

MINUTE RECORD FOR CITY OF ALMA
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 19, 2023

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Alma, Nebraska was held at City Hall on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

Present were Council Members: Tom Moulton, Chris Tripe, Larry Casper, Dyann Collins, and Mayor Hal Haeker. Absent: None. Administrator Lorri Bantam, City Clerk Dawn McNulty, Treasurer CeeAnn Affolter, City Utility Superintendent Russ Pfeil, Water Superintendent Scott Kuhl, and City Attorney Doug Walker were also in attendance. Notification of this meeting and the agenda was given in advance by posting, a designated method for giving notice. Advance notice of the meeting and the agenda was given to the Mayor and all members of the City Council. All proceedings hereinafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Mayor Haeker advised the public of the Open Meetings Act posted on the east wall of the meeting room, and then proceeded to call the regular meeting of April 19, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. and the following business was transacted:

Roll call: Tom Moulton-present, Dyann Collins-present, Larry Casper-present, Chris Tripe-present, and Mayor Haeker-present. Motion by Casper second by Collins to determine this meeting as previously publicized, duly convened and in open session. There being no further discussion upon the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Tripe, Casper, Collins, and Moulton. Voting no: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Haeker opened the floor to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2023, regular council meeting. Motion by Moulton, second by Collins to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2023, regular council meeting. There being no further discussion upon the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Tripe, Casper, Collins, and Moulton. Voting no: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Haeker opened the floor to discuss the claims and invoices for April 6, 2023, through April 19, 2023, for a total of \$ 142,140.96. Motion made by Moulton, second by Casper to approve the claims. There being no further discussion upon the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Collins, Tripe, Casper, and Moulton. Voting no: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Haeker opened the floor to discuss the Treasurer's report. Motion by Moulton second by Collins to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. There being no further discussion upon the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Tripe, Casper, Moulton, and Collins. Voting no: None. Motion carried.

Mayor opened the floor to discuss the Water and Sewer Rate Survey Completed by Nebraska Rural Water Association representative, Randy Hellbusch. He went over the Water Rate Information Sheet with the data from his recent evaluation and shared that over the last 5 years, the City has lost an estimated \$350,000 on the water utility. He suggested a raise in the water rates from \$16.50 per user and \$1.80 per thousand gallons to \$21.50 per user and \$2.35 per thousand gallons. Alma is currently on the lower end of water rates as compared to the rest of the state with towns of comparable size. He gave suggestions on raising the rates in one move or over a three-year period. Randy went over the information on the Sewer Rate Study. On a five-year average, showing a steady increase in expenses, the City has an estimated loss of \$250,000. He also suggested a rate increase from a base fee of \$8.25 with \$.55 per thousand gallons to \$12.50 base fee with \$1.00 per thousand gallons, which could be done also as a one-time charge or over a three-year period. Our rates are again on the lower average with towns of comparable size. The discussion was tabled for further review at the next meeting.

Mayor opened the floor to discuss the Contract agreement with South Central Economic Development District to administer the Rural Workforce Housing Development grant. Sharon Hueftle was in attendance to give an update on the progress of the contract. Sharon discussed the questions that need further clarification from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development before a contract can be written. She discussed her frustration working with treasury funds and the grant. She suggested that several of the towns that received the grant come together to obtain counsel to assist with writing the contract. Sharon will keep us advised of the progress on the grant contract. This item was tabled for further review at the next council meeting.

Mayor Haeker opened the floor to discuss the Pelican Tree Carving for the tree stump at the City

Auditorium. It was discussed that this is a chainsaw art piece and is on City property. It was mentioned that it is unique and would be a nice addition to the City landscape. If the structure is well maintained, it should last decades. Motion by Casper, second by Collins to move forward with the Pelican Tree Carving at the City Auditorium. There being no further discussion upon the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Casper, Tripe, Collins, and Moulton. Voting no: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Haeker opened the floor to discuss an Exception to City Code 111.11 to allow Peddlers to sell items on June 5 and June 6, 2023, in the City Park for the Bike Ride Across Nebraska event passing through Alma. Motion by Tripe, second by Moulton to move forward with the approval of the Exception to City Code 111.11 to allow Peddlers to sell items on June 5 and June 6, 2023, in the City Park for the BRAN event passing through Alma. There being no further discussion upon the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Casper, Tripe, Collins, and Moulton. Voting no: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Haeker opened the floor for the Administrator's Report. Administrator Bantam reported on the CCCFF Auditorium Renovation Grant. We were notified on March 31st that we did not receive the grant. We should receive a formal notice of non-select letter with feedback by April 30th. We can re-apply for the grant in two years.

Administrator Bantam reported on PHMSA's Natural Gas Grant. We received notification that we did not receive the grant. The City's application rating was only "Recommended" noting that the project narrative was unclear on how the equipment included in the project budget would be used to further the project objective or the project identified. They encourage us to apply in the future and will notify us when the next year is open.

Administrator Bantam reported on the Downtown Drainage Update. The preconstruction meeting was April 4. Miller and Associates were here April 12th, and they will be starting work next Monday on the block between Jewell and John Streets.

Administrator Bantam reported on the 7th Street Road Improvement Project. Work will start next Monday. We did not have to get any dirt from Dick Coe so there has not been any expense thus far. We did notify the property owners in the area that the road will be closed.

Administrator Bantam reported on the Highway 183 Shoulder Work update. This project is done and all we need to do now is re-seed the area.

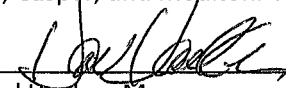
Administrator Bantam reported on EMC Dividend Check for \$3,416.97. This dividend check is lower than what we have received in past years.

Mayor Haeker then entertained for a motion to enter into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. Motion by Tripe, second by Casper to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues. Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Collins, Casper, Tripe and Moulton. Voting no: None Motion carried

Councilman Tripe left the meeting at 6:44.

Motion to reconvene regular session by Casper, second by Moulton. Upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Collins, Casper, and Moulton. Voting no: None Motion carried. Mayor stated that no actions were taken. Regular Session reconvened at 7:21 p.m.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Collins, second by Casper. There being no further discussion on the motion made and upon roll call vote, the following voted yes: Collins, Casper, and Moulton. Voting no: None. Meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.



Hal Haeker, Mayor

I the undersigned Clerk hereby certify that the forgoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Mayor and Council; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and available for public inspection at the office of the Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available at the meeting for examination and copying by members of the public; that the said minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning meetings of said body were provided advanced notification of the time place and of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting.

Dawn McNulty
Dawn McNulty, City Clerk

