

City of Charleston, MO

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**City Council
July 12, 2022**

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Rick Toon. Also in attendance were council members Jackie Whiteside, Patrick Farmer, and Clark Dugan along with Interim City Manager Philip Halter, City Clerk Ali Morris, City Attorney Tabatha Thurman, the Code Enforcement Officer Ken Stevenson, and Chief of the Department of Public Safety, Robert Hearnese.

Recognition of Visitors: Lester Gillespie, Sheriff Britton Ferrell, Captain Barry Morgan, Robert Chatman Jr., Theresa Chatman, Ann Riggins, Antonio Riggins, Don Patton, Brooke Lambert, Pamela Gillespie, Bishop Graham, Renee Hulshof, Sheila Shankle, Jayne Ellen Ray, Rodney Jones, Pam Jones, Symone Owens, Michael Owens, Preston Moore, Mike Mueller, Jean Mueller, Pastor David McLucas, Yarian Rodgers, Larry McCauley, Freddie Evans, Catie Austin, and Sherry Austin.

Jayne Ellen Ray addressed the council about the property that the organization, "CHARM", just recently purchased and Interim City Manager Phil Halter told her they would speak about it later in the meeting.

Theresa Chatman addressed the council and spoke about she and her husband's non-profit organization, NoMeRcy, and explained how they support families who have lost loved ones or have been victimized by law enforcement. They also help families of law enforcement agents who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Mrs. Chatman stated that she and her husband travel all over the globe helping families through fundraiser events, podcasts, etc. They love to get to know law enforcement officers, families, and individuals and bring everyone together. They want to bring the community of Charleston together and spread kindness. The council advised them to exchange information with Lester Gillespie and to let us know what they would like to do within the community.

Interim City Manager, Philip Halter addressed closing the street at 302 S 9th for a party intended for July 16th. Leandia Rigney asked to be on the agenda regarding this issue but was not present.

Mr. Halter introduced Mike Mueller. Mr. Mueller referred to the Farmers Market that sets up in AD Simpson Park on Wednesday mornings. He proposed that we test out something similar on certain Saturdays in October and November downtown on Market Street with more vendors. Mr. Mueller explained that he loves the enthusiasm people have for Downtown Charleston during the Azalea Festival and would like to see more of that throughout the year. He asked about procedure for permits and mentioned "crowd control" considerations to make the event safe and fun for all. Mr. Mueller handed out a draft outline of what they plan on doing in the fall. Mayor Toon asked City Attorney Tabatha Thurman if this event would require an ordinance, and she said no, that we would just need to give the okay. Councilman Dugan and Councilman Farmer said they gave it an okay. Councilman Whiteside mentioned there may be an issue if Citizens Bank is

open during the event, due to street access issues. Chief of Police, Robert Hearn Jr. said there would be potential for the same issue with Focus Bank, but it could be figured out. Mr. Mueller said he has already discussed this idea with the CHARM group, and they gave him the “green light”. The idea of a “Community Market” was okayed by all.

Lester Gillespie of Fresh Start Help Improvement Center spoke about the feeling of sadness he has experienced witnessing young kids that he has coached in the past getting involved in gun violence. Mr. Gillespie said he contacted Coroner, Terry Parker and asked how many people were murdered since he has been the coroner. He said there have been 25 murders since 2001, and there are many people within the community scared by this issue. Mr. Gillespie suggested that we attack the gun violence issue and make Charleston the place it used to be. Mr. Gillespie then introduced Mr. Don Patton. Mr. Patton said he has a background in counseling and has been working around the area for over 50 years “uplifting families”. He explained how most programs to help with relationships, are set up for mothers and children, not fathers. They would like to provide support to fathers who are struggling with relationships. Mr. Patton explained that there have been over 312 Charleston residents surveyed regarding violence and other issues recently. He went on to explain that once the information is tabulated, they will set up six focus groups, hoping to include members of law enforcement, ministry leaders, and all other community leaders that wish to participate. Mayor Toon asked what the next thing would be that the city could help with. Mr. Gillespie explained that it is important for us all to support one another and each group within the community. He said that one beautiful thing about this community is seeing all the kids intertwine at summer camps, Bible schools, etc. and that we need to learn from them.

Mr. Gillespie said, “We have an opportunity to do something great and we need to carry pride into the whole community”. Mayor Rick Toon mentioned that whenever people think of Charleston, they think of three things: the Charleston basketball team, Squirrels Baseball, and gun violence. He then told Mr. Gillespie that the city would love to help whenever possible.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Mayor Toon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2022, June 14, 2022, and June 20, 2022; council meetings as presented. Councilman Farmer made the motion, Councilman Whiteside seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Report of City Business / Operations: Interim City Manager, Philip Halter provided a written report as part of the meeting packet and began with addressing City Hall Personnel and other issues. He explained that former City Manager, Phillip Robinette’s contract with the city was cancelled and Stefanie Self is no longer an employee. The city hired Amber Gammons as the City Collector, and rehired Ali Morris as the City Clerk. Ida Williams is currently the City Treasurer. Mr. Halter added that the ad for the City Manager position has been sent to the Missouri Municipal League and posted to LinkedIn.

He also told the council and public about the city receiving a fine in the amount of \$4500 from the Department of Revenue for late submittal of taxes and said that the auditor should have us straightened out by August.

Former City Clerk, Mrs. Marsha Hart has been rehired part time to help train personnel.

Park issues were then addressed, regarding the newly replaced roof on the pavilion at Rolwing Park, which was funded by the Byrd Estate. Dirt was moved from the new, up and coming Family Dollar location on East Marshall, to Hillhouse Park in hopes of getting a grant to complete a wiffle ball field. Most of the dirt was moved to Whipple Park to fill in the trench along the East side of the park. Mr. Halter let everyone know that we are still unaware of what the plans are for the existing Family Dollar store.

He then brought to the CHARM group’s attention that they may be responsible for putting restrooms in where they purchased property between Dr. Petersen’s Dental Office, and Dogwood Nutrition.

Mayor Toon pointed out that it was in Mr. Halter’s report that Riley Fitzgerald reached out about connecting the Country Club to the City’s sewer system. Mr. Halter explained that since it is not within city limits, they would have to pay to connect on, but that it would be fine with the Public Works Director, David Harris.

There have been 56 registrations received for side by sides this year, with the majority of these being during the Dogwood Azalea Festival.

The Police Department/Fire Fighters fought six grass fires within the month from burning fields. Taking the fire truck and equipment out of town could lead to an issue if this continues to be an ongoing problem.

One major traffic incident occurred involving a high-speed pursuit on East Ada Street. The car jumped South Main Street, traveling 104 feet before landing. Subsequently, the car crashed two blocks later into two houses, knocking one completely off the foundation. Luckily no one was injured that we are aware of.

Mr. Halter acknowledged the new business in town, 'The Scoop' ice cream shoppe, which opened June 27th on Main Street.

During the month, we had two subsequential sewer line issues. We had one collapse at 7th and Commercial Street which required 7th Street to be closed for a short time. At the same time, a new manhole was installed further down 7th Street, near Cypress. Secondly, we had two repairs of a main line at the lagoon which was a big expense.

Mr. Halter met with Robin Medlin of Republic Services about our new five-year contract. With the new contract, each residence will be receiving new trash carts within the next couple of months. We plan to put the dates of the replacement, on the water bills, to help people prepare.

St. Francis Medical Center informed Public Works Director, David Harris that the plans for expanding Ferguson Medical Clinic on West Commercial Street have been put on hold. Mayor Toon asked what the exact plans are for the expansion. Mr. Halter told him that we do not know at this time.

A Planning & Zoning meeting is currently in progress of being set to discuss re-zoning a residential area to accommodate a barber shop/hair business.

Mr. Halter told the council and public that the city currently has 39 accounts with Citizens Bank and that seven are inactive. We are looking into consolidating some of these accounts and possibly closing some.

Asphalt milling and overlay was completed on June 29th. We are still waiting for the final bill.

Mr. Halter met with County Clerk, Emily Pullen regarding the city tax rate. There is some confusion about what the proper tax rate should be, and we are still waiting for a response.

During the month, Mr. Halter contacted Citizens Bank about getting additional interest on some of the accounts, but they are not looking to increase the rate at this time.

Focus Bank is going to be updating their heating and air conditioning system within the next few weeks. This will require part of Commercial Street to be closed to allow a crane to move this new equipment to the roof of their building.

The Public Works report was included in the Council packet, which addressed the maintenance, issues, and repairs that occurred during the month.

The police report was referenced. Mayor Toon asked about one call on the report that was labeled as a "robbery". Chief of Police, Robert Hearn Jr. explained that some calls are simply labeled what they are called in as, even though that is not exactly what happened.

Code Enforcement Report: Ken Stevenson said that it was a "busy month". Thirty-five notices were sent out, with ten being for public nuisances. Two were cleaned up. Some of them were labeled as "vehicle

violations” but could also mean that junk or tires have been piled up in the back of a truck on properties. Mr. Stevenson went on to discuss issues with landlord/tenant situations. The violations are to follow the property owner even if it is technically the tenant making the violation. Some owners have been compliant with speaking to their tenants about cleaning up, while others refuse to do anything.

Mr. Halter acknowledged the budget. Compared to last year, revenue is currently up by a little, while expenses are down, but this could change.

Mayor Toon brought up the Wiffle Ball field idea and said he thought it sounded ridiculous at first, but then realized that it wouldn't be a major cost and that it would offer something to occupy those spending their time at the ball fields and offer kids an outlet rather than staying in the house.

Mr. Halter explained that the most recent Ordinances had been assigned duplicate numbers and that we needed to amend and re-sign those.

Renee Hulshof spoke about the advantages and benefits of going through the process to get the City of Charleston registered as a Certified Local Government (CLG). This would allow the city to apply for many grants to gain tools and resources to help with restoring historic buildings and using them to their full potential. Mrs. Hulshof asked if the city has a grant writer. Mr. Halter explained that we are hoping to find that within the search for the new City Manager. Councilman Whiteside mentioned he would like to see a Veteran Memorial Wall on the lot where the previous City Hall building sat. Mrs. Hulshof spoke highly of all the potential within the city and said that her husband, Kenny, would be happy to assist in any of the legalities to help get the process going. Mayor Toon mentioned that our next step would be to get an Ordinance written up. Councilman Dugan asked if there are any negative sides to becoming a CLG. Mrs. Hulshof said there are none, other than that it is a slow and arduous process. Mayor Toon was advised by the City Attorney, Tabatha Thurman to make a motion that we begin the process to draft an ordinance. Councilman Whiteside motioned. Councilman Dugan seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. The plan is to have the ordinance prepared by the August council meeting and Mr. Kenny Hulshof will be in touch with the City Attorney to help assist.

New Business: Bill NO. 3905/Ordinance NO. 3046, appointing Ali Morris as City Clerk was presented. A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside, seconded by Councilman Farmer. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Resolution #1101 was presented to change the signature cards at both banks. A motion was made by Councilman Dugan, seconded by Councilman Whiteside, and was approved unanimously.

Bill NO. 3906/Ordinance NO. 3047, authorizing execution of a contract for Audit Services was presented. A motion was made by Councilman Farmer, seconded by Councilman Dugan. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Resolution #1102 was presented regarding the Water Sewer Grant with Horner-Schiffrin. A motion was made by Councilman Dugan, Councilman Farmer seconded, and was approved unanimously.

Liquor License Renewals: The renewals for ‘Las Brisas’ Mexican Restaurant and ‘Smokerz Outlet’ were both received late but had no incident reports. A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside, seconded by Councilman Dugan. All were in favor of renewing the liquor licenses. The motion passed.

Interim City Manager, Philip Halter discussed a proposal to increase the water, sewer, and trash over a five-year period. We have not raised the water rates in a significant way within the last three years. Mr. Halter also proposed we make the increase to where it comes out to an even dollar amount, to eliminate as much coin exchange as possible making it easier for both customers, and employees. Mr. Halter poured out two nickels and two pennies and explained the first increase would simply be seven cents per day. He then poured out

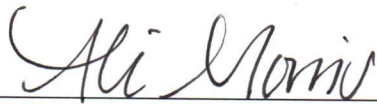
three dimes and a penny and explained it would be a total of thirty-one cents per day for the next projected increase.

Mayor Toon mentioned the possibility of having to test the lead in the water within the next few years, which could potentially advance to us installing new lines where lead is detected. Mr. Halter then mentioned a possible increase in the commercial water rates as well to help with those costs, as there has also not been an increase in commercial rates within the last three years.

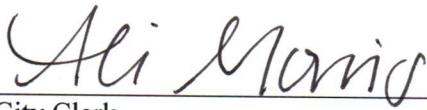
Interim City Manager Halter mentioned quickly that there has been a total of nine applications for the City Manager position, with the possibility of a tenth one on its way in.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Councilman Whiteside to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Dugan seconded the motion. All in favor. The motion carried.

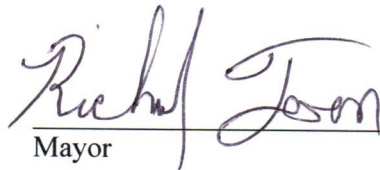
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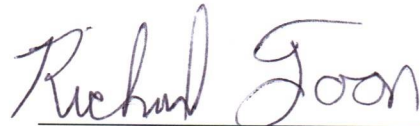
City Clerk



City Clerk



Mayor



Presiding Officer