

KECHI CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Speer called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Council present: John Speer, Brian Adams, Betty Washington, Matt Brewer, Richard Haddock, and Margaret McCormick.

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

Guests present: Ben Mabry from PEC, Taylor Messick, Doug and Cathy Bonnesen, and Carl Brown from GettingGreatRates.com via Zoom.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Mayor Speer.

B. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Brian Adams to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Margaret McCormick.

Motion carried 5-0-0.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes January 14, 2021 Meeting

C. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Brian Adams to approve agenda with changing order of New Business Items A & B, add Interactive Dialog with Update on Sewer Cleaning/Camera-ing, and Executive Session will be 20 minutes to discuss a contract. as written with 25 minutes for the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Betty Washington and carried 5-0-0.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Public Forum – Margaret McCormick addressed Council asking that in accordance with posted signs that all Council members continue to wear masks, even from the bench.

B. Kechi Civic Groups – None

III. OLD BUSINESS - None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. WATER & SEWER RATE STUDY – Carl Brown from GettingGreatRates.com presented the rate studies. He gave background on his experience, and his objective in analyzing and setting rates to have each utility fully funded and boost performance to have rates cover capital improvements (CIP) as needed. He worked closely with City Administrator (CA), Kamme Sroufe to use our data and understand our current rate structure as well as future needs of both utilities. He presented two models for each utility with the projected cost of replacement, CIP, and debt service coverage being the main differences. If amounts are different than projected, he can help with the proportional adjustments as needed. His recommendations included a tiered system for water usage as is now our practice and making both utilities consistent in billing the base rate plus usage. Currently, sewer billing does not bill for the first unit used. He directed the Council to tables that showed recommended charges as well as what the changes would be to residential bills.

No action was taken.

B. Health Benefits Renewal – CA Sroufe presented cost comparisons for benefit policies including the current grandfathered benefits package as well as alternative insurance companies’ proposals. The City would not save money by deviating from the current plan, but the other plans would be financially burdensome to employees with having much higher deductibles and co-pays. The increase is 12%, 4% for dental and 8% for health, but the increase is not more than what was included in the adopted budget. Currently, the City pays 95% of the cost and covered employees pay the remaining 5%. Brian Adams requested more education on what it means to be “grandfathered,” how to curb these costs, what it would mean to the City to lose it, wants to control the specifics, and look at cost savings. Ms. Sroufe addressed the size of our employee pool limiting some of those cost savings and the availability of plans.

Motion by Brian Adams to approve the 2021-2022 renewal of Blue Cross & Blue Shield Health and Dental Benefits for City employees and authorize the Mayor to sign the Grandfathered Attestation. Motion seconded by Matt Brewer and carried 5-0-0.

V. INTERACTIVE DIALOG

- A. Sewer Cleaning & Camera-ing** - Public Works Director, Thomas Bevan reported that Mayer Specialty Service had completed the sewer cleaning and running camera in 6500ft of mains and manholes. Most that need repair are in the older parts of town that still have clay tile sewer. There is one line that needs to be relined within the year, a manhole that is near collapse, and a hole in clay pipe east of Oliver. We do now have a GPS locator and are starting to map the lines. We have proposed an agreement with PEC to get a cost estimate to reline sewer lines which can be very reliable and more cost effective than replacing them. PEC will be able to use the Mayer report and video as soon as it is available. The collapsing manhole would take first priority, but to make scheduling easier, doing the entire project would better than piecemealing the project. Council would like staff to prioritize repairs. CA Sroufe will update Council when information from Mayer is available.
- B. PEC Contract** - CA Sroufe asked to have the contract with PEC moved to the open meeting. Council agreed after Andrew Kovar instructed that if they had questions that were proprietary in nature, that they ask those in an Executive Session. Ben Mabry summarized the content from the current 2017 contract. There was clarification on which services provided are considered paid under the terms of the contract and which would require additional agreements. Testing and inspection are not a part of the fees. He stated that the contract would be lump sum and not itemized, and projects not a part of the contract would be broken out on an hourly or unit basis, and the City would clearly know in advance which type of project it would be prior to agreements being signed. There were no questions for the City Attorney from the Council and no action was taken.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Betty Washington and second by Richard Haddock to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0-0. Meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Signed: _____
John Speer, Mayor

Attest: _____
Theresa Morlan, City Clerk