

June 17, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes

ALLIANCE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING, TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2014

STATE OF NEBRASKA)
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COUNTY OF BOX BUTTE) §
)
CITY OF ALLIANCE)

The Alliance City Council met in a Special Joint Meeting, June 17, 2014 at 7:00 a.m., at the Knight Museum and Sandhills Center, 908 Yellowstone Avenue, Alliance. A notice of meeting was published in the Alliance Times Herald on June 12, 2014. The notice stated the date, hour and place of the meeting, that the meeting was open to the public, and that an agenda of the meeting, kept continuously current, was available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk in the Municipal Building.

Present at the meeting were Mayor Feldges, Council Members Benzel, Lewis, Yeager, and Seiler. Also present were City Manager Cox, City Attorney Olsen, Assistant City Manager Waggener, and City Clerk Jines. Representing the Box Butte County Commissioners were members Hashman and Lore. Box Butte County staff members were County Clerk Messersmith.

The Special Meeting began with Mayor Feldges and Box Butte County Commission Chair Hashman opening the meeting for their respective Boards. Mayor Feldges made the Open Meetings Law announcement and indicated the required posting was displayed on the stand against the north wall of the room.

- The Law Enforcement Lease Amendment Approval - Electrical Rate Reporting was the first matter to be discussed between the Boards.

City Manager J.D. Cox informed the Boards that the current City-County Law Enforcement Center (LEC) Agreement requires the City to provide a comparability report of the two different electric rate schedules. Since the implementation of the Electric Rate Agreement between the City and County, the City eliminated the Municipal Rate Schedule. As one of the two rate schedules is no longer available, the City would like to discontinue unnecessary reporting.

It was agreed that each Board will consider the amendment at their next regular meetings.

- The next item before the Boards was an additional amendment to the Law Enforcement Lease Agreement dealing with the pre-authorization requirement for repairs which will be paid jointly by the County and the City. The Law Enforcement Center (LEC) Agreement spells out the costs of facility repairs and upgrades will be budgeted and split by the City and County according to the percentages stipulated. The City has noticed that repairs have been made to the LEC without advanced notification. [Section 4-d] *“Long Term Maintenance and Repairs. The division of expenses for and other terms and conditions regarding major repairs to and replacements of the electrical, plumbing, heating, and cooling systems shall be mutually agreed upon by the City and County in writing prior to*

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such repairs and replacements.” In order for the City to responsibly budget for said expenses, the City requests participation in facility planning, and notification should an emergency arise which had not be contemplated. When recent repairs have been completed, the vendor has been requested by the County to split the bill and bill each entity separately. The Agreement provides in Section 4-e that *“Invoices. The County shall pay the respective providers all utility expenses, including City owned utilities, and for property, casualty, and liability insurance and thereafter send an invoice to the City for the City’s portion of such expenses.”* The City would like to see the same practice with facility repairs and upgrades. This request is a result of feedback from a vendor.

The Commissioners informed City Council they would discuss the matter with Sheriff Mowry to see if the communication between the Departments could be improved.

- An update on the E-911 and joint communication efforts was the next matter before the Boards. Police Chief Kiss reported that he and Tacy Liptack toured the Ogallala facility with Pete Peterson. Mr. Peterson strongly recommends the consolidation of services. Dispatch Supervisor Brandy Dalhberg also indicated a strong preference to consolidation. She recently attended an Intrado Conference relating to dispatching and meeting emergency needs of the public. Although she believes consolidation is in the best interest of our citizens, she stated whether the Boards move forward or not the dispatchers will be there to serve the public. Currently the dispatching equipment is being upgraded to Viper II and we are waiting on the phone company to upgrade their equipment and service in order for it to be activated.

The County expressed their willingness to take over the responsibilities of dispatching; all that needs to be determined is the financial contributions by all parties. Currently there are three options for the operation of a consolidated dispatch center: County, City or an independent contractor. The Task Force was encouraged to perform additional research to determine the advantages of each option in order to move forward with a decision. The Task Force Chairs – Councilman Benzel and Commissioner Hashman will be hosting a meeting and will invite those involved in the project to provide input.

- The next item before the Board was a request by the Box Butte County Commissioners regarding the taxing capabilities of the new Panhandle Cooperative facility which was constructed on the West Plains Grain property which is a Tax Increment Financing Project. City Manager Cox informed the Boards that the City has already done the legal research on the issue. West Plains Grain and Panhandle Cooperative are completing the legal documentation required, which should be completed in the very near future. Box Butte County informed the Council they have a July 25th deadline to make a tax determination. City Manager Cox will make arrangements to have a conference call between himself, the City’s legal counsel and Commissioner Lore as soon as possible to determine what, if anything needs to be completed to assist the County in making their tax determination.

- The County Commissioners requested to discuss landfill fees. City Manager Cox began the discussion by sharing some facts regarding the cost to operate a landfill:

- Currently City residents pay landfill costs in 2014 of approximately \$900,000;
- Of the approximate \$1 million collected for the landfill, \$110,000 is collected as “gate fees;”

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- Gate fees are also collected from many residents of the City of Alliance.

City Manager Cox also informed the group that the City was just notified that our Tire Grant Application has been approved in the amount of \$61,400 and would also be open to individuals residing outside of the City limits.

The County Commissioners indicated a desire to provide coupons to county residents in order for them to be able to take advantage of the free amnesty week.

Jim Irwin, 2380 CR 59 appeared before the Boards and asked if there could be a special rate for individuals that live outside of the City limits and within the two mile extraterritorial zoning area. Mr. Irwin also suggested that the landfill be open a few hours on Sundays during the Spring and Summer months. He felt this would deter the practice of individuals leaving trash on the roadsides. The practice of individuals dumping trash is very frustrating for Mr. Irwin as he not only has to remove it from his property but also pay a fee to dispose.

Deb Dopheide, Director of Keep Alliance Beautiful addressed the Boards and stated she believes more attention was needed with the disposal of hazardous wastes.

- The City of Alliance Library fee for County residents was the next item on the agenda. There was no discussion as Commissioner Lore stated she was just interested in the figures which have been provided by City Manager Cox.
 - City residents currently fund a majority of the library costs of over \$500,000 annually.
 - After implementing library card fees system on November 1, 2013, we have collected approximately \$150 - \$200 per month, or \$2,400 in total as of the end of April from individuals not living in Alliance.
 - There are 853 patrons designated Non-Resident Individual and 145 patrons designated Non-Resident Family for a total of 998 accounts in the system.
- The proposed Airport Road improvements were discussed. The total project price is estimated to be \$600,000, with the Nebraska Game and Parks providing \$300,000 for the project and requiring a 50% match. Box Butte County will be responsible for approximately 80% of the project (one mile) with the City of Alliance responsible for 20% (quarter mile). The County will pay from the highway to the Golf Course turn-off, and the City from that point to the Veteran's Cemetery entrance.

Now that the parameters of the project have been determined, each Board was asked to place this project within their budgets for the next fiscal year.

- The next matter before the Boards was the request of the Box Butte County Commissioners to receive funding from the City of Alliance for necessary sidewalk improvements at the Courthouse. At the last joint City-County meeting, a question was raised regarding the City's sidewalk replacement program. The County would like the City to use the parameters of the old program for their project which would provide a 50% match and not limit them to the \$1,000 limit of the new program. The following is an outline of events relating to this item:

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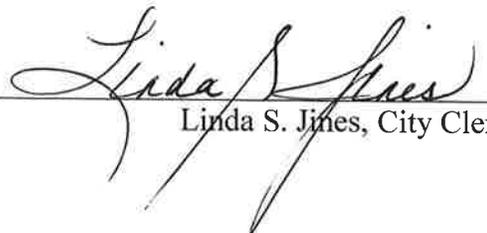
- Research followed and it was found that County Commissioner Sandy McCarthy did submit the City's Sidewalk Replacement Program application form dated 8/25/2011, which at that time provided a 50%-50% participant-City cost share.
- Subsequently, minutes show that former City Street Superintendent Eric Lenz did address this matter with the County Commissioners on September 6, 2011 and at that same meeting the County Commissioners approved payment of the County's 50% share, under the program that existed at that time.
- Unfortunately, the City never received payment of these funds and the project was not completed.
- Since that time, the City discontinued that program and replaced it with a new program that, among other things, capped the City's participation at \$1,000.

The Commissioners requested the City Council to make a final determination of the request at a future City Council meeting.

- County Commissioner Hashman requested the next item regarding snow removal for the Courthouse property be removed from the agenda.
- The next item on the agenda was an announcement by the City of our plans to file liens on property. The City is in the process of demolishing dilapidated buildings, and more aggressively dealing with nuisance items and delinquent water and sewer billings. This has resulted in unpaid assessments to the City that legally can be filed as liens on real property. The mechanism to obtain reimbursement is to file liens through the County with the desire that the liens be handled the same as delinquent real estate taxes. Three liens are to be filed next week totaling \$3,363.87.
- The last item on the agenda was public comment time, and there was none offered.
- The Box Butte County Commissioners will host the next meeting with the date to be determined. The Boards requested that Sweetwater Avenue be place on that agenda for discussion.
- The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

(SEAL)


 Fred Feldges, Mayor


 Linda S. Jines, City Clerk