

CITY OF THE HIGHLANDS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, 6:00 p.m., June 12, 2023
Crazy Horse Sports Club, 922 W. Crazy Horse Dr., 67502

This meeting is being recorded.

Minutes

- I.** Meeting called to order - 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Moore.
A. Welcome by Mayor Moore
B. Pledge of Allegiance
C. Roll call of the Council by City Clerk, Bonnie Swenson
Present: Jeff Jackson, Mark Kerschen, Butch Neel, Kenny Nuss
Absent: Brian McElgunn, AZC - Mo Penny
Guests: Vickie Nuss; Dave Thomas; Brad Easter; Eric Lutz, Sheriff's office; Gerry Wiens, Chief of District 3 Fire Department.
- II. Approval of the agenda as presented**
- Kenny Nuss made motion to approve agenda; Butch Neel seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- III. Public Comment(s)**
- Gerry Wiens, appointed as the new chief of District 3 Fire Department, introduced himself. Mayor Moore has his contact information - he wants to be available to answer any questions from residents. Will propose to his immediate supervisor, Travis Vogt, the possibility of notifying The Highlands City Council when someone applies for a burn permit. Kenny Nuss mentioned that he had witnessed smoke in the area and asked how burn permits can be communicated to the council so they are aware. Chief Wiens will check with his superiors and get an answer. He would like to host an Open House to display the new fire engine Nickerson is getting in August, their new UTV and their firefighters, hoping to interest more people to be volunteers. May post details on The Highlands website when date is determined.
- IV. Approval of draft Minutes:** May 8, 2023, regular meeting
- Jeff Jackson made motion to approve minutes; Mark Kerschen seconded; motion carried unanimously.

V. Reports

A. Mayor

1. League of Kansas Municipalities Information Feedback meetings are being held statewide. Mayor Moore and Bonnie, City Clerk, will attend the one in Andover on July 20, 2023. LKM is also holding a grant-writing class in collaboration with K-State - maybe someone on the Parks and Recreation committee would be interested in attending this.

2. Charter Ordinance No. 8 is now correctly posted on the website.

B. Treasurer

1. Mark Kerschen reviewed the May Treasurer's report.

General Fund Beginning Balance 5-1-2023	\$ 63,124.69
Deposits/Receipts total	2,186.33
Disbursements total	(1,712.09)
General Fund ending balance 5-31-2023	63,598.93
Capital Improvement Fund	140,793.12
Equipment Reserve Fund	25,604.73
Parks and Recreation Fund	7,831.43
American Rescue Fund	<u>47,919.28</u>
Total 5-31-2023	\$285,747.49

- Jeff Jackson made motion to approve the Treasurer's report; Butch Neel seconded; motion carried unanimously.

2. Checks presented for payment:

Reno Co. Utilities - \$221.98

- Butch Neel and Mark Kerschen will follow up to see why the bill has increased so drastically and will ask Peggy to alternate the watering days.

Fincher's Findings, Inc. - \$839.72 - Highlands Welcome Committee canvas bags

Gatehouse Media/Hutch News - \$439.84 - publication of burn ordinance

(published once in summary form) and Charter Ordinance No. 8 (published twice in entirety)

Nisly's - \$281.00 - cleanup day dumpster

Post Office - \$114.00 - annual fee for PO box

Bonnie - \$167.36 - reimbursement for roll of stamps, envelopes, mailing labels, printing paper, colored file folders and magazine holder boxes to complete organizing of file cabinet.

Powered by ME - \$6,500.00 - street edge cleaning (to be paid from American Rescue Fund)

- Jeff Jackson made motion to approve payments as presented; Butch Neel seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- Jeff Jackson made motion for \$35,000.00 to be allocated to the Capital Improvement Fund from the General Fund for 2024 budget purposes, per Resolution 2023-0077; Butch Neel seconded; motion carried unanimously.

C. AZC

1. Update on roads - Mayor Moore reported in Mo's absence. Powered by ME will be working in the city in July until the end of asphalt season.

2. Ordinance No. 2022-27, AZRC committee structure - Mayor Moore reviewed the ordinance and wondered whether changes really need to be made. Mo, AZC, (coordinator) has a list of seven volunteers that he can use to go with him for non-structural building permits. The council decided to leave the ordinance as is, no amendment needed.

D. Parks and Recreation Volunteer Committee

1. Status of cleanup at the entrance and north lots along Monroe - Brad Easter reported on the P & R Committee working on some fundraising ideas and other things that will be reported on this evening. He has had conversation with AT&T regarding the fence around their boxes and has their permission to remove the chain link fence and poles. AT&T needs to cover some pits with new lids before he feels comfortable with removing the fencing. Will get some help to roll it up and discard it along with other items that could not be placed in dumpsters. Ongoing maintenance at the entrance includes mowing and continued spraying for poison ivy, blackberries, etc. Jeff Jackson would like to have this paid out of General Fund and save monies from the P & R funds to go for their "dream" park amenities.

Dave Thomas reported on his research for grant writing assistance for park development. He has had contact with a sales representative for Kansas from Athco who knows if there would be any grant money for playground equipment available. He has done playgrounds for Hutch High, Nickerson, and Buhler, and he would be willing to attend a council meeting. The sales rep will work up a plan for The Highlands, that could include equipment for adults.

