

A regular meeting of the City Council of Iola was held on February 13, 2023, 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 and Council Members Peters, Shallah, Peterson, Wicoff, D'Albini, Slaugh, and Lohman were present. Also present were City Administrator Rehder, Assistant Administrator Schinstock, and City Clerk Hutton. Council Member Kinder was absent.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Council Member Slaugh, seconded by Council Member Peterson, approves the agenda as presented. All in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Persons wishing to address the City Council regarding items on the agenda may do so as they are called. Persons wishing to address the City Council regarding items not on the agenda may do so when called upon. Comments on personnel matters and matters pending in court or outside tribunals are not permitted. Speakers are limited to three minutes. No action will be taken.

Larry Crawford from Basola suggested that the Council complete Marshmallow Lane South to the highway. This would benefit road construction detouring and moving large farm equipment through town.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes Approval**
 - **January 23, 2023, Council Meeting**
- B. Appropriations Approval**
- C. Police Department Forfeiture Report**
- D. Cedarbrook Housing Resolution 2023-07**
- E. KMEA Director 2 Appointment**

Council Member Lohman made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Council Member Slaugh. All in favor. Motion carried.

PROCLAMATION

A. Lehigh Portland State Park

Mayor French read the proclamation showing support for the Lehigh Portland State Park Project.

Mayor French opened it to public comments. Council member D'Albini noted that he favors the private entity donated to the State of Kansas for a park. He questioned whether the City of Iola would be responsible for upkeep or patrolling since the property is within city limits. Administrator Rehder noted that there would be no cost to the City of Iola to maintain the property. If the need arose for law enforcement assistance that local police would provide.

Council Member Slaugh stated that the Iola Elks Club had done a fabulous job taking care of the property all these years. He noted that seeing it change from its current use would be sad.

Ryan Sigg stated that the Iola Industries group comprises local business owners and residents. Over the years, Iola Industries have had some great ideas for Iola. He said that when the Iola Register printed the article on February 2, 2023, about the property being gifted to the State for a State Park, that was the first time the Iola Elks were made aware of what the lake was going to be used for. The Elks have leased the property from Iola Industries for forty-one years. They were not allowed to keep the property or purchase the property. He feels that Iola Industries kept the project secret and only informed the public of its actions once it was done.

Mr. Sigg stated that the Elks have carried liability insurance on the property and have maintained the area. Thrive improved the area with the addition of trails. He wondered if this gift to the state was done for a tax deduction for Iola Industries. He also questioned what would happen if the State didn't keep improving the property or abandoned it. He stated that Thrive would be obtaining more grant money for this project as part of this project. He hopes that it is maintained and used as well as it has been.

Council Member D'Albini noted that he hopes the project is successful. He stated that there had been hurt over the process of this project, and it would take up to a generation to heal the hurt created.

Lisse Regher spoke on behalf of the Iola Industries Board. She said the project was kept secret and had to be done before the State was bored. She stated that the property would be

sold for development if the legislature did not move forward. Iola Industries is trying to prevent development on the land to preserve the trail system and lake area.

She noted that Economic Development is a long process, and information must often be kept secretive until both entities agree. This weekend a Strategic Planning Retreat is being held to discuss ways to move forward with Economic Development in Iola and the rest of Allen County. She noted that if the State Park comes to fruition, residents who walk and bike into the park will not have to pay for a State Park pass. All individuals driving in and camping overnight must buy a pass.

Council Member Shallah asked why Iola Industries handled the process the way they did. Why was the eviction notice served to the Elks before the KDWP decided to accept the gift of the property? They could have continued to use the property until the State agreed.

Ms. Regher stated that KDWP could not accept the property with the buildings. They were not built to state quality standards.

Council member Peterson asked if the park would be completed during 2023. Mr. Regher stated that a group of individuals is planning on attending a session of the legislature at the State Capital this week to speak on behalf of the bill. Once the bill is passed, the State must find grant funding to help the State pay for the project. With the process, there will be community conversations about the project's layout. Thrive has told KDWP that they will continue to do upkeep on the trails so that they can continue to be used.

ROUNDTABLE

A. 2022 Economic Development Year in Review - Lisse Regher- Ms. Regher noted that during the year, Jonathon Goering resigned from his position at Thrive as the Economic Development Director to pursue a job in the Wichita area.

With the additional contributions from the City of Iola, Allen County, and the City of Humboldt, Thrive has offered a better financial package for a new Economic Development Director. While an applicant was found, she cannot start work immediately due to a prior obligation with her current employer. The position will remain open until it is filled either with this applicant or someone else.

Ms. Regher reviewed all of the projects that took place during the 2022 year. Many additional business ventures throughout the county have kept everyone busy and the County thriving.

Ms. Regher told the Council Members that over \$4 million was awarded in grant funding for the year, including a CDBG grant for a fire truck for the City of Iola. Thrive continues to search.

The Council thanked Ms. Regher and her staff for the work they did in 2022.

NEW BUSINESS

A. EV Charging Station Request - Paul Porter - Paul Porter of Derryberry Breadery and Big Square to install electric vehicle charging stations on the city road right-of-way.

Mr. Porter stated that he plans to offer the charging stations free of charge to the public. In return, he hopes individuals using the station will come into his shop to purchase items and stay in his Air BNB.

Assistant Administrator Schinstock noted staff has stated that Mr. Porter will have to sign a Franchise Agreement with the city for the underground electric lines. This would require Mr. Porter to become a Kansas One Call Network member, which would mean marking his lines for franchisees wanting to install lines in the area. With the understanding that if the City of Iola needed the infrastructure removed for any reason, Mr. Porter would be responsible for the removal cost.

Council Member D'Albini asked that the infrastructure installment on the City Right of Way would be the City responsible for it. Administrator Rehder stated that the City would not be liable for Mr. Porter's equipment.

Administrator Rehder stated that staff would recommend keeping the parking spots private. Several businesses have previously requested exclusive parking spots around the square and have yet to be denied. Making these spots complete would open up other business owners to this request.

Council Member Slauch noted that if Mr. Porter was willing to become a franchisee, he favored the idea.

Council Member Shallah stated that if Mr. Porter installed solar panels on his building, the city would not gain electric sales from the units. Mr. Porter noted that he has plans to install solar panels on his building to offset the cost of the electricity.

Council Member Wicoff wanted to ensure the city would not be responsible for insurance liability since it would be on the city's right of way. Administrator Rehder stated that Mr. Porter must provide insurance per the franchise agreement.

Mayor French noted that the Council had looked previously at installing some charging stations around the square in partnership with Evergy. The cost was prohibitive for the City at the time. He told the Council Members that they would have to decide to install charging stations in a parking lot or other location if they did not approve Mr. Porter's request.

Many Council Members noted that a parking lot would be a better option than the city right of way. However, the request before the Council tonight is the parking lots west of Mr. Porter's business.

Council requested staff prepare a franchise agreement and return to Council with the request.

B. Unit #22 Bucket Truck Replacement - Jim Baker - Jim Baker, Electric Distribution Superintendent, reported to Council that he had spoken with a representative of Altec Industries regarding the purchase of a bucket truck. Mr. Baker discovered that while most companies are not even providing bids due to the backlog of the chassis for the trucks, those providing bids are giving a time frame of one year for smaller trucks and up to four years for the larger bucket trucks.

The representative of Altec Industries has available two small bucket trucks built on a two-wheel drive chassis and not a four-wheel drive chases, as the buyer requested that would be available for \$165,859.00. The City of Iola does not require and has never had a four-wheel drive truck in its fleet, so the available truck would fit the current need to replace a truck on the verge of not passing the inspection due to mechanical problems.

Council Member Slaugh stated that he would like the city to follow the purchasing policy and bid on the trucks, and if this was the lowest bid received, then purchase the truck.

Council Member Peterson asked what would happen to the old truck. Mr. Baker and Mr. Schinstock stated that the truck would be sold on Purple Wave. Purple Wave allows the city to put a minimum bid on the vehicle and a buyer's fee versus a seller's.

Mr. Baker would also like to build specifications for a new truck and solicit bids for purchase in 2025.

Motion made by Council Member Shallah and seconded by Council Member D'Albini to approve the purchase of a new Altec forty-foot bucket truck on a 2023 Dodge Ram 5500 in the amount of \$165,859 to be paid from the equipment reserve funds. All in favor. Motion carried.

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

A. Council Member Peters -

- Council Member Peters had nothing to report.

B. Council Member Lohman—

- Council Member Lohman had nothing to report.

C. Council Member D’Albini—

- Council Member D’Albini noted that someone had reported graffiti on the Rail Trail North of Oregon.

D. Council Member Peterson—

- Council Member Peterson had nothing to report.

E. Council Member Wicoff-

- Council Member Wicoff had nothing to report.

F. Council Member Slaugh—

- Council Member Slaugh had nothing to report.

G. Council Member Shallah –

- Council Member Shallah had nothing to report.

H. Council Member Kinder -

- Council Member Kinder was absent.

I. Mayor French

- Mayor French reminded the Council that Administrator Rehder’s evaluation was due, and they needed to get their forms submitted to Human Resources.

J. Administrator Rehder

- Administrator Rehder had nothing to report.

K. Assistant Administrator Schinstock -

- Assistant Administrator Schinstock reported that the Fire Chief is inspecting the new fire truck in South Dakota. The process is moving forward.

DATE / TIME OF NEXT MEETING

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 27, 2023

City Council Meeting 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 13, 2023

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7:28 p.m. Motion made by Council Member Shallah and seconded by Council Member Peterson to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried

It was approved by the City Council of Iola, Kansas, on the 27th day of March 2023.



Mayor Steven French



City Clerk, Roxanne Hutton

