

MONDAY

JANUARY 10, 2022

The Governing Body of the City of Pratt met in Regular Session in the Commission Room located at City Hall.

PRESENT:	Zach Deeds	Mayor
	Gary Schmidt	Commissioner
	Don Peters	Commissioner
	Jeanette Siemens	Commissioner
	Kyle Farmer	Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:	Bruce Pinkall	City Manager
	LuAnn Kramer	City Clerk
	Brent Carver	Finance Director
	Jeff Ward	Police Detective
	Regina Goff	City Attorney
	Russell Rambat	Public Works Director
	Jamie Huber	Dir. of Electric Utilities
	Larry Eisenhower	Recreation Director

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting was called to order by Mayor Schmidt. The Mayor instructed the Clerk to note that all Commissioners were present.

Mayor Schmidt reminded the audience that this meeting may be taped and/or recorded.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Siemens led the audience and staff in the invocation and Mayor Schmidt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

- December 20, 2021 Regular City/County Joint Commission Meeting
- December 30, 2021 Recessed Workshop/Training Session

City Attorney Goff stated that there was a change on Page 5 of the December 20, 2021 minutes and it should state ‘comparative negligence’ and not ‘compares negligence’ and the last sentence in that paragraph should state ‘versus private property’ not ‘versus the street and alley’. Mayor Schmidt made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2021 Regular City Commission meeting minutes as amended and the December 30, 2021 Workshop/Training Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peters and carried unanimously.

RECOGNITION OF MAYOR:

City Manager Pinkall thanked Mayor Schmidt for all his hard work and dedication to the City of Pratt as he completes his second term as Mayor. Mr. Pinkall stated that his leadership, organization and experience as a community leader were valuable qualities that lead us through these unprecedented times. Mr. Pinkall commented that Mayor Schmidt had been doing things under different circumstances. Mr.

2 – January 10, 2022 (Regular Commission meeting)

Pinkall added that Pratt was a better place because of Mayor Schmidt's commitment, values and genuine concern. Mr. Pinkall thanked Mayor Schmidt again for everything that he had done during the Commission meetings and presented him with the Mayor's plaque.

Mayor's comments:

Mayor Schmidt stated that he was a teacher of chemistry and physics for fifteen years and he cannot get that out of his mind and he had learned a lot during his stint of five years on the Commission. Mayor Schmidt commented that, as a teacher, he had to say that the best teachers were his students and that they look at things in a different perspective. Mayor Schmidt thanked all of the Commission and staff for being good teachers and for asking good questions, because that was what good government was about and the way it was supposed to work. Mayor Schmidt commented that COVID had taken over a lot of things and we were not able to accomplish some things that we had wanted to and we had to cut costs and it affected how we spent money and to do more with less. Mayor Schmidt stated that we made sacrifices, but we made it.

Mayor Schmidt commented, that with the loss of Ms. Diana Garten, it left us in a bad place and it brought up some new issues and new practices and we had to defend our commitment and loyalty to some degree. Mayor Schmidt stated that we learned that we were not prepared for such a crisis, but we are making progress as we speak and we will keep that up in 2022. Mayor Schmidt commented that, if your team is 15 points behind at half time, you up your defense so bit by bit you can get there. Mayor Schmidt stated that Finance Director Carver was put in a tough spot and we have been slow in trying to communicate better and this was a big lesson to learn. Mayor Schmidt added that the workshops had been very helpful and we were making progress. Mayor Schmidt thanked the department heads, staff, City Manager, and City Attorney for all that he had learned.

CERTIFICATION OF NOVEMBER 2, 2021 ELECTION:

City Clerk Kramer read the election certification letter she had received from County Clerk/Election Officer Voss confirming that Commissioner Zach Deeds had received the majority of the votes in the November 02, 2021 general election.

OATH OF OFFICE GIVEN TO NEWLY ELECTED CITY COMMISSIONER:

City Clerk Kramer administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Deeds and he returned to his place at the dais.

REORGANIZATION OF PRATT CITY COMMISSION:

- **Nomination for Mayor:**

Mayor Schmidt made a motion to nominate Commissioner Deeds to serve as Mayor for 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farmer and the motions carried unanimously.

- **Nomination for Vice-Mayor:**

Commissioner Farmer made a motion to nominate Commissioner Schmidt as Vice-Mayor for 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and the motions carried unanimously.

- **Designation of Official City Depositories:**

City Manager Pinkall stated that the City utilizes accounts with The Peoples Bank, Legacy Bank and Fusion Bank and he recommended that this continue in 2022. Commissioner Siemens made a motion to approve The Peoples Bank, Legacy Bank and Fusion Bank as the Official City Depositories. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farmer and carried unanimously.

- **Designation of Official City Newspaper/News Source:**

City Attorney Goff stated that the Commission had passed a Charter Ordinance that allowed the City to use the City website as the official news source and charter out of an official City newspaper. Ms. Goff commented that we had done that legally because it was taking a lengthy amount of time to get things in print and the cost was astronomical. City Manager Pinkall commented that there would be better communication and we could get it out multiple ways and he felt it was a positive move for us. With no more discussion, Commissioner Siemens made a motion to designate the City website as our news source. The motion was seconded by Mayor Deeds and carried unanimously.

BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ON SPECIAL REAL ESTATE TAXES AND TAXES PHASED IN AN ANNEXATION:

City Attorney Goff stated that Mr. Kevin Cowan with Gilmore and Bell had worked with the City on many bond issues and he was going to talk to us about how to implement special taxes. Mr. Cowan stated that they had some discussion earlier about these lots, projects and developments and he was here tonight to give the Commissioners some additional possibilities. Mr. Cowan commented that it was his understanding that there were lots that were ready for development and the infrastructure was in place that the City had paid for. Mr. Cowan added that the City would like the lots to be developed plus get paid back something for their infrastructure investment. Mr. Cowan stated that this Commission, or future Commissioners, might want to reinvest that money for possible additional infrastructure. Mr. Cowan commented that they had talked about the general improvement and assessment laws that the City had used before for newer subdivisions, which was ideal for new housing, sub-divisions and infrastructures, and the payment in position of special assessments for that infrastructure. Mr. Cowan explained; however, that that Statute did not allow you to go backwards and the City already had the improvements in place.

Mr. Cowan stated that they did talk about the Community Improvement District Act, which was very similar. Mr. Cowan commented that this Act was much more flexible than the General Improvement Assessment Act and one example was that the General Improvement Assessment Act could only be used for publicly owned infrastructure and the Community Improvement District Act could be used for privately owned infrastructures and facilities. Mr. Cowan stated that you sometimes hear on the news of different communities doing a CAM special sales tax overlay, which could be for a hotel or a retail operation. Mr. Cowan added that it did not have the constraints, but again you could not go backwards and pay for infrastructure that was already in place.

Mr. Cowan stated that what they would discuss would be to have the City establish a district and they would be the petitioner. Mr. Cowan explained that the City would be the property owner and petition the City to establish this district and describe what the eligible costs of the infrastructure were and how they were going to be repaid, which would be through special assessments and not a sales tax overlay. Mr. Cowan added that everything else would be under the General Improvement Assessment Act and those assessments would be imposed from those lots over time, which was not a bad idea. Mr. Cowan stated that one of the negatives to that would be that those assessments would be payable by the City while they own the property. Mr. Cowan commented that, while we oppose the assessments because we had already

paid for the infrastructure, we could establish a land bank. Mr. Cowan explained that public property could go into a land bank and there would be a polling of property tax payments and special assessment payments. Mr. Cowan added that property tax payments were not due in future years if in a land bank and special assessments were the same if the land bank held the property. Mr. Cowan stated that that would solve the problem of the City wanting paid back for the existing infrastructure.

Mr. Cowan stated that there might have been some discussion with future developers and rural housing incentives. Mr. Cowan commented that, to read the Statute you would think that it would not work very well because the improvements were already in place. Mr. Cowan explained that they had a similar situation in Abilene, which by Charter Ordinance and the Rural Housing Incentive District Act, and applied to Cities that uniformly did not apply. Mr. Cowan commented that the concern with Rural Housing would be if we could go backwards and identify the eligible costs of things that already exist. Mr. Cowan stated that he thought we could do this through a Charter Ordinance by changing the Statute as it applies to the City providing the eligible costs and include the infrastructure that the City had already constructed and establish what those costs were.

Mr. Cowan stated that the key distinctions were that the Rural Housing Incentive District were done in tax increments and they were for development or redevelopment that increase property tax values and then you take advantage of the tax values. Mr. Cowan commented that, when you create a Rural Housing Incentive District, there was a process of notifying the County and School Districts and they have the opportunity to make a finding that it would be averse to them. Mr. Cowan explained that it really had to pertain to them being willing to forgo those property taxes that would be generated over time. Mr. Cowan stated that this process had to involve them. Mr. Cowan stated this was a two-step process that involves a housing deeds analysis and make a finding of that analysis of suitable housing and the lack of housing that was holding the City back from economic development. Mr. Cowan stated that, once the City had the analysis and the Governing Body signed off on it, they send it off to the Department of Commerce and they hopefully agree with it. Mr. Cowan stated that, at this point, the City could create the District and identify the eligible costs of what they want paid for that in relation to that district.

Mr. Cowan stated that this was a good opportunity for the City. Mr. Cowan commented that, when the City establishes the District, there was a twenty-five year clock for completion of the plan. Mr. Cowan explained that the plan would be to get this fully developed and get increments generated so we could pay ourselves back. Mr. Cowan stated that, depending on how quickly this develops, would depend on what the tax burden was and the tax value. Mr. Cowan explained that one of the negatives of the Rural Housing Incentive District Act was that it was residential; therefore, you would not generate as much in tax dollars. Mr. Cowan explained that that was one of the things that would have to be looked at, which was what type of homes were going to be built and what type of taxes they were going to generate and if they were going to be suitable to start paying the City back. Mr. Cowan stated that that was different than special assessments. Mr. Cowan explained that the City would be able to determine exactly what they were based on by what the City wanted to get back. Mr. Cowan commented that, with Rural Housing Incentive District, we may know what we would like to get back over the twenty-five years; however, the City had no control over whether the general property tax increments would actually do that.

Mr. Cowan stated that there were advantages to both and he had seen where both had been used on brand new development. Mr. Cowan explained that it was usually where infrastructure was going to be constructed and the developer was going to try and figure out how that was going to be paid. Mr. Cowan commented that the developer might ask the City to pay for them and the City might let him know that they usually do that through special assessments, which the developer might think were pricey. Mr. Cowan went on to explain that the Rural Housing Incentive District could reduce those specials by putting in the infrastructure, impose the special assessments; however, they would be reduced annually by the increments that they receive from the Rural Housing Incentive District. Mr. Cowan stated that there

had been one statutory change and that was the extension of the twenty-five years and now they give you a longer period of time to collect the increments. Mr. Cowan commented that that was going to give you more time to get it developed and the values should go up over time; therefore, increments would continue to grow.

Commissioner Schmidt asked how the Rural Housing Incentive District would interfere with the Neighborhood Revitalization program we have through the County. Mr. Cowan stated that it would affect that and those were rebate and abatement, which was where you pay your taxes but you get it back and they go towards your infrastructure. Mr. Cowan explained that there was only one general ad valerium tax and he felt that it would be one or the other. Mr. Cowan commented that it would be RHID's over twenty-five years or Neighborhood Revitalization over ten years. Commissioner Schmidt stated that we were interested in getting more from the sale of the property. Commissioner Schmidt questioned if the Rural Housing Incentive District allowed commercial and industrial and explained that the City had the possibility of some of the unplatted land going to some commercial business. Mr. Cowan stated that RHID was just residential, but it was useful to talk about those types of things for the next development. Mr. Cowan commented that they sometimes run into these types of things when they deal with revenue industrial bonds. Mr. Cowan stated that, if we were going to gravitate to what we had talked about a month or two ago, the simpler process where the City was in control, would be to develop a land bank. Mr. Cowan commented that the land bank would be the owner and he could help with that.

Commissioner Schmidt asked who would sit on that board. Mr. Cowan stated that it would be like any other board at the City, such as the Governing Body, if that was what you decided, but the Statute states that the board would be appointed by the Commission. Mayor Deeds commented that we were trying to address derelict properties and he asked if there were any avenues through a land bank to accomplish something without jumping through all the hoops the City has to. Mr. Cowan stated that the land bank could hold title to that property and if the structure was unsafe and dangerous. Mr. Cowan commented that the City had to go through and make it safe and the City could go and charge the owner through his property taxes. Mr. Cowan added that that was where a land bank could be beneficial and would take it from there. Commissioner Schmidt asked if that was only for the Sandy Creek properties or throughout the City. Mr. Cowan stated that it could be expanded throughout the City.

Mayor Deeds stated that we have had several community members that would like to be a part of this and Mr. Monte Hostetler was here tonight and was chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Hostetler asked if the land bank would be responsible for the upkeep of the property until someone takes over. Mr. Cowan stated that that was correct. Mr. Cowan explained that the City did have to give thirty-day notice before the property was to be sold and there were special rules for the land banks other than the maintenance. Commissioner Schmidt questioned that there were no real funds involved unless the City had to use some of the revenue that had been generated to do improvements. Mr. Cowan stated that the City was going to have more strings attached than newly developed property, but we would want to get the benefit of the sale of the payment of the specials over time. Mr. Cowan added that the City was going to have to provide some type of funding for closing costs and things such as that. Mr. Hostetler commented that it could accept money from other sources. Mr. Cowan commented that, legally, it was subject to appointment by the Governing Body and, if they had not appointed themselves and they were making decisions you were not liking, you could re-populate. Mr. Hostetler asked if they had to have a Commission meeting if they had appointed themselves. Commissioner Schmidt stated that a couple of Commissioners could be appointed and they would still be okay. Mr. Cowan commented that there was a lot of flexibility.

Commissioner Schmidt asked if the land bank was restricted in making decisions. Mr. Cowan stated that the land bank would own that property. Commissioner Peters clarified that, if he (Commissioner Peters) owned property that was run down, the land bank could not help him with that and that they (the land

bank) had to own it. Mr. Cowan stated that that was correct. Mayor Deeds asked if the land bank could make an offer to the owner. Mr. Cowan stated that they could on dangerous structures, because the City was never going to get paid. City Attorney Goff stated that the City has a lot of properties that we have to mow and they are assessed against the tax rolls. Ms. Goff commented that we go to the property owners before it goes to a Sheriff's sale and offer to forgive the assessments in consideration of exchange for the title. Commissioner Peters commented that there were houses that we would like to see some paint on the outside and maybe some construction done on, but we do not want to be in the landlord business and the land banks would not want to own either.

Ms. Goff stated that there were houses that could be considered abandoned and the Statute did not allow it to be determined abandoned until the taxes had not been paid for two consecutive years. Mayor Deeds commented that the City had put numbers together to get true costs to get through these proceedings. Mayor Deeds stated that it was a nice scenario when you consider shooting them an offer and waiving their property tax. Ms. Goff stated that the amount of money that the City receives on those houses was minimal. City Clerk Kramer stated that the assessments that go against property taxes each year was quite a large amount and we did not get a lot of that back. Commissioner Schmidt asked about other creditors that they owe money to. Mr. Cowan stated that the tax lien would be superior to the mortgage.

Finance Director Carver asked whether a land bank could do whatever they wanted to do whether it was old or new development, because they were in control of their own destiny. Mr. Cowan stated that they have fairly broad authority on what they want to own and how they want to sell it. Ms. Goff reminded Mr. Cowan that the reason the Governing Body wanted to put special assessments against the lots in Sandy Creek was that they wanted to incentivize contractors to build and sell quickly. Ms. Goff asked Mr. Cowan how the land bank could help with that. Mr. Cowan stated that, while the land bank owned it, there would be no incentives because there would be no specials by Statute. Mr. Cowan commented that the specials would be delayed until they were sold by the land bank. Mr. Cowan explained that, if the land was sold to a developer or a contractor/builder, that sale would trigger the incentives. Mr. Cowan added that, once the specials were certified, neither the City or the land bank could do anything about it unless it was proven that they were paid. Mr. Cowan stated that, until that was done, the County would continue to collect them, but if the land bank was the owner, they would know not to collect them.

Ms. Goff asked how complicated it would be to get those items set up. Mr. Cowan stated that a CID was fairly simple and usually you had to know if you were going to do a general obligation bond, but we did not have that in this case. Mr. Cowan commented that we would have to draft a petition that the Governing Body would have to approve that would have to have a description of the property and the cost of the improvements. Mr. Cowan explained that we wanted a cost of the existing infrastructure, the method of assessments, two meetings of the Governing Body, which one would be a hearing and an Ordinance and that was in less than sixty days. Mr. Cowan stated that a land bank was not an easy process, but you were not having to publish anything or having hearings or waiting periods.

Commissioner Schmidt stated that he thought that this was something worth pursuing and it was not something that you had to get done in seven or eight months. Commissioner Siemens questioned that this was not just for Sandy Creek, but also for others. Mr. Cowan stated that this was just Sandy Creek and the land bank would be broader. Commissioner Farmer asked what Mr. Cowan's recommendation was that would be a good size for the land bank board. Mr. Cowan stated that it could be the number of Commissioners or you could consider each of you appointing somebody and that would be five plus one more and the Mayor would be ex officio. Commissioner Farmer clarified that, if there was something that the land bank was doing that we did not like, we could override them. Mr. Cowan stated that there would be a process.

Commissioner Peters stated that he would agree with Commissioner Schmidt on the land banks and go ahead and pursue it. Commissioner Peters added that we have two different issues and still need to address the stress properties and land banks were not going to do that for us. Mr. Cowan stated that he would agree; however, that there were two considerations. Mr. Cowan commented that the first focus was Sandy Creek and whether a land bank was going to work the way we want it to and continue to discuss whether there was anything a land bank could do to help with the stress properties. Mr. Cowan stated that he thought there were possibilities, but they were endless. Mr. Cowan commented that he would not worry about all the things land banks could do for the stress properties right now, because that would be a lot to work through. Mr. Cowan added that the nice thing was that it was a tool in the toolbox when we get it created for new development. Mr. Cowan stated that we were trying to take care of Sandy Creek right now and the land bank was the vehicle to accomplish that.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2201 ADOPTING INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE, 2021 EDITION:

City Attorney Goff stated that these next several agenda items were updating the international codes and that was a good policy to do when you sometimes have to deal with outside entities. Ms. Goff added that you want your rules and regulations to match and this was on the recommendation of Building Inspector Blankenship. Public Works Director Rambat stated that Mr. Blankenship also relayed to him that the Flood Plain also liked it to be within five years. Ms. Goff commented that the ordinance had the same wording as the last update and all that changed was the updating of the year.

With no more discussion, the following Ordinance 2201 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 15.04.010 AND 15.04.050 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PRATT, KANSAS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE, 2021 EDITION; AND PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMITS AND FEES.** Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve Ordinance 2201 adopting the International Building Code, 2021 Edition. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peters and passed unanimously.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2202 ADOPTING INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE – 2021 EDITION:

With no discussion, the following Ordinance 2202 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SECTION 15.05 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PRATT, KANSAS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE, 2021 EDITION.** Commissioner Peters made a motion to approve Ordinance 2202 adopting the International Fire Code, Edition 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmidt and carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2203 ADOPTING INTERNATIONAL FUEL GAS CODE – 2021 EDITION:

With no discussion, the following Ordinance 2203 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SECTION 15.10.010 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PRATT, KANSAS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FUEL GAS CODE, 2021 EDITION.** Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve Ordinance 2203 adopting the International Fire Code, Edition 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2204 ADOPTING INTERNATIONAL PLUMBING CODE – 2021 EDITION:

With no discussion, the following Ordinance 2204 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SECTION 15.12 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PRATT, KANSAS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLUMBING CODE, 2021 EDITION.** Commissioner Peters made a motion to approve Ordinance 2204 adopting the International Plumbing Code, Edition 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmidt and carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2205 ADOPTING INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE – 2021 EDITION:

With no discussion, the following Ordinance 2205 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SECTION 15.06 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PRATT, KANSAS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE, 2021 EDITION.** Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve Ordinance 2205 adopting the International Residential Code, Edition 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2206 ADOPTING INTERNATIONAL MECHANICAL CODE – 2021 EDITION:

With no discussion, the following Ordinance 2206 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 15.16 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PRATT, KANSAS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLUMBING CODE, 2021 EDITION AND THE INTERNATIONAL MECHANICAL CODE, 2021 EDITION.** Commissioner Peters made a motion to approve Ordinance 2206 adopting the International Plumbing Code, 2021 Edition and the International Mechanical Code, Edition 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE CEMETERY BOARD:

Public Works Director Rambat stated that Ms. Lori Jones and Ms. Toni Mantey’s terms were expiring on the Cemetery Board and they had been contacted and were willing to serve another term. Mr. Rambat explained that they did have another opening with the passing of Ms. Rita Hitt and Ms. Angie Branscom had emailed the other board members to do some recruiting. Mr. Rambat stated that this was a difficult board to fill. Commissioner Peters asked how often they met. Mr. Rambat stated that they meet around Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day to talk about improvements, but usually every three or four months. Mr. Rambat explained that they did not have much to discuss. Commissioner Peters asked about what they do on Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day. Mr. Rambat stated that they were out at the cemetery to hand out flyers, but the B-29 Museum had gotten more involved with the ceremonies so there were mainly visitors at Greenlawn now. Mr. Rambat recommended that Ms. Jones and Ms. Mantey be appointed to the Cemetery Board for an additional three-year term. Mayor Deeds made those appointments and there was a consensus of the Commission.

OPEN AGENDA:

No one in the audience wished to address the Commission.

REPORTS:

City Manager:

- **Webinars:**

City Manager Pinkall stated that he had registered for two ARP webinars coming up in the next couple of weeks and there would be details on how we turn the process in and what the review pieces would be. Mr. Pinkall commented that there would be another one in February put on by the Department of Treasury and they would be talking about how to utilize the funds you have already received. Mr. Pinkall stated that the State would be doing the first two with guidance from the Feds.

- **ED Board meeting:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that there would be an ED Board meeting at the Municipal Building on Wednesday at 8:00 a.m. and they would be sharing information for business development. Mr. Pinkall commented that the hope was to help existing businesses and to ask questions and start discussions. Commissioner Peters asked how businesses were notified. Mr. Pinkall commented that Mr. Mark Morgan handed out flyers. Commissioner Peters commented that at least there was an effort made. Mr. Pinkall stated that this was what our year needs and to see how the matrix would work with the number of employees businesses had. Mr. Pinkall commented that some might need assistance with their store or promotions. Commissioner Farmer asked if there was a good consensus that people were going to show up. Mr. Pinkall commented that the general feeling was that this was new and exciting and that this was a start.

- **Chamber Director:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that we still had an interim Chamber Director and they were still searching. Mr. Pinkall commented that he had gone to the last meeting and things were moving slowly. Mr. Pinkall stated that he had gone with Mr. Mark Morgan and Mr. Doug Meyer to Great Bend and gotten some unique ideas from Great Bend for child care and Main Street ideas and he was anxious to see if we would be able to utilize some of those ideas.

- **Jerry Moran:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that there had been a round table with Senator Jerry Moran and Mayor Deeds and Commissioner Schmidt had attended along with other taxing entities. Commissioner Schmidt stated that it was not a regular town hall gathering and there had not been any big decisions. Mr. Pinkall stated that he felt that Senator Moran was there to listen and there had been a lot of things discussed.

- **Close out 2021:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that 2021 was a year of change and challenge and we had addressed a lot of issues and came out positive with the encouragement of the staff and employees. Mr. Pinkall commented that we were in a very positive place and had gone through a lot, but got through better than most.

- **Dog Park:**

Commissioner Peters asked why the South Central Community Foundation was involved with the dog park. Mr. Pinkall stated that Ms. Holly Rooks wanted to be involved. Commissioner Farmer commented that she was a big proponent of that. Commissioner Farmer questioned if he knew how the fund raising

was going. Mr. Pinkall stated that we had an agreement that she would do that and it had just started. Mr. Pinkall added that it was under their umbrella so it was tax exempt.

- **Burkes:**

Commissioner Farmer asked if Mr. Pinkall had heard how Burkes was coming along. Mr. Pinkall stated that he had not heard anything either. Mr. Pinkall commented that he did know that they had the concrete drive on the east side of the building and they had moved the fire hydrant. Mr. Pinkall added that they had also put a cover over the water meter so they could drive over that. Mr. Pinkall stated that he had not seen the inside. Commissioner Peters asked if they had gotten any permits. Mr. Pinkall commented that they had for the concrete work, but he did not know about the inside work and he had not talked to Mr. Blankenship.

- **Scout Cabin:**

Commissioner Peters asked if the City owned the Scout Cabin. Commissioner Peters questioned if we were going to help with maintenance and repairs. Mr. Pinkall stated that there were people interested in doing some things inside that would be helpful and the funding was there to get that started. Mr. Pinkall explained that the simple repairs were in the restrooms, kitchen and flooring. Mr. Pinkall commented that it was a project that we need to continue working on.

City Attorney:

- **Track/Soccer field:**

Commissioner Peters asked if City Attorney Goff had heard back from the auditor about the question she had on the Track/Soccer field that had been stated wrong. Ms. Goff commented that she had not heard back. Finance Director Carver stated that he would reach out to her and see if she had gotten that corrected.

Public Works:

- **Highway 54 Project:**

Public Works Director Rambat stated that he had spoken to the inspector for the 54 project and they were sealing the joints and then they would be running over the lanes to see if there were any bumps that needed to be grinded down. Mr. Rambat commented that he was going to get with KDOT to see if he could open up North New Street. Mr. Rambat explained that they would still have to come in and stripe it; however, the temperature had to be at a certain point and rising. Mr. Rambat stated that they were nearing the end of the project, but they did have some landscaping and seeding to do. Mr. Rambat added that it should be wrapping up in the next few weeks.

- **Street Department:**

Mr. Rambat stated that the street department did a good job getting out in the middle of the night and throwing some sand down during the ice that we got a couple of times so everybody could get to work.

- **Water leak:**

Mr. Rambat informed the Commission that Water Superintendent Clay had identified a small water leak on the new water main that goes to the airport and goes underneath the highway. Mr. Rambat commented

that they went out and hydro-excavated it and exposed the end of the casing. Mr. Rambat explained that it was under the highway; however, it was cased so it would not hurt the highway. Mr. Rambat stated that they had been in contact with APAC and they would be coming out to do the repair. Mr. Rambat commented that they would probably just pull it out and find the leak and shove it back in and cap the ends.

- **54 Project cont.:**

Commissioner Peters asked about the drop off on some of the properties on 54 Highway. Mr. Rambat explained that there was a substantial drop in elevation and the contractor would have to go grade that out to finish it. Mr. Rambat commented that they would have to make it so the owner could maintain it. Commissioner Peters asked if this project was on budget. Mr. Rambat stated that it was as far as he knew.

- **Prairie Food:**

Commissioner Schmidt asked if he had heard anything from Prairie Food about the wastewater. Mr. Rambat stated the he had not, but he would reach out to them and let them know that that was of interest to us. Mr. Rambat commented that if they would be interested in a truck load or something delivered, that was one less we had to pay for.

- **Water Study:**

Commissioner Farmer asked if EBH had started their water soil testing for the water study. Mr. Rambat stated that he was not sure they had gotten that far, but he had gotten with them right before Christmas. Mr. Rambat commented that they were going to have another meeting here shortly to make sure we have everything put into place.

Electric Department:

- **Meter Reading equipment:**

Director of Electric Utilities Huber stated that we had a little scare with the meter reading system. Mr. Huber commented that it decided that it was not going to operate after the first of the year. Mr. Huber stated that thank goodness that Ms. Angie Branscom was involved in this, because she stuck with it. Mr. Huber explained that the handhelds were not reading, up loading or downloading and we tried everything from Mr. Greg Garrison, Itron, to the salesman. Mr. Huber stated that Ms. Branscom and the salesman think they figured it out this afternoon.

Mr. Huber commented that we were informed that they were no longer going to be supported earlier this fall; however, they would still operate. Mr. Huber stated that City Manager Pinkall, Ms. Branscom and he took a trip to Medicine Lodge to look at Southern Pioneer's system and they gave us a proposal to get back on their system. Mr. Huber commented that this was a great opportunity, but it would be expensive. Mr. Huber stated that it meant that every meter in our system would have to be replaced. Mr. Huber explained that he had Landis+Gyr, who the meters would be through kickback to Southern Pioneer, because they would be cheaper than going out and getting them ourselves. Mr. Huber stated that he had no numbers now, but we need to be thinking how we would pay for it if we move forward.

Mr. Huber stated that our Itron system was old and a first generation and there were four out after that. Mr. Huber explained that, rather than sitting on our hands, we need to be looking at what we were going

to do. Mr. Huber stated that everything was evolving faster than we could keep up. Mr. Huber stated that if the handhelds go down and do not work for good, they go back to pencil and paper and put it in the system by hand. Mr. Huber explained that we use a drive by system now where it downloads to the handheld and it uploads to the computer. Commissioner Siemens asked if there was a fund for this. Mr. Huber stated that there was not a fund big enough. Commissioner Farmer asked if we could use some of the COVID relief money. Mr. Huber commented that he did not think you could use it towards electric. City Attorney Goff agreed and said it was for water, wastewater and fiber. Commissioner Schmidt asked how many meters we had and if we had any outside the City limits. Mr. Huber stated that we did have some outside the City limits. Mr. Huber explained that Southern Pioneer came to us because they surround us. Mr. Huber commented that they had enough equipment that they would not have to add any and we would not have to supply any to read our meters. Mr. Huber stated that we have about 2800 electric meters and 3500 water meters; however, we were not even thinking about water right now. Mr. Huber explained that you could not do water unless you have electric in place. Mr. Huber commented that there were a couple of routes that were water meters that were radio read that would work so they would work. Mr. Huber stated that he wanted to bring this to the Commission because he was going to start bringing more and more to them maybe sooner than later. Mr. Huber commented that it was a lot of money, but this week had been very stressful. Mr. Huber stated that, if it comes to pencil and paper, we did have people to get the job done. Mr. Rambat commented that it would not be easy because people had been groomed to not have anyone in their back yards.

- **Street light downtown:**

Mr. Huber stated that we get a lot of complaints about the street lights downtown being out of sync. Mr. Huber commented that that was a \$80,000 fix.

Recreation Department:

- **Winter Activities:**

Recreation Director Eisenhower stated that they were starting the winter activities of yoga, karate, volleyball and basketball. Mr. Eisenhower commented that there were about eight hundred participants that would be kicking those activities off this week and go for about six weeks.

Police Department:

- **Holidays:**

Police Detective Ward stated that the holidays were pretty quiet this year.

- **Promotion:**

Detective Ward informed the Commission that Officer Brad Hitt was promoted to Sergeant this morning.

- **Law Enforcement Day:**

Commissioner Farmer stated that yesterday was Law Enforcement Day and he wanted Detective Ward to pass on how much he appreciated the job the police department does to keep us safe.

Finance Director:

- **Land Bank:**

Finance Director Carver stated that he had visited a little with Mr. Cowan before he left and had asked him a couple of questions. Mr. Carver commented that whether we appoint ourselves or someone else, those transfers from land could be for \$1.00. Mr. Carver stated that he had asked him if we were buying land from ourselves and putting money from one account to another. Mr. Carver commented that Mr. Cowan had explained that those transfer of deeds was a small thing, such as transferring the land to the City to the land bank and then, when it was time to sell, the land bank gives it back to the City for a \$1.00. Mr. Carver added that the City could then sell it to the contractor.

Mayor and Commission:

Mayor:

- **Website:**

Mayor Deeds stated that he had visited with City Manager Pinkall at the workshop and he would get a group together to focus on the website to make it more effective.

- **Appreciation:**

Commissioner Peters stated that he wanted to let Commissioner Schmidt know how much he had appreciated working with him the last five years on the Commission. Commissioner Peters commented that he had done a good job as Mayor and Commissioner.

- **Shelter:**

Commissioner Siemens stated that she had been visiting with the Library Director and he had mentioned that the basement at the library was a strong place and he offered it as a tornado shelter if the City ever needed it.

- **B-29:**

Commissioner Siemens commented that her Leadership group had gone out to the airport to visit the B-29 Museum and Prairie Food. Commissioner Siemens stated that there was a lot of comradery out there and we should respect what we have out there and we just do not know what tools we have at the B-29 Museum.

- **COVID #'s:**

Commissioner Schmidt stated that he had always watched the COVID numbers that came from the County and now they were not doing that. Commissioner Schmidt commented that that was a valuable local source that was used by churches and local groups. City Manager Pinkall commented that he would talk to Pratt County Health Director, Darcy Vandervyver. City Attorney Goff stated that the State was taking that over and she felt that Ms. Vandervyver was not unhappy that she was not doing it anymore.

- **REAP meeting:**

Commissioner Schmidt informed the Commission that the REAP meeting was canceled this month due to COVID.

- **Salary Package:**

Commissioner Schmidt asked City Manager Pinkall what the final salary package ended up being. Mr. Pinkall stated that it was the 2% COL from the Commission and he implemented the 1%. Mr. Pinkall added that some employees that were on the very bottom were given an additional increase.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Schmidt made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peters and carried unanimously.

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR:

ZACH DEEDS, Mayor



ATTEST:

LUANN KRAMER, City Clerk