

## **MINUTES REGULAR MEETING OKEMAH CITY COUNCIL**

**WHEN: MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2024 @ 6:00 P.M.**

**PLACE: OKEMAH CITY HALL, 502 WEST BROADWAY, OKEMAH, OK**

**PRESENT:** Ron Gott, Ronnie Lucas, Mike Ishmael

**ABSENT:** Brandon Anderson, Wayne Bacon

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kristy Lesley, City Manager; Relena Haddox, City Clerk/Treasurer

### **FLAG SALUTE AND ROLL CALL**

**Mayor Ron Gott** initiated the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM.**

**City Clerk Relena Haddox** completed attendance roll call.

**Mayor Ron Gott** called the meeting to order, confirming a quorum was present.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

**Motion:** Approve minutes.

- **Proposed by:** Ronnie Lucas
- **Seconded by:** Mike Ishmael
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

### **APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDERS.**

**Motion:** Approve purchase orders

- **Proposed by:** Mike Ishmael
- **Seconded by:** Ron Gott
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES.**

- Susan Doty, residing at 724 East Broadway Street, voiced concerns regarding potential retaliation and intimidation from city officials.
  - Doty alleged being doxed by a city official and expressed her intent to file formal complaints with the City Council and the state attorney general.
- Doty inquired about the number of families displaced due to city-ordered house condemnations, citing a specific family encountered at a local grocery store.
  - Ron Gott requested the family's identity to investigate the matter further, but Doty preferred to disclose it privately to avoid public embarrassment for the family.
  - Doty emphasized the need for compassion from the city in such situations.

### **DISCUSSION AND TAKE POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE CONVEYANCE OF THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY TO CHARMED, A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION, TO-WIT:**

*Lot Five (5), Block Forty-five), Okemah Proper, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma.*

- Kristy Lesley provided an overview of Charmed, a 501(c)(3) community housing organization that assists elderly individuals and veterans in securing affordable housing.
  - Lesley highlighted CHARMED presence in neighboring communities and their interest in establishing a presence in Okemah.
- Lesley proposed conveying a city-owned lot, previously cleared after demolition and unpurchased at a tax sale, to Charmed for their initiative.
  - She emphasized the need to collaborate with Jack to determine the rules and regulations governing such conveyances, citing examples of similar actions in other municipalities.
- Mike Ishmael inquired about CHARMED funding sources for development projects.
  - Lesley clarified that Charmed operates as a non-profit and relies on available funds for investment in housing projects.
- Ron Gott acknowledged the merit of the proposal but suggested tabling the discussion until the next meeting to allow time for gathering further information.
  - The council unanimously voted to table the discussion.

#### **DISCUSSION OF THE STATUS AND PROGRESS OF THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:**

- **Street Overlay Project:** Lesley reported that the street overlay project is scheduled to begin soon.
- **Signage Project:** No updates were provided on the signage project.
- **Airport Project:** Lesley provided an update on the airport project, expressing gratitude to the Creek Nation for paving the access road.
  - She noted that the taxi lanes have been poured and are currently curing.
  - Lesley also announced that the city has received a grant from Oklahoma Aeronautics for [Grant Purpose].

#### **CITY MANAGERS COMMENT.**

- **Building Demolition:** Lesley informed the council that the city is awaiting the results of asbestos testing for two buildings slated for demolition.
- **Food Giveaway:** Lesley announced an upcoming food giveaway event scheduled for the 27th at the fire station.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Lesley highlighted recent improvements in the city, including the bridge leading to Creek Nation, the farmer's market, and ongoing work on Main Street and Palmer Market Road.
- **14th Street Concerns:** Ron Gott addressed concerns regarding a hole in the road on 14th Street and potential fire hazards posed by fir trees in the area.
  - He suggested consulting with Jim Bill to assess the situation and explore possible solutions with residents.

**COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES FROM BOARD MEMBERS.**

- Mike Ishmael inquired about the location of the fir trees mentioned by Ron Gott, specifically if they were encroaching onto the road.
- Gott clarified that the trees are located on private property belonging to Western Seed and are situated near residential areas, raising concerns about potential fire hazards.
- Ishmael noted that the trees in question are cedar trees, known for their oily composition, which could contribute to rapid fire spread.
- Gott emphasized the seriousness of the concern, highlighting the potential risk to nearby homes.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:11pm by Mayor Ron Gott.

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**Relena Haddox, City Clerk**

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**Ron Gott, Mayor**