

KECHI CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 26, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Ashley Velazquez called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

Council present: Ashley Velazquez, Todd Hedstrom, Matt Brewer, Brian Adams, and Richard Haddock.

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

Guests present: Logan Mills, Michelle Gowin, Curtis Zerr, Beth Ann Hardin, and Taylor Messick.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Mayor Velazquez.

B. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda

1. Council Meeting Minutes May 12, 2022

Motion by Brian Adams to approve the consent agenda was seconded by Rachel Trumbull and carried 4-0-0.

C. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Todd Hedstrom to approve agenda with the 15-minute executive session for Attorney/Client privilege. The motion was seconded by Matt Brewer and carried 4-0-0.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Civic Groups/Committees – Curtis Zerr addressed the council on behalf of the Kechi Arts Council (KAC). He reported that they have been working on the interior of the museum building, putting in paneling and memorabilia will be visible from the outside. KAC is selling raffle tickets, for \$10 each as part of their fund raiser. He asked about the old city hall, and if it will be brought up to code to be used by all Kechi civic groups. He also reported that EMC dividends had been paid to the city in the amount of \$10236.87.

B. Kechi Good News – Mayor Velazquez reported that she had requested community members to send her the names of graduates from Kechi so that she could publicly congratulate them. Councilmember Hedstrom was happy to announce his daughter, Megan, had graduated from High School as well. City Administrator (CA) Sroufe reported that Chief Woodrow will be attending grad school at WSU Hugo Wall School, and that she had received a Rising Star Scholarship from the Kansas Association of Cities and Counties.

C. Public Forum – Beth Ann McKean, 6434, 6436 and 6450 N Hillside, addressed the council regarding a weed violation letter that she had received, which was accompanied by pictures of the weeds in her ditch. She owns five acres and is frustrated with the high rate of stormwater fees. She brought pictures which show the landscape of her farm fields and lawn. She appreciates that the city had the trees in the ditch cut down. Now there are trees and branches sprouting in the ditch. She mowed as much of it herself as she could, but it was a big challenge, and she doesn't think it's her job. She addressed water management and said pictures show the

storm water from the north and south sides of her driveway that are emptying into her fields. She addressed concerns that her neighbor had as well. She appreciates that Kechi paved the east side of Hillside, but also wants the city to step up and take care of these properties.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Thorny Meadows Final Plat** – Zoning Administrator (ZA) Chris Morlan, introduced the item. There had been a house previously on the property, but after it had been moved off the property and the owner wanted to build a new home, the property needed to be platted in accordance to Zoning Regulations. ZA Morlan reported that the property had previously been two lots and was platted as one. There are no easements or roads to be dedicated, and City Attorney, Andrew Kovar and the Kechi Planning Commission have reviewed the plat.

Motion by Matt Brewer to approve the Thorny Meadows Plat and authorize the mayor to sign. The motion was seconded by Richard Haddock and carried 4-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS - None

V. DISCUSSION

- A. Debt Capital and Tax Abatement** –CA Sroufe reported on outstanding General Obligation Bonds and expiration dates, as well as special assessments and how the city’s debt limit is established. She gave an overview of current projects and resulting debt service as well as planned and potential projects and funding that will be needed.
- B. Zenner Meter Readers** - CA Sroufe gave the council a synopsis of the issues that we have been experiencing with meter reading. At the beginning of May, all meters were read manually as a part of an internal audit to give us a better picture of the issues. There were quite a few gas meters that were reading correctly, but the electronic read had been sending a faulty read. CA Sroufe, Director of Public Works (DPW) Thomas Bevan and City Clerk Theresa Morlan have met with Zenner to address concerns and create a plan to address them. A Zenner technician is scheduled to be in Kechi the week of June 1st to start addressing specific meters. The meters will again be read manually that week as well. City staff will receive additional training by Zenner the last week of June.

DPW Bevan added that to the history of Zenner, which had initially been water meters, and gas meter readers were installed in fall 2019. We did not have new gas meters installed at the same time that the electronic readers were installed. Recently, it was discovered that the “pulses” were set incorrectly by Zenner. They are diagnosing why that occurred as well as why some have started reading backwards. CA Sroufe added that we are looking at grants and may need to look at replacing them, if the issues cannot be resolved. There have been a lot of investigative work and man hours due to the issues. The discrepancies have been double and triple checked, and we are working with residents on payment plans if needed due to the “catch up.” Many of the recent misreading seem to have started in the fall. DPW Bevan stated that although we are getting a read rate of 95%, the accuracy of the reads is highly questionable. The system does have a 10-year warranty that is still in effect.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Brian Adams to enter into executive session for 15-minutes for the purpose of Attorney/Client Privilege with the meeting to resume at 8:04pm. The motion was seconded by Richard Haddock and carried 4-0-0.

The meeting resumed at 8:05pm, and no binding action was taken.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Richard Haddock to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Todd Hedstrom and carried 4-0-0. The time of adjournment was 8:06pm.

Signed: _____

Ashley Velazquez, Mayor

Attest: _____

Theresa Morlan, City Clerk