

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Charles City city council met in a planning session on September 16, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Dean Andrews presided and the following council members were present: Jerry Joerger, DeLaine Freeseaman, Phoebe Pittman and Phillip Knighten. Keith Starr was absent. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers, city engineer John Fallis and city attorney Brad Sloter.

Mayor Andrews commented that the city hall parking lot still looks good so it shouldn't need to be cleaned again. Trick or treating was discussed and it was decided to give guidelines to participants to be safe and if a resident wants to distribute candy, they should have their light on. If not, then they should leave their lights off.

Amending the employment contracts with the city administrator and city clerk was discussed. City attorney Sloter stated that the council was in favor of compensation for extra duties when the evaluations were conducted for these employees. Ahlers and Cooney are recommending an amendment to the employment contracts and designate it as extraordinary pay. Council member Knighten wanted to be sure that this would be fair and wouldn't short them. Sloter replied that council could authorize more pay later if more hours were put in. Council decided to go with the percentage discussed at evaluations, which was 60%. Sloter will prepare the amendments for council action at the next regular meeting.

An ordinance has been drafted to match changes in the state code pertaining to penalties for misdemeanors. The fee will be increased to \$855 to match what is in the state code. This will be on the next regular agenda for a first reading.

An ordinance has also been drafted pertaining to animal neglect which will also match changes made in the state code for this charge. This new ordinance will also expand and clarify these types of offenses. This will be on the next regular agenda for a first reading.

City engineer John Fallis reviewed a recommended change order for the HMA paving project. This change order would add work to be done on two railroad crossings in town which are owned by Farmer's Feed and Grain but are to be maintained by CP railroad. The railroad has been telling us for quite some time that they plan to fix these crossings but haven't yet. Farmer's Feed and Grain has told us we can pave over the crossings but they want to be able to re install the tracks in the future if they choose. The city has Heartland Asphalt in town working on our HMA project and we can add the railroad crossing work to that contract for \$25,000. Attorney Sloter stated that the city can pass a resolution directing the railroad to repair the crossings by a certain date and if they don't, we can do the work and assess it to them. But since the railroad doesn't pay taxes, we would have to send a bill to them for reimbursement. They wouldn't have to pay it and we would then be stuck paying for it. Council member Freeseaman asked if the rails will be taken out prior to putting down asphalt and Fallis replied no, they would overlay over the tracks. We have gotten so many complaints on these crossings, council felt it needed to be done even if the railroad didn't reimburse us. Mayor Andrews has been talking to the railroad about the train depot and mentioned these tracks. He commented to them it might be good media relations if they fix this crossing. Heartland Asphalt will be here next week and our next regular meeting after this Monday isn't until October so that will be too late. Some concern raised that we should at least try to go through the motions of directing the railroad to fix the tracks and then proceeding with repairing them ourselves if they fail to do so. Council asked for more information before voting on this change order at the September 21 regular meeting. This will be on the agenda and if council has enough information they can vote. If not, this item could be put on the September 28 special meeting. Council member Joerger and Attorney Sloter left the meeting at this time.

City engineer Fallis reviewed a proposed change order for the Main Street Bridge project. The contractor, Jasper Construction, has discovered that the cracks listed in the plans and specs have opened wider considerably so the epoxy injection method they planned to use won't work. They will now need to increase the amount of area for concrete repair. Calhoun Burns, who prepared the plans, is recommending concrete reinforced wall instead. Estimated cost for this is \$88,000 but there would then

be three bid items we won't need which would be a reduction of about \$60,000. So the actual estimated cost for this change order would be an increase of about \$28,000. Another item to consider changing is the removal of old lighting that was meant to light up the dam. These lights aren't really effective and if we wanted to light the dam, we should replace these lights with LED. The cost quoted to remove the old lighting is \$3200. Council thought this was a little high and asked if we could just leave the old lighting there and remove it if and when we decide to install new lighting for the dam. Consensus was to leave the light removal off of the change order and do the other changes discussed.

We have received a couple of proposals to conduct a goal setting session with city council and city department heads. One was from Pat Callahan, who did our last session. He is currently working on the city's capital improvement plan. The other quote was from Elizabeth Hanson. Her quote was about \$850 higher than Pat's. Her quote included two days of sessions to give more time for input. City administrator Diers thinks that a fresh set of eyes might be a good thing for this session, so is recommending going with Elizabeth's proposal. They have selected November 9 for the session with the council. Council member Freeseaman requested that the information submitted from the department heads be given to the council so they can see what goals they have ahead of time.

Diers reported that the water tower is being painted, the logo will be painted on next week. We will start on union negotiations in November. The telecom board of trustees approve the extra \$200,000 loan at their meeting last night, they wanted to express their appreciation to the council for working with them on this project. They also approved the agreement with the CPA firm for review of the business plan and also the agreement with Dorsey Whitney for preparation of the bond documents. We plan to close on the financing for this fiber project in November. Today was the first day of the virtual League conference. Diers is working on a power point presentation he will present with MidAmerican at their conference. City engineer Fallis reported that they have started the wood turtle fence today at the Charley Western bridge project.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk