

**Greensburg City Council
October 14, 2014
City Hall**

Item 1: Opening Session

Call to Order; Roll Call

Mayor Robert Dixon called the special meeting, work session, to order at 6:05 p.m. on October 14, 2014. Council present: Mark Trummel, Rick Schaffer, and Haley Kern. Matt Christenson and Sandy Jungemann were absent.

Item 2: Items of Business

A. Discuss long range planning for the City.

City Administrator Ed Truelove spoke to Council regarding the Annual League of Kansas Municipalities Conference that he and City Clerk Christy Pyatt recently attended. Truelove encouraged any Council Member who could to consider attending the 2015 conference in Topeka.

Truelove provided a list of topics he would like to see discussed tonight as planning for the future of the City. Council was encouraged to add additional discussion as needed.

Long Term Budget Planning:

Truelove reminded Council that there is not a lot of "fluff" in the 2015 budget. Discussion was had on the difficult future ahead without an increase in the mill levy. Two funds give Truelove cause for concern, Equipment Reserve and City Reserve (Insurance). The consensus of the group was that a minimum of \$1,000,000 should be maintained in City Reserve, in case of unforeseen needs. The City's required contribution to the swimming pool project will bring the reserve nearly to the \$1,000,000 balance. If awarded the KDOT Airport Grant, 10% of the project will come from the same reserve, bringing it just below the desired minimum. The group discussed the need for rebuilding those funds and possible ways to accomplish that, including the possibility of a ½ ¢ sales tax for infrastructure or reserve. To increase the current 1¢ sales tax, citizens would need to approve the initiative through a vote. Truelove briefly mentioned a new concept discussed at the League Conference called participatory budgeting, in which the public is given the ability to decide how a designated amount of budgeted funds will be spent. Truelove will expand on the concept at a later date.

Airport:

Truelove and others are scheduled to travel to Topeka on October 22nd to meet with Mike King, Secretary of Transportation, to promote the airport project. Council discussed the economic possibilities that are available if the City is awarded the airport grant. In addition to economic development, the airport would provide a paved landing strip that would accommodate an air ambulance. One paved landing strip in each county in Kansas is a goal of KDOT. Council was also asked if they would be at all interested in approaching the County about establishing a Regional Airport Authority or partnering with them on an aspect of the project, such as paving the road to the airport.

Pool:

Todd Knight, McCown Gordon Construction, will be present at the October 20th Council meeting to present a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) to Council. With approval, Council will be asked to issue a Notice to Proceed on the project. Council stressed that the maximum project budget is \$2.3 million. Stamped drawings will be available next Tuesday, following approval of the GMP and Notice to Proceed.

Incubator:

Truelove advised that there have been 2 open spaces in the Incubator building for a year or more. Regardless of occupancy, the building has had maintenance needs. Truelove showed a Power Point graph of expenses, revenues, budgetary authority, and unencumbered cash for the Incubator fund from 2011-Present. Staff has received several inquiries about the empty spaces; however, full occupancy will not bridge the gap between expenses and revenues. Truelove discussed possible scenarios for offering free or reduced rent to new occupants for the first 4-12 months, as a business incentive. During rent years 2-3 an occupant would pay the currently approved rent for the given space. At year four of occupancy, the lessee would pay the going rate for rent, so as not to compete with other local entities for long term tenants. Council discussed current and potential future renters for the spaces, as well as what kinds of alterations Council is willing to allow tenants to make to the spaces. Kent Colwell at USDA has been asked if there would be any ramifications of operating the facility as a standard rental facility, as opposed to an Incubator. Colwell stated that, more than likely, the City would be required to pay back some of the USDA grant funds they received for construction of the building.

Property Abatements:

Truelove updated Council on the approved abatement of property located on Cherry Street. Truelove contacted the current owner by deed following the decision to proceed. He stated that he has sold the property. Truelove will be looking into this development; however, Staff has confirmed that a new deed has not been filed at the Court House. Staff asked if Council would like to proceed with additional abatements at this time. The consensus was to proceed, being consistent with what has been done in the recent past, and going through the priority property abatement list that was previously created. Truelove also discussed how to proceed with the abatement of dead and dying trees located on private property. Staff plans to send a letter to property owners, asking them to remedy the situation and then give them time to do so before proceeding with the formal abatement process.

Land Bank Vision:

Truelove advised that Staff has been provided with a flier he created, offering property owners who do not maintain their properties the opportunity to donate the property to the land bank. Those letters are to be mailed with the weed notices. Council was asked how large they wanted the bank to get. Maintenance of a large number of properties is a concern.

Electric Utility Options:

Truelove presented a chart representing expenses, revenues, budgetary authority, and unencumbered cash for the Electrical Fund. Also discussed was the status of current employees, in regard to retirement. Truelove has been approached with the possibility of the City selling its electrical distribution system. The current electrical staff is small enough that 2 employees now trade taking calls every-other-weekend. Truelove recommended the City stop pulling money from the electrical fund and add back staff to the department versus selling the distribution. Council discussed the possibility of spending money to send someone with a connection to the City to training for the department; as well as cross training between departments.

Staff Succession Planning:

City Hall will be undergoing some staffing and position changes over the coming year, due to an announced retirement in June. Council briefly discussed the number of Staff members needed, the possibility of closing over the lunch hour, and process improvement. Staff will track the number of people who utilize City hall during a regular lunch period. The Public Utilities Department will also likely see changes in personnel over the coming year. As previously announced to Council, Chief Alvarez is a candidate to be appointed by the Governor to complete the unexpired term of Sheriff Lothman, who recently resigned. Council discussed the possibility of once again contracting with the Sheriff's Office,

should Alvarez be appointed. Also discussed was the possibility of adding a second officer to the Police Department by possibly partnering with the school to provide a school resource officer.

Economic Development:

Currently, Kiowa County Economic Development receives \$30,000 from the City on a yearly basis. Many non-profits are also able to apply for a portion of the \$15,000 in grant funds available yearly through the City. Council discussed the possibility of reallocating the previously designated \$15,000. Also discussed was the current partnership between the City and the Center For Innovation. Dixon and Truelove voiced that the City and County have received a good planning and visionary process for their investment. Lack of economic development through the Center's efforts was also discussed. Staff plans to further examine the city's current Economic Development investments and partnerships. Dixon also mentioned the possibility of reducing or eliminating current Council and Mayor salaries.

Walking Trail:

Citing the Comprehensive Master Plan, Truelove displayed and described the plan for a walking trail across various areas of the City. Truelove explained the National Health Ranking of Kansas, discussed at the League meeting. Truelove feels that the installation of a walking path in town is vital to increasing the quality of life for current citizens and attracting and keeping people in town. Staff is aware of public interest in a walking trail. Truelove would like to organize a panel of citizens who want to lead the cause. Dixon pointed out that there are several healthy living grants available for projects such as this, through EPA.

Item 3: Adjournment

With nothing further to discuss, Dixon declared the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Robert A. Dixon, Mayor

Christy Pyatt, City Clerk