

MONDAY

MAY 15, 2023

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
	Jeanette Siemens	Commissioner
	Kyle Farmer	Commissioner
	Doug Meyer	Commissioner (via phone)

ALSO PRESENT:	Bruce Pinkall	City Manager
	LuAnn Kramer	City Clerk
	Brent Carver	Finance Director
	Nate Humble	Police Chief
	Regina Goff	City Attorney
	Russell Rambat	Public Works Director
	Brad Blankenship	Building Inspector
	Jamie Huber	Director of Electric Utilities
	Larry Eisenhauer	Recreation Director

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

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

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Commissioner Farmer led the audience in the invocation and Mayor Deeds led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 01, 2023 regular Commission meeting. Commissioner Siemens seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**BUSINESS:**

**PRESENTATION OF POWER PLANT OPERATOR OF EXCELLENCE AWARD:**

Mr. John Littleton, KMU Director of Energy Services, stated that the Power Plant Operator of Excellence Award was presented to the power plant operator that exemplifies core values of their community and their craft. Mr. Littleton commented that the criteria for those nominated demonstrates commitment to improving the lives of their community members and excellence of their technical field and acts as a mentor for their peers. Mr. Littleton stated that they presented Mr. Bryan Evans the Power Plant Operator of Excellence Award at the Conference this year.

Mr. Littleton read some words from others in Pratt as to why Mr. Evans should receive this award – ‘Mr. Evans started out as a City of Pratt operator’s assistant in February 1989 and through hard work and dedication he worked up through the ranks to become the power plant superintendent. Being Superintendent, Mr. Evans has been instrumental in managing the City’s 30 mega watts of generation capacity, a well-trained crew combined of 138 years of service on a \$11 million budget. The City is very fortunate to have employees like Mr. Evans to lead the way.’ Mr. Littleton expressed KMU’s gratitude for a job well done to Mr. Bryan Evans in receiving the Power Plant Operator of Excellence.

**CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL FOR USE OF GRAVES PARK ON JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> FROM 2:00 PM TO 5:00 PM:**

Ms. Abigail Skiles, Pratt Public Library, asked the Commission for permission to use Graves Park for a summer water day on June 1<sup>st</sup> from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Skiles stated that the fire department would be grilling hot dogs and Mr. Darren Dunn with 93.1 would be there also. City Manager Pinkall stated that it should be a fun event and that park was not used that much. Mr. Pinkall added that the pool would be open next year to accommodate for more parking. With no more discussion, Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve the use of Graves Park for the summer water day put on by the Pratt Library. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSS ISSUES, SUGGESTED REPAIRS AND POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR WELL #7:**

Public Works Director Rambat stated that well #7 had been experiencing a great amount of vibration and the guys went out and dropped the well head down to reset it to the proper height, but it continued to do the same thing. Mr. Rambat commented that they had Clarke Well and Equipment come in and pull the well to do an inspection. Mr. Rambat explained that they found an old concrete casing and they also found root penetrations and at the 62’ mark they found larger tree root intrusions down to the current water level, which was about 80’. Mr. Rambat stated that the roots got into the bowl of the well and that was what had caused the vibrations and that was confirmed by a tv inspection.

Mr. Rambat stated that Water Superintendent Clay wanted to talk about how important this well was to our summer operations and this was something we needed to consider repairing and he apologized for not getting them the costs earlier to review. Mr. Rambat commented that they had visited with EBH and they had talked to others that had these wells. Mr. Rambat stated that this was one of the wells that nitrates were not approaching or exceeding limits and we needed to consider getting it back on line. Mr. Rambat added that this was not about our future water needs, but it was about keeping things going as they were now and keeping the towers full. Commissioner Farmer asked if well #7 was Champa Street. Mr. Clay stated that it was and it had been drilled in 1943. Mr. Clay explained that it had 12” seams. Mr. Rambat stated that the root intrusion could be the pathway from outside of the well like chemicals or nitrates, so the second part of the plan would be getting the well rehabbed and take down the trees in the vicinity and put some salt around the roots to detour them from growing any further.

Mr. Rambat stated that Clarke Well’s proposal was to clean out all the roots as good as they could visually and slide a new pvc casing down inside of that so that there was a new solid piece of pipe to static water level to prevent future problems. Mr. Clay explained that in 1943 they had run a plug down to the water table at 65’ deep and then ran gravel pack up to 2’ of the surface, so the tree roots had been working into that gravel for all these years. Commissioner Farmer asked where the funding would come from. Mr. Rambat stated that he did not know Mr. Clay’s budget status, but it was probably something that they needed to discuss with Finance Director Carver. Mr. Rambat commented that some things come up unexpectedly and he may have to put something off he had been saving for or we might look at some ARPA money. Mr. Rambat expressed the importance of needing to put this well back on line for the

summer needs. Mr. Rambat added that Mr. Clay was somewhat hamstrung with some of the levels approaching mcl maximum contaminant nitrate levels and having to do some juggling of the wells. Commissioner Farmer asked if the other wells were showing an increase in nitrates with this well shut down. Mr. Clay stated that they were not and the peak demand would not show until June, July, and August. Mr. Clay explained that he had three or four wells that were one rainy season from going over in nitrates; however, we were trying to favor those wells and work the ones lower in nitrates.

Mayor Deeds asked if we blend. Mr. Clay stated that we did not, but may some day with a new system. Mr. Clay explained that each well goes into the well distribution system now. Mayor Deeds commented that there should not be any issues if the pvc was continuous with no seams and asked if it would still be necessary to kill the stuff around it. Mr. Rambat stated that you had to be careful with what you use. Mr. Rambat explained that they want to dig down between the existing tree balls and cut the roots as they approach the well house and throw some salt in there to discourage growth. Mr. Clay added that the wells themselves would be designed to have a liner that would be gravel packed 5' below the water table and then everything above that would be a concrete plug. Mr. Clay commented that then you would be able to trap and pull the water off the bottom of the well and seal off everything.

Commissioner Farmer asked Mr. Carver how much we had in ARPA funds. Mr. Carver stated that he thought it was around \$700,000; however, the list of projects was long. Mr. Carver commented that the budget was tight, but there was no better candidate for the funds. Mr. Rambat stated that Mr. Clay had put back money for projects such as rehabbing the towers and having them inspected, which takes a lot of money. Mr. Rambat added that this was about keeping our system operational. Mayor Deeds asked if they had exhausted any grants. Mr. Rambat stated that they had one for the safe water drinking loans once a year; however, he did not think we could get it quick enough. Mayor Deeds asked if we could still beat the peak demand if this was approved this evening. Mr. Clay stated that we should be able to if they could start in about two weeks and if they found the inside sleeve. Mr. Clay commented that they would have to build the collars that would fit inside, because everything was tight. Mr. Clay added that they had not added sales tax to the bid, so we did need to do that.

Commissioner Farmer asked if there were any other wells close to what we were dealing with on well #7. Mr. Clay explained that we did not know about this until they pulled the well. Mr. Rambat stated that all the wells were constructed about the same time and some were in residential areas. Mr. Rambat commented that you would assume that there were more out there. Mr. Clay added that there were trees around the well houses. Mr. Rambat stated that, with the new parameters on well houses, you could not put them where they were now. Mr. Rambat commented that we could rehab our current ones in their current location. Mr. Rambat explained that you had to be 350' from a sewer main and 100' parameter circumference of the well itself. Mr. Rambat stated that that was why they looked outside the City limits for this well. Commissioner Farmer asked what the nitrate levels were for well #7 before this. Mr. Clay stated that he felt it was 7 parts per million and the mcl was 10.6.

Mayor Deeds asked what the intentions were for tonight. Mr. Rambat stated that, if they needed more time to go over the pricing, he understood. Mr. Rambat commented that Clarke Well had done work for the City before and always did good work. Mr. Rambat explained that \$49,000 plus was a big price ticket and he apologized for leaving the pricing out of the packet; however, he would like to move forward if possible. Mayor Deeds questioned that this amount would cover everything or the budget would cover any of the stuff. Mr. Clay stated that he had visited with Clarke Well today and the only way it would change would be if some type of unpredictable thing would happen and we would have to come back to the Commission.

With no more discussion, Mayor Deeds made a motion to approve the Well #7 project as presented which includes the bid from Clark Well Equipment Inc. in the amount of \$49,150 plus sales tax to be paid out of ARPA funds. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farmer and carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF RES. 051523 PROVIDING FOR A HEARING ON THE UNSAFE OR DANGEROUS STRUCTURE AT 512 AUSTIN:**

City Attorney Goff stated that this resolution was based on City Inspector Blankenship's recommendation. Ms. Goff reminded the Commission that the building inspector could declare a structure unsafe and the Commission then adopts the resolution that would then be published two weeks in a row on the same day of the week. Ms. Goff commented that there would be a hearing thirty days after the second publication and the owner could appear and give any statement to the Commission as to why it should not be declared as unsafe or state a remedy to the issue.

Mr. Blankenship stated that this structure was brought to his attention by a neighbor and this was a garage/shed. Mr. Blankenship commented that he had to go in the alley and peek over the fence. Mr. Blankenship explained that this was really bad and it was shedding nails and roofing materials. Mr. Blankenship stated that this could not be rehabilitated.

With no more discussion, the following Resolution 051523 was presented to the Commission for their approval: **RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR HEARING ON UNSAFE OR DANGEROUS STRUCTURE PURSUANT TO K.S.A. 12-1750, et seq. AND PRATT MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 8.08.010 et seq.** Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve Resolution 051523 providing for a hearing on the unsafe and dangerous structure at 512 Austin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and carried unanimously.

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF ROBERT SCHMISSEUR TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION:**

Mayor Deeds stated that this item would be tabled and explained that other committees and boards had an application for the members to fill out; however, this one had been overlooked. Mayor Deeds commented that they would get an application for this and then they would put it back on the agenda.

**OPEN AGENDA:**

- **Miss Kansas parade:**

Mr. Randy Stone, Elks Lodge, stated that Merchants Park would be having food trucks and he asked permission to close Fourth Street from Main Street to the alley during the Miss Kansas Parade. City Manager Pinkall stated that he would let the people at the Parrish Lofts know about the closure if approved. Mr. Stone commented that it should only be from 8:00 a.m. to noon. Public Works Director Rambat commented that he would put some barricades out and they could put them up and take them down at their convenience. Commissioner Farmer made a motion to approve the closure of Fourth Street to the alley on June 10<sup>th</sup> for the Miss Kansas parade. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Siemens and carried unanimously.

- **Save the bricks:**

Ms. Carolyn Porter addressed the Commission about saving the bricks on South Main. Ms. Porter commented that the red bricks were part of history and she wanted to preserve that. Ms. Porter stated that

Pratt was a small town with limited budget and should not be wasted on destroying the red bricks. Ms. Porter stated that she would do anything possible to save the bricks.

- **Morris Smith:**

Mr. Morris Smith wanted to thank Lt. Sheldon for taking care of the semi-trucks on South Ninnescah. Mr. Smith then wanted to talk about the security deposit for the electric utility and stated that it should be used to pay whatever late fees there were before someone's electric was turned off. Mr. Morris commented that if a bill was \$189 and a deposit was sitting there of \$200, it should be used to pay that bill. Mr. Morris stated that he wanted them to consider that option. Mr. Morris finished by saying that he was available to volunteer for any boards or commissions and he could drive a truck.

## **REPORTS:**

### **City Manager:**

- **Meeting with AGH:**

City Manager Pinkall informed the Commission that City Attorney Goff, Finance Director Carver, and he had met with AGH who would be assisting us moving forward with our side of things after Mr. Carver left at the end of May and until we got a replacement. Mr. Pinkall stated that we had received twenty applications and about six were local, seven from around Kansas and seven from across other areas.

- **2024 Budget:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that they had started the 2024 budget process and meetings with the department heads would start Wednesday. Mr. Pinkall commented that those would be compiled before Mr. Carver left.

- **Sandy Creek sign:**

Mr. Pinkall stated that he had several calls about the Sandy Creek sign and he would get that taken down this week. Mr. Pinkall commented that there should be a ground breaking sometime this week by Klausmeyer Construction.

- **Pool:**

Commissioner Farmer asked if the storm slowed down the pool. Building Inspector Blankenship stated that it had not. Mr. Pinkall commented that there was a pool meeting Thursday. Mr. Blankenship stated that there was some erosion that had run off from the north area and there was some water in the pool that they had to pump out.

- **Park sign on First Street;**

Commissioner Farmer asked about the damage to the park sign on First Street. Mr. Pinkall stated that that should be replaced soon.

### **City Attorney:**

- **Busy couple weeks:**

City Attorney Goff stated that she had been busy attending all the committee meetings. Ms. Goff commented that Mr. Blankenship had taking her around to show her some of the unsafe structures. Ms. Goff explained that she had worked on the personnel handbook and got it off to the League to look it over. Ms. Goff also reported that she had been helping with the resumes for the Finance Director position.

**Public Works:**

- **Limbs:**

Public Works Director Rambat stated that the street department would be spending the week picking up limbs from the storm last week. Mr. Rambat commented that the damage was not what they thought it would be, but they did have drainage issues that they did not usually have. Mr. Rambat explained that the trend did not have leaves and hail.

- **Free Landfill Week:**

Mr. Rambat stated that he had not visited with Mr. Winkel at the landfill yet, so he could not give the Commission any numbers, but he should have them at the next meeting.

**Building Inspections:**

- **Ground Breaking:**

Building Inspector Blankenship stated that Klausmeyer would be breaking ground Thursday. Mr. Blankenship explained that they would start with a basement and that crew would start another one and another crew would go to the first one and work on that and just keep going.

**Electric Department:**

- **Storm Damage:**

Director of Electric Utilities Huber stated that his guys were doing a little bit of clean-up after the storm; however, the biggest issue was trees on private property. Mr. Huber commented that he had a full-time tree trimming crew, but trees on private property were the home owner's responsibility and so was the line from the house to the pole. Mr. Huber commented that a lot of maple trees did not make it and those tree limbs pulled services off the houses and it was up to the home owners to trim them up. Mr. Huber added that those fees were high. Mr. Huber stated that he saw a big hit on the corner of First Street and Main Street and Rochester Street. Mr. Blankenship commented that he had six or seven calls about who was going to pay for it. Mr. Blankenship added that most of those were old 60 amp and were barely hanging there anyway.

- **6<sup>th</sup> Street Park:**

Mr. Huber stated that he had decided to pull all the poles in the little diamond at 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park after the incident Recreation Director Eisenhauer mentioned at the last meeting.

**Recreation Department:**

- **Tennis tournament:**

Recreation Director Eisenhauer stated that the tennis tournament went well except for the storm putting about 7” of mud on the courts. Mr. Eisenhauer commented that the fire truck came and helped wash them down to get them ready.

- **More games:**

Mr. Eisenhauer stated that there would be State ball games this week along with State regionals.

**Police Department:**

- **Schools about out:**

Police Chief Humble stated that school was about out, so we needed to be watching out for kids walking or riding bikes around town.

- **Uptick:**

Chief Humble commented that there was a little uptick of people being out, but they were keeping up with that and making the needed adjustments in the problem areas.

**Finance Department:**

- **April:**

Finance Director Carver stated that the month of April was almost closed out and he had been working on the audit, budget, and the personnel manual. Mr. Carver commented that the budget was earlier than last year and the summer would be really busy.

- **Audit:**

Mr. Carver commented that the audit would be May 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> with no pending carry over.

- **AGH:**

Mr. Carver stated that there had been a meeting with AGH to get a plan for a desk manual.

- **Budget:**

Mr. Carver stated that the budget meetings were the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> with the departments.

- **Last days:**

Mr. Carver commented that he would finish what he could before he leaves and would answer questions since he had a better knowledge of things. Mayor Deeds stated that he had a tremendous confidence level with AGH on board that we could walk the next Finance Director through this. Mr. Pinkall agreed and he felt comfortable after their meeting.

**Mayor and Commission:**

- **Webinar:**

Mayor Deeds stated that there was a budget Webinar on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. and he and Commissioner Siemens were going to attend. Mayor Deeds commented that they would recess if any other Commissioners wanted to come. Commissioner Schmidt wanted to, so this meeting will be recessed.

- **Art event:**

Commissioner Siemens stated that there was an art event at the Bixler's and there were several hundred people that attended. Commissioner Siemens commented that there were out of county tags so she assumed that they ate in town and maybe spent the night.

- **Compliment:**

Commissioner Schmidt stated that he wanted to compliment the City crews that worked the damage after the storm. Commissioner Schmidt commented that they did a good job.

**RECESS:**

Commissioner Farmer made a motion to recess until Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. for the budget webinar. Mayor Deeds seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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ZACH DEEDS, Mayor

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

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LUANN KRAMER, City Clerk