

KECHI CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Ashley Velazquez called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

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

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

Guests present: Blaine & Joanie Harris, Glenda Pace, Bob Christian, and Taylor Messick.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Mayor Velazquez.

B. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda

1. Council Meeting Minutes February 9, 2023

Motion by Brian Adams to approve the consent agenda with removal of Cost of Living Adjustment and seconded by Matt Brewer. Motion carried 4-0-0.

C. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Brian Adams to approve agenda with the addition of item III. D. Cost of Living Adjustment and item V. Executive Session for Non-Elected Personnel for 10 minutes. The motion was seconded by Todd Hedstrom and carried 4-0-0.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Civic Groups/Committees – None

B. Kechi Good News – City Clerk, Theresa Morlan, announced that the desks and furniture will be put in offices, enabling the clerk’s area to have three workspaces for a more efficient work environment. We were able to utilize desks we already had to minimize financial impact.

C. Public Forum – Joanie Harris, 109 W Chippewa St, had concerns with the presentation of the community survey on January 12th and the lack of questions from the council. She felt that the summary provided did not give the context. She asked that the council use the survey results to guide decisions. She also feels that the sales tax vote shows a divided Kechi, and asked the council to build relationships, honor residents’ desires, and reminded them that the staff desires may differ from priorities of residents. She also addressed economic growth, being good stewards, and being creative in how the city develops.

Blaine Harris, 109 W Chippewa St., addressed the council regarding no questions being asked of the Ideatek representative about the internet service provided during the franchise agreement item. He had performed an internet search of the company, which provides mainly wireless internet, and questioned where the towers would be located if there was not fiber optics. He also questioned if they had seen the business plan, how will it look in the community and what the City Council thinks is important.

Public forum closed at 7:11pm

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Sales Tax Ordinance 1809-23 – An Ordinance levying a Retailer’s Sales Tax in the amount of one percent (1.0%) within the City of Kechi, Kansas, effective July 1, 2023.**
Andrew Kovar, City Attorney, stated that this starts the process needed after the vote to approve the sales tax.

Motion by Todd Hedstrom to adopt Ordinance 1809-23. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0.

- B. Sewer Assessment Service Contract – City Administrator (CA) Sroufe presented the contract with Ace Pipe, the only company who does the sonar needed to pinpoint the location of the issue with sagging sewer line on Huffman Dr. This method would help estimate the cost of the repairs needed without digging up the entire line to find location. The city staff would lend support during the operation to help keep costs lower.**

Motion by Brian Adams to approve the contract with Ace Pipe for \$23,670. The motion was seconded by Matt Brewer and carried 4-0-0.

- C. Gas Pre-pay Agreement – CA Sroufe presented the agreement which would provide a discount of \$0.25 to \$0.40 per unit of pre-paid gas. We would have to elect what percent of our gas usage we would want to purchase at the discounted rate, based on average per day usage, and we would be locked into that amount. The estimated savings would be \$9,000 per year. CA Sroufe recommends contracting for 50% of our daily usage. The company can vacate if the discounts are not doable, and the contract although for 30 years would be evaluated every 5 years with the option of us vacating at that time.**

The item was tabled until March, and staff was asked to get benchmark from other cities at that time.

- D. Cost of Living Adjustment – Annual Market Adjustment to Pay Scale – CA Sroufe presented the summary of the item. Concerns from the council included the increased cost in health insurance, the sustainability of COLA increases, and the expectation that it would come in lower than 6.5% even though the budget amount was 10%. CA Sroufe noted that the PD retirement was in the budget, and that an addition 5% of the healthcare costs have been passed onto the employee. Also discussed were retention, wage indices for the region, other municipalities, overall compensation, personnel policy, and consistency with the pay scale to avoid large jumps and costly salary studies.**

Motion by Matt Brewer to approve the 2023 annual market adjustments to the pay plan based on the actual 2022 Consumer-Price-Index of 6.5% effective for payroll period January 29, 2023. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull. The roll call vote: Rachel Trumbull – yes, Brian Adams – no, Matt Brewer – yes, and Todd Hedstrom – no. Mayor Velazquez opted to vote in the case of the tie, voting yes. The motion carried 3-2-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS - none

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Brian Adams to enter into Executive Session for 10 minutes for Non-Elected Personnel with the meeting to resume at 8:28pm. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0.

Motion by Brian Adams to extend Executive Session for an additional 20 minutes with the meeting to resume at 8:49pm. The motion was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0.

The meeting resumed at 8:53pm, and no binding action was taken in Executive Session.

Motion by Matt Brewer to approve payment of accrued vacation up to 277 hours to Chief Woodrow upon her resignation. The motion was seconded by Todd Hedstrom and carried 4-0-0.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Rachel Trumbull to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Brian Adams and carried 4-0-0. The time of adjournment was 8:59pm.

Signed:  _____
Mayor Ashley Velazquez

Attest:  _____
Theresa Morlan, City Clerk