

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
FEBRUARY 25, 2019

Charles City city council met in a planning session on February 25, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers. Mayor Dean Andrews presided and the following council members were present: Keith Starr, Jerry Joerger (arrived 6:12), DeLaine Freeseaman (arrived 6:07), Michael Hammond and Dan Mallaro. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers, city engineer John Fallis and city attorney Brad Sloter.

Cory Spieker, water superintendent, reviewed the need for a new slaker for the water plant. This piece of equipment adds the lime to the city water to soften it. We have two but one currently is inoperable. There are several options to replacing/repairing this and staff is suggesting replacing the set point controller with PLC model, add motor VFD and change to AC motor for a cost of \$17,716. Our current output is less than the total capacity of the plant so the slaker runs slower in adding the lime. This causes the computer to set off an alarm and therefore triggers the on call operator to check it out. (Council member Freeseaman arrived at the meeting.) The new equipment will allow for slower use of lime, less wear and tear on equipment, upgrading to newer equipment and hopefully less call out time. Questions on if it would be beneficial to replace both units now or would that be a negative thing. Cory will check on this. (council member Joerger arrived at the meeting) If both units can hook to the PLC, we would be able to shut down false alarms from home after hours. This will be on the next regular agenda for council action. Cory reported that we had two main breaks and will start repairing those tomorrow morning after we get the locates back.

Bob Ingram, from Sisson and Associates, was present to give the city a dividend check from IAMU for approximately \$71,000. This is the largest check the city has ever received through this program and it represents the savings in claims throughout all of the municipalities in the state covered by EMC insurance. The city's return to work program for work comp claims has helped the city lower their claims.

Sump pump discharge issues discussed. Some people recently have desired to connect to the city's storm water system for their sump pump discharge. This has required that an agreement be executed each time between the property owner and the city. Staff has drafted a new ordinance to cover this type of situation with a permit issued at the staff level. The size of discharge line, requirement for inspection of the connection installation, an indemnification clause for the city's protection and ability for the city to require connection to the sub drain in a nuisance situation are all included in the ordinance.

Our first sub drain project is planned for this summer on North Missouri Avenue to allow homeowners there to connect to alleviate their sump pump issues. The funds for this project will come from the storm water fund and each homeowner will have to pay for their own connection to the sub drain. Homeowners there will be notified when this project will be happening so they can pay to hook up while it's being installed if they choose. The existing storm water drains will be able to take on the additional water from the sump pumps during heavy rains.

City engineer John Fallis has drafted a sidewalk policy for council to consider. It includes guidelines for where we will prioritize new sidewalk installation/extensions, eliminating the need for a bond for a homeowner who wants to install their own sidewalk and maintenance of current sidewalks. Changing the bond requirement would be done by amending the current ordinance. The other items would just be included in city policy. This policy would only cover work done in the city right of way, not private sidewalks. Our code doesn't specify who pays for the installation of new sidewalk. If the city wants the property owners to pay, we would need to go through an assessment process which is outlined in state code and is cumbersome. Council member Joerger commented that the city paid to install a sidewalk recently on First Avenue going up to the middle school and that maybe set a precedent. City administrator Diers stated that a sidewalk program is important for the future and we need to set guidelines. It's going to be hard to cover every situation but having a plan/policy going forward will help us in areas where there may not be as heavy pedestrian traffic as there is on First Avenue for that project the city did. Council member Freeseaman suggested talking to other cities on their sidewalk policies. Putting a sidewalk on South Grand was discussed, that has issues with not enough room and/or right of way in certain sections. One possibility here is to go down to just three lanes with the middle one being a turn lane.

Sidewalk extension project on South Main reviewed. The plans have this going in on the west side of the street. This would allow a better connection to the hospital and also avoid issues with gravel drives that are on the east side of the street. We recently had unsuccessful bids on the mid block cross walk in the 400 block of North Main and also the gutter drainage project improvements at 800 First Avenue. So staff is suggesting including these two projects as alternate bids within the South Main sidewalk extension project bidding. A public hearing will be set for April 1 at the March 4 regular meeting.

Tree trimming was discussed. The code currently prohibits home owners from trimming their own trees in the city right of way but the code requires them to trim those trees. There was some concern on liability if damage was done to private property while the homeowner was trimming. City attorney Slotter did not see any liability issues for the city and Bob Ingram, city's insurance agent, concurred. Council member Hammond stated that homeowners should be allowed to trim their own trees that are in the right of way if we are going to require them to trim. After the city does all of the trimming this summer, he suggested going forward to stay on top of this issue and notify the homeowners that need to trim.

The South Main/North Jackson HMA project was reviewed. Council approved the preliminary plans in November and a public hearing has been set for March 18. The state is in charge of this project and will conduct the bidding and project construction process. Engineer's estimate of cost was \$890,000 and Heartland was low bid at \$805,949.53. Temporary construction easements will need to be secured for this and will be approved at a future council meeting.

City administrator Diers distributed a list of the 2019 goals identified at our recent goal setting session. The Housing 360 meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow due to weather. Broadband meeting is still on schedule. That discussion will include partnering with New Hampton and brainstorming possible locations for the broadband utility. This board will have to be in place to make hiring and borrowing decisions. This will be an autonomous board with the city only appointing the members. Some of these decisions will have to be made pretty soon.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, city clerk