

KECHI CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 26, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Ashley Velazquez called the meeting to order at 7:15pm

Council present: Ashley Velazquez, Matt Brewer, Todd Hedstrom, Brian Adams, and Rachel Trumbull.

City staff present: Kamme Sroufe, City Administrator; Andrew Kovar, City Attorney; Theresa Morlan, City Clerk; Thomas Bevan, Director of Public Works; and Jessie Woodrow, Chief of Police.

Guests present: Margaret & Jack McCormick, Karin Anderson, Mark Bradbury, Bob & LeeAnn Conger, David & Sandra McConnaughay, Betty Washington, Will & Nancy Glenn, Von Rhodes, Richard & Cindy Wolf, Richard & Gail Villalovos, Bea Burkhalter, Kris Brown, Earl Findley, Tom Fields, Rick Alley, Bill & Beth Wenner, Blaine Harris, Noah Taylor, Jim Boone, Paul Jones, Rich Hutfles, Chris Morlan, and Taylor Messick.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Mayor Velazquez.

B. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda

1. Council Meeting Minutes January 12, 2023

Motion by Brian Adams to approve the consent agenda and seconded by Rachel Trumbull.

Motion carried 4-0-0.

C. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Brian Adams to approve agenda with the addition of item II.A Continue Tax Referendum Discussion. The motion was seconded by Todd Hedstrom and carried 4-0-0.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Sales Tax Referendum Discussion & Public Forum

Robert Conger, 151 E. Kodiak, gave a brief history of the project, and how the city prides itself on keeping the mil levy low. The City makes improvements to park, sidewalks and streets, and maintenance needs to be a long term commitment with planned replacement. Simple projects can be expensive with unseen costs. Twenty-five percent of property tax revenue goes to the city. A \$2 million grant is in the balance, and we need a fund source for the project, either property or sales tax.

Bill Wenner, 552 E Cheyenne Ct., questioned what per cent of the estimated \$90,000 sales tax revenue would come from sales at JumpStart. City Attorney Kovar did state that fuel tax would not be impacted, and only sales from retail items would have the additional 1%.

John Speer, 642 N Creek Trail Cir., stated that the grant seems like a great deal, and asked if the sales tax is not approved, does the project die. WAMPO works projects in 4 year cycles, and they were graceful with extension and gave time to reduce utilities and identify a fund source. The governing body would have to decide on alternative source for the grant or choose to axe the project.

Karin Anderson, 300 E. Kechi Rd., asked the council if the sales tax is nixed, what their state of mind regarding an increase in mil levy. Councilmember Adams replied that Kechi has the third lowest mil levy in Sedgwick County, and he has never voted for a tax increase. The improvements would add to the

quality of life, and the city would be getting a 30% discount using the grant. From his perspective, the project will die without sales tax. Councilmember Brewer had similar statements regarding not raising mil levy, but added that this is an opportunity to improve the City of Kechi with money from outside. He wants to be a good steward of the city's resources and does not want to incur debt. Councilmember Hedstrom stated that he would want to see what the increase to the mil levy would be, and his feedback would be based on the vote. He feels it would be a shame to lose the money but understands inflation and the hardship. Councilmember Trumbull echoed his sentiments, and that she too is personally affected by this, but it would be a shame to not take advantage of the grant money.

Sandra McConnaughay, 542 E. Cheyenne Ct., has lived in Kechi for 23 years, and her husband sat on council when the project was planned. But right now, it hurts due to inflation, and they are on a fixed income. The 1% sales tax will not bother them, but it will affect some people.

Karin Anderson, asked about the amount of increase in property tax that would require a vote of residents. City Administrator (CA) Sroufe stated that budget laws changed. With the Revenue Neutral Rate legislation, if there is a budgeted increase in spending, there must be a public hearing and the council would need to vote to increase the Revenue Neutral Rate.

At the closing of the public comments, Councilmember Brewer thanked those in attendance, he values their input, and encouraged them to vote to have their voices heard.

B. Civic Groups/Committees – None

C. Kechi Good News – Karin Anderson said she was very happy that the trash at both Old School Taphouse and Valley Floral were now being picked up at 10am, rather than 2am. Mayor Velazquez added Happy Birthday to two councilmembers. City Clerk Morlan stated that the Public Works Department had received a written thank you and some refreshments from a resident who appreciated the after-hours work they had done to fix a gas issue.

D. Public Forum – Ms. B Burkhalter, 427 N Sioux, (City's 200th resident) appreciated the repaving of Chippewa and Shawnee, but asked if there was a plan to redo Sioux. Public Works Director Bevan explained the street assessments and maintenance plan that had been developed. He believes that Sioux is to be addressed in 2024, and that they are able to crack seal streets to extend their life.

Public comment was closed at 7:50pm.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Council President – to be evaluated each January

Motion by Todd Hedstrom to continue having Matt Brewer serve as Council President. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0.

B. USDI Annual Contract Renewal

Motion by Matt Brewer to approve the renewal with USDI for services related to the gas system. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0.

C. Ordinance No. 1808-23 – Ideatek Franchise Agreement – A contract franchise ordinance granted to Ideatek Telecom, LLC, a telecommunications local exchange service provider providing local exchange service within the City of Kechi, Kansas. – James Krstolich addressed the council regarding

the company and services they offer.

Motion by Brian Adams to adopt Ordinance 1808-23. Seconded by Todd Hedstrom, the motion carried 4-0-0.

- D. **2023 Health and Dental Benefits Annual Renewal** – CA Sroufe presented the item. Due to an increase of 33.26% in coverage, she recommended a one-time increase to the split between city and employee cost share from 95/5 to 90/10 to help cover the difference between the cost and budgeted amounts.

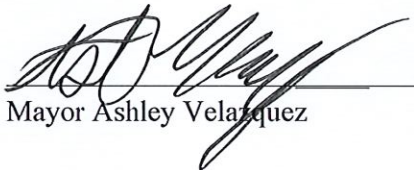
Motion by Matt Brewer to approve the BCBS Renewal and authorize the signing of the Grandfathered Attestation. Seconded by Rachel Trumbull, the motion carried 4-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS - none

V. ADJOURNMENT


Motion made by Matt Brewer to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0. The time of recess was 8:05pm.

Signed:



Mayor Ashley Velazquez

Attest:



Theresa Morlan, City Clerk