

Special Council Meeting
November 25, 2013 6:00 p.m.
City of Oswego, Kansas

Present: Councilmembers Dee Brown, Darren Tynan, Kelly Vance, Jane Rea and Bill Owens with Mayor Glenn Fischer presiding.

Absent: Councilmember Susan Bringle.

Also Present: City Clerk Cheri Peine, Deputy City Clerk Carol Eddington, Police Chief George Elliott, City Superintendent Calvin Jurgensen, Attorney Rick Tucker, Asst. Police Chief Brandon Conrad, Gary Tomey, Paula Kern, Carole McKinley, Jim Zaleski and pat Hendrickson.

Labette County Tourism – Jim Zaleski, Director

Zaleski presented information on the Freedom Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA), an affiliated area of the National Park Service. This organization tells the story of pre-Civil War to post-Civil War – the strife, growth, etc. This would bring more tourism to the city as Historical travel is on the rise and history such as this is well followed.

Zaleski said that he and a representative from FFNHA toured Chetopa and Oswego to see about choosing a spot along the Neosho River for an interpretive history. Back in 1859-1860, the Neosho was a dry riverbed all the way into Texas. This dry riverbed served as a natural road to the Underground Railroad. Individuals would travel at night in the riverbed from the South up to “free” Kansas.

After conducting their tour of the areas along the Neosho, they chose Riverside Park to be the best location for this interpretive history. They would like to place three or four limestone slabs along the bluff in the park (between the buffalo and the overlook area – possibly beyond). The slabs would have pictures and two or three sentences on them depicting this history. The information and the pictures would be lazered onto the slabs. The slabs would be standing up using a concrete sleeve to protect the limestone at the ground level. Zaleski said he would also like to have an artists rendering at the overlook as to what the area would have looked like in this period of time.

The funding for this project would be through a grant. Zaleski would apply for the grant (a max of \$5,000) and the grant match would be 50%. The match would come from Labette County Tourism and the City. All he is asking from the City of Oswego is a letter of commitment stating that the City will commit to a three-man crew for 8 hours. This crew would work on the site preparation, etc. Zaleski said Labette County Tourism will match the in-kind commitment. The first draft of the grant application is due mid-January and the final application is due February 1, 2014.

Zaleski assured the Council that they would be consulted on what goes on the slabs. He said he could come to Council meetings on a regular basis for approvals. The wording for the slabs will not be decided upon until after the grant is awarded. Tynan made a motion and Brown seconded

to approve of the Mayor signing a letter of intent to commit 3 men for 8 hours of work to the project. Motion carried.

Attorney Rick Tucker – Sale of Property

Attorney Tucker reported that he received an inquiry about the city selling the piece of property in Parsons that had been donated to the city years ago. Dr. Lava has offered to pay \$850 as well as paying the taxes on the property. Tucker said that he would have Realty do a title insurance on the property and prepare a quit claim deed for the Mayor and the City Clerk to sign if the Council agreed. After some discussion, Brown made a motion and Rea seconded to approve the deed. Motion carried.

Personnel Policy Revision

Benefits – it was determined to come back to benefits. (later in the meeting it was decided to discuss the benefit package at length at a different meeting)

Residency – after some discussion, this residency statement stayed the same.

Councilmember Owens left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Hours of Operation – It was determined to leave the hours in but to state that a temporary change in the hours of operation for different departments could be determined by the appropriate Department Head, however, any permanent change in hours of operation would have to be approved by the Governing Body.

Holidays & Department Heads – the current policy states that Department Heads have 30 days to take off a day in exchange for working on a holiday. After discussion, Council suggested the time frame to take the day off be changed to 90 days and that if a Department Head needed more time than that, they would need to have it approved by the Council.

Sick Leave – discussion was held on the amount of time employees take off for sick leave. The city's computer system will figure time in ¼ hour increments. After discussion, consensus was to leave the discussion on use of sick leave as it is.

Leave Without Pay – it was determined to change the leave of absence without pay to a maximum of 30 days, not six months as the current policy states. Any changes or extensions to this time frame will have to be approved by the Governing Body.

Uniforms – Police Chief Elliott said the city does still provide guns as needed for department personnel. There needs to be a statement in regards to the type of boots purchased by the city for the Police Dept. – that the city will only pay for the type of boot required by the police chief and that they can only be worn on duty or they will be considered a taxable benefit.

Deputy Clerk Eddington felt that the words in the uniform section that addressed grooming should be moved to a separate section and not referred to under uniforms. Councilmember Brown read a section from the personnel handbook where she works. Consensus was to include a similar section in the City's policy handbook. Brown will email the section to Eddington.

Councilmember Owens re-entered the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Accident Drug/Alcohol Testing- After some discussion, it was determined to require drug and alcohol testing when there is a lost-time accident, an accident involving property damage, or when a Supervisor or Department Head has reasonable suspicion and believes that the employee should be tested.

Pay on Termination – Paragraph c. in this section is new and states that anyone who has left the city’s service will not receive any compensation from the city for appearing in court on a city court case. Council agreed to leave it in.

Sexual Harassment Policy – Attorney Tucker suggested looking over the section and getting rid of any unnecessary words, otherwise, leave as it is.

Safety Meeting Attendance Requirement – When asked for input on making it clear in the personnel policy the effects of any leave of absence on the safety meeting incentive, Council stated that if the employee is not at work that month, the employee does not receive the safety incentive benefit for that month and subsequently the additional yearly amount.

Cell Phone Use Policy – After discussion on other cities’ experiences with IRS audits, it was determined to have the policy state that the personal use of city cell phones is prohibited.

Job Descriptions – there are changes to various positions with the city taking place now. Staff said that duties may change based upon knowledge, ability, time factors, changes in employees, etc. Clerk Peine said that the city may want to go with more general descriptions of duties in the job descriptions and these will be looked at with that in mind but staff wanted Council input first. It was noted that the lifeguard job description should say that the minimum age requirement is 16 and that the maximum age for all of the Fire Dept. positions is 60.

Personnel Policy Receipt & Acknowledgement Form – this was bound in with the policy just to show the Governing Body what staff has the employee read and sign after going over the policy with them. Attorney Tucker suggested that the last paragraph include the words – that this handbook is “neither an express nor implied” contract for employment.

Adjourn

Owens made a motion and Rea seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion carried.

Mayor Glenn Fischer

Attest:

Deputy City Clerk Carol Eddington