

City of Belleville
City Council Meeting
Monday, March 8, 2021
Belleville City Council Room

The meeting of the City of Belleville Council was held on Monday, March 8, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at the Belleville City Council room.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Robertson called the Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Pastor Rick Snodgrass gave the opening prayers and comments.

ATTENDENCE:

Council members present: Kim Lapo, Mike Nondorf, Doane Sells, James Doyle, Mike Palmquist and Nick Cox.

City Staff present: City Manager Adam Anderson, City Clerk Russ Piroutek, City Attorney Andy Lohmann and Police Chief Chris Springer.

Others present: Fred Arnold, Rick Snodgrass, Steve & Emily Breeden and Waylon Sheetz.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES AND DISBURSEMENTS:

Mike Palmquist made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 22nd, 2021 regular Council Meeting. James Doyle seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Mike Palmquist made a motion to approve the appropriations and disbursements. James Doyle seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rick Snodgrass commented on the broken curb in front of the Assembly of God Church.

Steve Breeden talked about his interest in purchasing the American Legion Building.

OLD BUSINESS:

Cost estimates for a part time and full time Code Enforcement Officer were provided to the Governing Body. After reviewing the information and asking questions, the consensus of the Council was to move forward with a part-time position, and see if 20 hours a week would work. There was discussion on training the individual, time-line of the Nuisance Abatement Program and reviewing the ordinances. Councilmembers Doane Sells and Kim Lapo will meet with staff to bring back a recommendation of how the City will structure the Nuisance Abatement Program, and the duties of the employee.

The Council discussed the American Legion Building. Pictures of the contents were included in the packet. Appliances, chairs and tables, a bingo machine, a gun safe and other miscellaneous items were in the building. Many memorial American flags were also in the building. Recommendations were given on who to contact so the flags could be returned to family members or be placed in a different Legion Hall. After some discussion, the Council felt that the building should be sold through sealed bids, and also include what the future use of the building would be. There was also question whether the property should be placed in the Land Bank to achieve this. More information will be brought back to the next meeting regarding the advantages of placing the property in the Land Bank

NEW BUSINESS:

A resolution was included in the packet, establishing content-neutral public comments, without personal or slanderous statements. There was a wide variety of opinions from the Council on the resolution, as some felt public comment should be regulated more than what it is in the proposed resolution, while others were concerned with the City suppressing citizen's opportunity to speak at meetings. After more discussion, Doane Sells made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-005 as presented. Mike Nondorf seconded the motion, which carried on a voice vote of five (5) yeas and one (1) nay cast by Kim Lapo.

Doane Sells provided information for an essay competition for 7th graders through the League of Kansas Municipalities, and would like to see support and incentive from the City for this project. Annually, the League has a "My City, My Home" essay contest that asks students to reflect on their hometown and explain why they love their community. Locally, with help from RCJSHS staff, the Pride Committee and the Chamber, 7th graders would be awarded on their essays before they are sent to LKM. The Council discussed how to implement the program, how to judge the essays and the dollar amount of the awards. Chamber Director Waylon Sheetz stated the Chamber would match the monetary amount of the awards. After more discussion, Mike Palmquist made a motion to support the program. James Doyle seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a voice vote. How the local program works and any commitment to funding will be decided later.

Heinen Brothers, Inc provided information on the improvements to the hanger they lease at the airport. They could spend up to \$50,000-\$60,000 on concrete, office & rest room remodeling and adding a large door to the hanger, if they could obtain a long-term lease. The Council addressed the decision to retain ownership of the hanger opposed to selling it. Points were made that the items the city stores in the hanger could be moved elsewhere, proceeds from the sale could be put back into the airport and the City would still receive annual payments for leasing the land. James Doyle made a motion to sell the hanger to Heinen Brothers, with the conditions that the pilot lounge stays with the City and there is a buy back clause in the agreement that the City has first right to purchase back the hanger. Kim Lapo seconded the motion, which carried on a voice vote of five (5) yeas and one (1) nay cast by Mike Palmquist.

Doane Sells made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1032, authorizing the City to enter into an agreement with KDHE for financing of a loan for the water treatment plant. The loan will be for \$3,826,376, with \$1,097,000 principal forgiveness for 20 years and a gross interest of 1.30%. Nick Cox seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

A last-minute addition to the agenda was the availability of a low-cost loan from the State of Kansas for funding to help with high wholesale natural gas bills from February. The City still does not have an exact bill, and estimates vary widely. After discussion of “best guess” estimates of what the bill could end up, Mike Palmquist made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-006, applying for \$600,000 in emergency funding. James Doyle seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a voice vote. James Doyle made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1033, authorizing the City to apply for \$600,000 in emergency loans from the State of Kansas for natural gas bills. Nick Cox seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT:

City Attorney Lohmann stated he will look into rules with Land Bank and any issues with public comment.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT:

City Manager Anderson commented on the incentives through Economic Development for house painting and removal.

COUNCIL MEMBER/MAYOR COMMENTS:

Doane Sells gave a list of upcoming activities for the Pride Committee.

Mike Nondorf asked about the manhole repairs discussed at last meeting.

Kim Lapo asked about a date for the City-Wide Cleanup and getting it advertised. The date has been set as April 12, 2021.

James Doyle stated he appreciated the agenda link being placed on Facebook. He also questioned his vote on the resolution for public comment. He wished he had given it more thought.

Mike Palmquist commented that he would like to see the City be stricter with public comment.

Mayor Robertson wanted to thank the Fire Department for what they do. They don’t receive enough thanks for the work they do, and they are all volunteers from the community.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mike Palmquist made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike Nondorf seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Russell Piroutek
City Clerk