2. Report on citywide cleanup - pleased with the results. Jeff has the safety vests and trash bags - will hold onto for next year. May do another one before a party the committee would like to plan for October. Would like to have another citywide picnic in the part of the park that is maintained (potluck, food trucks), with intent of making residents aware that the committee is working on a park, solicit input, and hope to recruit more volunteers to assist with the overall project

as it progresses. Have had ideas to hold an art contest for kids to design a t-shirt as a fundraiser for the park, among other things.

3. Tree in the median entrance - Brad Easter asked for approval to remove the dead Blue Spruce. Cheryl Wiggins is a master gardener and can help with suggestions for replacement. Would purchase new trees from someone that can provide a warranty on them and replace with something that won't be a line-of-sight issue or root problem. Will come back to the Council once the committee has all been made aware of the new tree options.

- Jeff Jackson made a motion to hire a contractor to remove the tree and grind the stump to be paid out of the General Fund; Kenny Nuss seconded; motion carried unanimously.

E. The Highlands Volunteer Welcome Committee - have received the new welcome bags and will be filling up 15 for new residents. They are canvas with The Highlands logo on them.

VI. New Business

A. 2024 budget development - Jeff has received the property assessments from Reno County. Assessed values are up 11.28% from last year. Revenue Neutral Rate will decrease property tax by 1.9 mills from last year, which is a 10% drop for each homeowner. At some point, will need to look at increasing the RNR to pay off any future bonds. Jeff needs to complete the spreadsheet and will send it to the council to review prior to the July meeting. There is a page on the state website for publication notice for Hutch News to publish the budget prior to the meeting. Will just need to schedule a normal public budget meeting before the July meeting at 5:30 p.m.

B. Discussion on ordinances regarding firearms and animals in the city (2020-17 and 2020-22) - Uniform Public Offense Code for Kansas Cities - specifically shooting nuisance animals and discharging firearms in the City. Mayor Moore reviewed Section 10.5 (b) (3) - the City of The Highlands has adopted this ordinance in its totality, did not opt out of anything. Discussed that there is no hunting within the city limits and there are undefined issues that need to be addressed. Erik Lutz, sheriff's office representative, stated that taking care of an animal tearing up your yard would not be an issue with their department, but the Highlands ordinance is what could cause a problem. Need to define a permissive use clause focusing on events of property damage by wild animals, for instance, to allow for these situations.

- Mayor Moore will work on some verbiage for an opt-out to the UPOC ordinance for the July meeting.

C. Discussion on Charter Ordinance No. 07, specifically related to terms of office. Kenny Nuss stated that due to the size of our city and to get more people involved, the 2-year term would be more attractive to residents. Jeff Jackson acknowledged we can repeal the Highlands ordinance and go back to the Kansas Statute, Chapter 15. He will send it to council members to review prior to next month's meeting. This would make every council member position, including the mayor, go back to 2-year terms for everyone.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Report on ROW and lot cleanup - Kenny Nuss reported we have done a mailout, including 13 corrections. Have not heard of a lot of problems but have had a few calls. Country Club Circle lot owner JoLee Spence of Edmond, OK, appreciated the communication and will have it cleaned up to sell. Kenny set her up with a local realtor and they will help her find someone to clean the lot up so it can be sold. Tyler Ritter has cleaned up his lots. Scott Smith asked for clarification of what the committee expected from him. Kenny will confirm the lots owned by Miller Homebuilders - he has a new map from Reno County for reference. Pat Gardner - Kenny asked him to call when cleared; he wants to mow his own ditch, doesn't want City to do it. Will probably need to do another communication of some kind a year from now due to ongoing growth. Feels we are ready to start looking at drainage.

B. Drainage/culvert project discussion (2023 Goal #3) - no rock bid yet, Jeff will follow-up with county. He has found the culvert map for identification purposes.

VIII. As may arise - N/A

IX. Date for next City Council meeting:

A. June 26, 2023 - Jeff Jackson made motion to cancel this meeting; Butch Neel seconded; motion carried unanimously.

B. July 10, 2023, 6:00 p.m. - will hold annual public 2024 budget meeting prior to regular monthly meeting at 5:30 p.m.

C. Agenda items for next meeting:

1. LKM Information Feedback meeting attendance - July 20
2. Reno County Utilities - water bill increase
3. 2024 budget finalization
4. UPOC - Firearms ordinance amendment
5. Charter Ordinance No. 7 - repeal Highlands ordinance

- X.** 2023 Goals
1. Develop long-term plans for roads (obtain estimate from civil engineer) (completed)
 2. Identify what needs to be done with roads this year (short term) (completed)
 3. Identify drainage concerns
 4. Establish Parks & Recreation committee (completed)
 5. Continue with vacant lot clean-up
- (2022 goals: Road repairs, vacant lot clean-up, signage [completed], future drainage concerns.)

- XI. Motion to adjourn - 7:32 p.m.**
- Jeff Jackson made motion; Mark Kerschen seconded; motion carried unanimously.