peres noted that the option of running the cable on the pole versus underground should prevent large outages due to cut cables.

Council Member Lohman stated that the proposal included additional Franchise Fees from customers. Wouldn't those fees be reallocated from a previous service provider if they were

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to switch to KwikKom? Mr. Vogel noted that approximately ½ of the customers are with other companies. The other ½ would potentially be new customers.

Mayor French asked what other cities KwikKom has installed the fiber-optic for individual residential customers. Mr. Peres noted that they have about 80% of Osawatomie completed. Mr. Peres noted that they are not having as much of a challenge as other employers in the area. They offer a minimum salary of \$15.00 per hour as well as comparable benefits.

Mayor French asked why KwikKom did not apply for their own grants instead of relying on the City to provide ½ of the cost using COVID Relief Funding. Mr. Peres noted that as a town Iola did not qualify for grants due to the fact that the number of individuals in underserved is less than the minimum necessary for the grant. They stated if the city did not partner with them they would still install the fiber-optic however it would be done in the future.

Mr. Vogel noted that when a customer signs up for service a technician goes to the house and installs the service for the customer.

Council Member Peters asked why KwikKom didn't connect to the fiber-optic coming down Highway 169. Mr. Peres stated that the 169 line was not there when they began their underground line, and the current line is closer to where they wanted to start their service.

Donna Houser made a comment that when KwikKom installed lines in her neighborhood sewer lines were broken and the city had to repair them.

Mayor French stated he would like to see a cost analysis before agreeing to the project. He also noted that the ARPA funds have already been designated for wastewater line repairs.

Council Member Peterson noted that she had some concerns with approving this kind of financial assistance to a private company without a stipulation for that company to pay the funds back. She also noted that pulling money from the sewer repairs that are needed would not be a smart decision on the part of the city.

Council Member Slaugh noted that he appreciated the work that has been done to the service, however according to the City's Purchasing Policy a bid process would have to be done for this type of work.

Motion made by Council Member Kinder to prepare a bid for the fiber-optic proposal presented by KwikKom. Motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion was made by Council Member Slaugh and seconded by Council Member D'Albini to table the agenda item while staff and council look at some options and possible financial avenues. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **ROUNDTABLE**

**A. 2021 Economic Development Year in Review** -Jonathan Goering, Economic Director gave an update on the projects that have been accomplished in Iola as well as county-wide during the year 2021.

Mr. Goering also touched on the projects that are in the works for the year 2022.

## **COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

### **A. Council Member Peters -**

- None

### **B. Council Member Lohman-**

- Council Member Lohman told the group that he has heard from citizens that are in favor of turning the old nursing home into housing options.

### **C. Council Member D'Albini-**

- Council Member D'Albini asked about the rocks around the sides of Small Creek. Some of it is in major disrepair. Administrator Rehder stated that staff is looking into it and planning some maintenance for the creek.
- Council Member D'Albini asked how individuals were notified about the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. Administrator Rehder stated that anyone that fills out a building permit is given the information for the program.

### **D. Council Member Peterson-**

- Council Member Peterson stated that she has had some citizens contact her that are in favor of the apartments on North Walnut.

### **E. Council Member Wicoff-**

- Absent

### **F. Council Member Slaugh-**

- Council Member Slaugh reminded the Economic Development Committee members that there is a meeting scheduled for 5:00 p.m. tomorrow.
- Council Member Slaugh noted that he would like to have a Council work session to review the priorities of the City including CIP projects in February or March.
- Council Member Slaugh stated that it is his goal to have a walking trail built on North Kentucky Street.
- Council Member Slaugh noted that he would like to have a discussion of the open space that the City has put on a future agenda.

**G. Council Member Vacancy –**

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**H. Council Member Kinder -**

- Council Member Kinder apologized for missing some meetings recently. He thinks 2022 is going to be a great year for the City of Iola.

**I. Mayor French**

- None

**J. Administrator Rehder**

- None

**DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 14, 2022

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 28, 2022

**7:33 p.m.** Motion made by Council Member D’Albini and seconded by Council Member Lohman to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried

It was approved by the City Council of Iola, Kansas, on the 14th day of February 2022.



  
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Mayor Steven French

  
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City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton