

CALL TO ORDER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Jacob LaRue presided and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Commissioners Present: Mayor LaRue and Commissioners Phillip Chaney and Tim Fairchild.

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Kevin Berthot.

Staff Present: Todd Newman, City Manager; Ryan Follmer, Assistant City Manager; Tina Bailey, City Clerk; David Brake, City Attorney; Cory Kepley, Chief Finance Officer; and Brandon Westerman, Director of Electric Utilities.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Commissioner Phillip Chaney.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH – APRIL 2023

Mayor LaRue proclaimed April 2023 as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month in Chanute. CASA and Hope Unlimited representatives accepted the proclamation.

AGENDA

The Agenda was approved on motion by Commissioner Fairchild, seconded by Commissioner Chaney. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda is used to approve non-controversial or routine matters by a single motion and vote. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- Minutes – City Commission – March 27, 2023
- Warrant Register dated March 29, 2023
- Warrant Register dated April 5, 2023
- Review Various Board and Committee Minutes and Reports
- Request to Use/Close City Parking Lot and Approval to Sell/Serve Alcohol During the Annual Oktoberfest Event
- Consider Use and Temporary Closure of Certain City Parking Lots and Streets for Safari Family Fun Day – April 29, 2023

Motion made by Commissioner Fairchild, seconded by Commissioner Chaney, to approve the Consent Agenda. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bernard Neyer, 319 South Lafayette commented on the recent storm destruction and requested waiver of landfill fees for disposal of storm debris.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Todd Newman gave his report on City activities and operations. Items reported on included an update on the new trash carts.

City Manager Newman requested that Director of Electric Utilities Brandon Westerman provide an update on the recent storm and damage.

Mr. Westerman provided a brief summary of the storm timeline, damage, and actions taken. He thanked City crews for the work that was done and also thanked the other communities that provided Chanute with mutual aid.

General discussion was made.

Commissioner Chaney requested that the City schedule a Task Force meeting to educate downtown building owners of the resources available to them.

City Manager Newman reported that he would contact Neosho County and Chanute Regional Development Authority to check their availability.

OLD BUSINESS

PROCESS FOR FILLING VACANT CITY COMMISSION SEAT

At the last City Commission meeting, the Commission discussed the vacancy on the City Commission due to Sam Budreau's resignation. The Commission discussed whether to fill the vacancy, in the near future or wait until June 1, 2023 to see if there is going to be a primary election for local candidates.

General discussion was made.

Commissioners Chaney and Fairchild requested that this item be placed back on the Agenda for further discussion after the June 1, 2023 filing deadline to run for the office of a City Commissioner.

NEW BUSINESS

EVERGY SOLAR PROJECT

A few years ago, the City of Chanute in conjunction with Ash Grove and Evergy looked at installing solar panels at Power Plant 3. At that time and through 2021, the estimated cost for that solar energy was equal to or higher than the wholesale market. In 2022 the wholesale market price had significantly increased, especially for daytime or peak hours.

In 2022 the federal government passed the Inflation Reduction Act that provides significant tax credits for utilities that install renewable energy. Eligible renewable energy projects receive at least a 30% federal rebate for the cost of constructing the generation. Additional tax rebates of 10% can be achieved if the project qualifies as being constructed in a brownfield site and potentially another 10% rebate dependent on the percentage of the project that is domestic. Last year, the Southwest Power Pool also raised the percentage that utilities have to have as generation reserve from 12% to 15% for all utilities. The solar project as proposed by Evergy does not require any investment from the city. The tax rebate from the federal government brings down the cost of the project so that the cost for energy is now below what the city pays to purchase wholesale electricity for daytime hours.

There is limited financial risk to the City of Chanute as Chanute is only agreeing to buy the power at a set rate when it is produced. Chanute will also receive additional capacity to cover the increasing customer demand for electricity.

Lindsay Freeman, Senior Business Development Manager with Evergy gave a presentation of the proposed solar project and answered questions.

Glen and Kathy Wicker, 4535 South Plummer were in attendance and commented on this item.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman, City Attorney David Brake, Director of Electric Utilities Brandon Westerman, Ms. Freeman, and Mr. & Mrs. Wicker.

Motion made by Commissioner Chaney, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, to authorize City Management to execute the Renewable Purchase Power Agreement between the City of Chanute, Kansas and Evergy Kansas Central, Inc. as presented. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1417 SOUTH MALCOLM

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 911 SOUTH STEUBEN

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 411 SOUTH LINCOLN

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 214 NORTH WASHINGTON

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 520 NORTH HIGHLAND

Motion made by Commissioner Fairchild, seconded by Commissioner Chaney, to adopt resolution declaring that the above properties are in violation of Chanute Municipal Codes and authorizing abatement of certain nuisances as presented. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Resolutions were assigned: No. 2023-41, No. 2023-42, No. 2023-43, No. 2023-44, and No. 2023-45.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Fairchild thanked City crews and the other communities that provided mutual aid for the work that was accomplished after the recent storm.

Commissioner Chaney thanked City crews for the work that was accomplished after the recent storm and that he was thankful that there were no injuries reported.

Commission Chaney requested an update on the Osa Martin Development Project.

City Manager Newman reported that the City is waiting on KDOC approval for the RHID.

Mayor LaRue thanked City staff for the group effort that was provided to the community after the recent storm.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Fairchild, seconded by Mayor LaRue, to adjourn. Voting Aye: All.
Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Tina L Bailey, CMC
City Clerk