

**CITY OF YUTAN
P.O. BOX 215 - 112 VINE ST.
YUTAN, NE 68073
(402) 625-2112**

A regular meeting of the Mayor and Yutan City Council was held at City Hall on March 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Egr. Council Members Beck, McLaughlin, Peterson, and Thompson were present. Mayor Egr opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Egr then informed all of the individuals present of the location of the poster regarding the Open Meetings Act and Code of Conduct.

- 1) **Consent Agenda:** A motion was made by Thompson and seconded by Peterson to approve the consent agenda: approve minutes from February 18, 2020 regular council meeting, accept the February Treasurer's Report as submitted, and authorize payment on all submitted claims. YEA: All. NO: None. Motion carried. Claims: Canon Financial 117.88; Cardmember Services 1,857.30; Cole Bockelmann 307.40; Companion Life 219.72; Connie Kroksh 241.84; Cubbys 360.51; Elkhorn Computer 337.50; Gretna Sani 280.00; Int Rev 5,131.22; JEO 2,130.00; Katy Neukirch 192.42; Lamp Rynearson 3,750.00; Laurie Van Ackeren 16.50; Lowes 1,144.39; Lydia Adcock 150.00; Meadsigns 240.00; Menards 413.13; Mike & Stacy Kirchmann 150.00; MUD 420.63; NE Dept of Rev 100.00; NE Dept of Rev 1,803.48; One Call 11.54; OPPD 5,227.95; Payroll 20,523.87; Rachel Spanel 88.81; Roadrunner Transportation 434.00; SYNCB/AMAZON 664.94; U.S.P.O. 227.90; U.S. Cellular 148.93; Wahoo-Waverly-Ashland Newspaper 209.90; Insuf Chk 115.02;
- 2) **Open Discussion from Public:** No discussion was held.
- 3) **Presentation from Guests**
 - a) Terra Uhing, Executive Director of the Three Rivers Public Health Department, called into the meeting to present information to the mayor and council on COVID-19. She began with a brief history on the initial cases that were diagnosed in Nebraska and the causes of these cases. She mentioned that the state is currently at 22 cases with one case being considered community spread, which means that the cause of the infection cannot be definitively traced. Executive Director Uhing noted that there have been no cases within the Three Rivers district but that there is ongoing testing and active monitoring occurring within the district. She informed the council that there was a meeting held earlier in the day between the Three Rivers Public Health Department and local municipalities to discuss continuity with services. She then asked if anyone had questions, and the city administrator asked what role Three Rivers would like the City to play in this. Executive Director Uhing suggested having a plan in place to ensure continuity of service and also suggested the City enforce the 10-person guideline and help distribute relevant information from the Three Rivers Public Health Department. Mayor Egr asked whether there were any guidelines specific to childcare providers and was told that Three Rivers is in the process of drafting a letter to send to daycares to establish guidelines for good practices, like limiting

ten people to a room and not allowing anyone with symptoms to enter the daycare. Mayor Egr then asked for an estimate on when schools would reopen, and the executive director stated that she would expect the closures to last no less than 4-6 weeks. She also noted that the governor had previously stated that, if another community spread case was diagnosed, he would close schools for 6-8 weeks. Utility Superintendent Wilke questioned whether the maintenance department should plan on opening the park bathrooms in the spring or to leave them closed to discourage people from going to the parks. Executive Director Uhing said that, if the park bathrooms are opened for the season, it is important to make sure that they are always stocked with hand soap but also mentioned that closing the bathrooms would be a viable option if large groups are seen meeting at the parks. Library Director Van Ackeren asked if there has been any determination as to how long COVID-19 lives on surfaces. The executive director answered that, while an exact timeframe is unknown as there have been conflicting reports, the general consensus is that it would not survive long on surfaces; she then suggested that the library director quarantine books for 24-36 hours before allowing them to be checked out again. Executive Director Uhing then suggested that the City get some ideas on how to safely address that some of the elderly individuals in town may not be checked in on regularly by friends or relatives. Lastly, the executive director emphasized that the Three Rivers Public Health Department is a resource to communities and welcomes all phone calls to address questions and concerns.

- b) No Yutan Youth Athletics representatives were present to discuss the use of Hayes Field. A motion to table this discussion was made by Thompson and seconded by Peterson. YEA: All. NO: None. Motion carried.

4) **Ordinances and Public Hearings**

- a) Council Member Thompson mentioned that he had requested more information about surrounding communities to make sure this ordinance was setting reasonable standards, which City Administrator Bockelmann provided in their council packets. A motion to waive the three-reading requirement and approve Ordinance 758 was made by Thompson and seconded by McLaughlin. YEA: All. NO: None. Motion carried.

5) **Resolutions**

- a) City Administrator Bockelmann explained that the City received two bids for the proposed asphalt overlay on Cedar Drive with the lowest bid being \$93,159.40 from OMNI Engineering. The council discussed whether it would be worth paying Lamp Rynearson to handle the construction administration for this project, as it was not included in their scope for the design and engineering work. Mayor Egr asked whether a timeline for the construction has been determined, and the city administrator mentioned that the plan was to have the work completed between the baseball and softball seasons. Council Member Peterson warned that those seasons have been postponed and may be pushed back. Council Member Thompson stressed the need to have an agreed upon completion date in writing to ensure that the project isn't postponed excessively. A motion to approve Resolution 2020-5 was made by Thompson and seconded by Peterson. YEA: All. NO: None. Motion carried.

6) Other Action Items

- a) A motion to issue a special designated liquor license to Chieftain Community Club for Yutan Days Festival - located at 108 Vine Street, Yutan, NE on June 26th, 27th, and 28th from 8:00 a.m.–2:00 a.m. was made by Thompson and seconded by McLaughlin. YEA: All. NO: None. Motion carried.

7) Discussion Items

- a) When asked whether they wanted to discuss this issue tonight, Council Member Thompson noted that he would like the affected parties to be present for a discussion on this matter, but Council Member Peterson requested a brief overview of the issue. City Administrator Bockelmann explained that there is a parking lot within a section of City right-of-way being utilized by a private residence as a parking lot and that he is recommending the City vacate this right-of-way to allow the adjacent property owners to utilize it and take over responsibility for maintaining it. The city administrator then described the different methods the City could use to vacate the right-of-way. Council Member Thompson asked how this issue was brought to the City's attention, and the city administrator explained that when a tenant in the property asked the owners to put more rock in the parking lot, the owners reached out to the City, as they were aware that it was a City right-of-way. At that point, the city administrator began looking into the issue and possible options for the council to consider. City Administrator Bockelmann stated that, if the council knows what direction they would like to take on this matter, an ordinance could be drawn up for the next meeting. The council then briefly discussed what maintenance of this area would entail. Council Member Thompson reiterated that he would like the adjacent property owners present to discuss the options. A motion to table this item was made by Thompson and seconded by Peterson. YEA: All. NO: None. Motion carried.
- b) A motion to table this item indefinitely was made by Thompson and seconded by Peterson. YEA: Beck, Peterson, and Thompson. NO: McLaughlin. Motion carried.
- c) City Administrator Bockelmann stressed the need to have council consensus on what the City's policies would be for the current situation while also taking into consideration how the situation could evolve. The city administrator asked the council to determine what their payroll policy would be for employees that have been put into quarantine or who have tested positive for COVID-19. Council Member Thompson explained that the governor has suggested a "lay-off" of sick or quarantined employees to allow them to collect unemployment while they are unable to work. Council President McLaughlin expressed his opposition to the idea, as payroll has already been budgeted for and that, if employees feel pressured to come to work in order to get their regular paycheck, it could result in all of the City's employees getting exposed and possibly infected. Council President McLaughlin and City Administrator Bockelmann also explained that office employees are able to work remotely to prevent exposure. Mayor Egr and Council Member Peterson both indicated their agreement that employees should be paid if quarantined or diagnosed with COVID-19; Mayor Egr then asked Council Members Thompson and Beck whether they would be okay with

continuing to pay employees under those circumstances, and both agreed. Library Van Ackeren then shared her ideas of continuing home delivery or arranging curbside pick-ups of library materials, but the council stated their preference for the library to remain completely closed with no check-out of materials to prevent possible spread of illness to library staff or other community members. The library director asked whether the council was okay with her continuing to come into work with the library doors locked in order to clean, organize, and complete other tasks, and the council told her to continue to do so. Mayor Egr also instructed Library Director Van Ackeren to arrange to have the library carpets deep cleaned by a professional company. The city administrator informed the council that the city office has already been closed to the public as well, and the council told staff to keep the office closed and not allow face-to-face appointments at this time. City Administrator Bockelmann explained that OPPD and MUD have issued a moratorium on shut-offs, and he asked the council how they would like staff to handle late fees and shut-offs for delinquent water/sewer bills. The council discussed the drawbacks of allowing bills to accumulate for several months without shut-offs versus potentially shutting a resident's water off during a health crisis. Ultimately, the council decided to have staff continue issuing late letters and completing shut-offs as usual and to revisit the issue at subsequent meetings to consider changing their course of action. City Administrator Bockelmann then brought up the topic of cleaning protocols and asked the council if they had any additional suggestions. Council Member Thompson stated that he would like employees to keep as much distance from each other as possible, working in separate areas and driving separately. Council Member Peterson suggested office staff alternate days to work from home, so only one staff member would be in the office each day. Council Member Thompson concurred and mentioned potentially purchasing a laptop to better allow employees to work from home. Staff was told to make sure that they arranged whatever was necessary to enable them to work remotely should they choose to do so. The council then discussed what would be needed to have the option of meeting via teleconferencing methods and how participation would be made available to the public. The council requested that the city administrator determine the best way for teleconference council meetings and to make sure they can hold their April meeting remotely. The council also decided to cancel the Easter event and annual pet clinic. The council clarified that the deadline for pet licensing could be extended if needed. The city administrator and other department heads then went through their essential functions and explained what may be impacted by the virus. Council Member Peterson then asked the other council members whether the City should get more proactive about getting an ordinance passed to prevent gatherings that exceed the recommended 10-person limit. City Administrator Bockelmann explained that, since the governor has not yet issued a declaration to provide legal standing for City police to enforce the guideline, the City's Board of Health would have to issue a declaration to accomplish this. Council President McLaughlin expressed that he doesn't feel a City ordinance is currently needed, if the governor hasn't deemed it necessary to do so statewide.

8) Supervisor's Reports

- a) Library Director's report was not submitted for this month.
- b) Chief of Police's report was not submitted for this month.
- c) Maintenance Department's report was submitted.
- d) City Administrator's report was submitted.

9) **Council Discussions:** None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Next regular meeting of the Yutan City Council will be held April 21, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

Darin Egr, Mayor

Katy Neukirch, City Clerk-Treasurer