

**CITY OF HARPER, KANSAS
COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2022 6:30PM
Mayor Scott Blubaugh**

Council met in regular session with Mayor Scott Blubaugh in chair. Present were Eric Barker, David Earls, Kenneth Leu, Lonnie Teel and Brande Voge. Rose Ann Green was absent.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of the February 14, 2022 Council Meeting.

Appropriation Ordinance No. 02282022

January Municipal Court Publication Report

Motion by Eric Barker second by Lonnie Teel to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

RECOGNIZE GUEST

Devyn Hoy was present and introduced to the governing body. She began employment with the City as the Customer Service and Accounting Clerk February 16, 2022.

Deputy Clerk Karen Befort presented the governing body with data and research she had been working on to have the municipal swimming pool professionally cleaned and painted. Given the need to have the pool evaluated, she was unable to source professional services through traditional means. She reached out to approximately eight firms to invite them to perform a site inspection and provide a proposal for services based off the needs they felt were appropriate.

Two firms came just to look at power washing the pool.

JF McGivern – Not interested in taking job due to staff and time constraints.

Paradise Power Washing & Cleaning - \$5,750.00 (clean only).

Two firms also provided firms provided bids to power wash the pool interior and completely repaint the pool's interior surfaces.

Torrey Brothers - \$56,900.00

Utility Maintenance Contractors (UMC) - \$87,556.00

Rick Penner, representing Torrey Brothers was in attendance to explain the current condition of the pool, how the problems most likely developed and what would be required to remove the problems and restore the surface to the best possible condition for operations. He provided samples of the paint chips that were flaking off from problem areas. Their schedule was too full to complete work prior to the swim season, but said they would honor their quote for the work to be performed after the swim season. He made it clear for optimal results the process could not be rushed. Deputy Clerk Befort added that Torrey Brother's quote included power washing the galvanized structures and cleaning up the water features.

The governing body discussed the needed work and associated costs. Administrator Hartson suggested the cost to be paid from the Infrastructure Sales Tax that was originally implemented to construct the pool in 2001.

Considering that regardless of action the work could not be completed until after the 2022 swim season, Council took no action, wanting to take more time to consider any potential alternatives.

Admin. Hartson presented a proposed grant application for the Kansas Department of Commerce 2022 Building A Stronger Economy (BASE) grant. The grant was a first-time, and potentially a one-time, grant for the eligible activities. The activities that were of interest to the City of Harper included water, sewer and street infrastructure directly related to economic development. The City had two business parks that were missing key elements for completion. The Harper Business Park had a parcel of land still available for development but lacked a driveway apron from Frontage Road to the parcel, as well as needing additional dirt build-up. The Airport Industrial Park had already had the highway access constructed with local funds and water utility extensions by local funds, but was missing the sewer utility. The sewer utility was especially important in the industrial park because the land sits over the aquifer that supplies municipal water to both Harper and Anthony. It had yet to be constructed due to cost constraints. Another key project that qualified would be housing if the entity could directly tie it to economic development. Harper was in a unique position because of Harper Industries Inc. job growth (55 jobs in previous two years) and Cox Machine rebounding from the Boeing 737-Max production issues. Harper Industries has more than 40% of their employees commuting into Harper for work because there is not adequate inventory of quality

homes in Harper to accommodate the existing job growth, let alone additional job growth through development. The continued development of Sycamore Addition was an ideal candidate for infrastructure construction for new housing developments. Admin. Hartson had been working with Cyndra Kastens, City Administrator Anthony, KS, on development needs and both communities had similar scope of work that qualified for BASE grant funding. They had visited with Jonathan Clayton, Director of Economic Recovery, about the potential of a joint application. He was supportive of the joint application since it provided regionalism, it also allowed for more opportunities for bidding because the economies of scale would make the project more appealing to contractors. Neither community wanted to bear responsibility for risking the funding of the other's project, so it was asked if individual and joint could both be applied for. He again supported that idea so the individual projects could be evaluated on their own merit, however, a third entity would have to sponsor the joint project. Neither City could submit an individual and joint for the same scope of work. The Harper County Community Foundation (Kevin Alexander) agreed to sponsor the joint application.

If approved, the City would be responsible for 26% of the project funding. The \$200,000 in ARPA funds would be eligible to be used towards the projects. For the apron to the Harper Business Park, Admin. Hartson proposed utilizing reserved economic development funds (\$10,000); for the Airport Industrial Park's sewer the Infrastructure Sales Tax would be most appropriate because it was directly related to the City's utility infrastructure; for Sycamore Addition the Street/Infrastructure Sales Tax was appropriate given that the work included constructing the street and related infrastructure.

Council discussed the housing issue in Harper and the need for incentivizing private development. Admin. Hartson explained that the community had private individuals that wanted to invest in development, as well as hoping to attract actual developers, the problem arises with the return on investment. The investment threshold for development in Harper cannot currently compete with developments in the Wichita-metro area just given the proximity to labor and materials. If the City was able to otherwise fund infrastructure without assessing it back through special assessment, and pair it along with the Housing-Ad Valorem Rebate Program, the investment threshold may be reduced enough to attract investors. As well, by working with Anthony on projects similar in scope, the projects could be packaged together and get more value in the project by bidding a single large Harper County region project versus two smaller individual projects. Council discussed the type of housing for Sycamore Development. Given the neighborhood values, it would be imperative to stipulate minimum standards equivalent to the neighborhood to ensure improved value to that area. Members of council were also concerned about middle-income housing inventory being depleted. Admin. Hartson explained that work was also being done to identify other land opportunities to address those needs. That was another joint effort both cities were working on. There were specific grant opportunities under the Kansas Housing Resource Commission that were being sought to help fund development.

Motion by David Earls second by Lonnie Teel to authorize the submission of the Kansas Department of Commerce BASE grant application for the construction of water, sewer and street infrastructure for Sycamore Addition, driveway apron at the Harper Business Park, and sewer infrastructure to the Airport Industrial Park; providing the HCCF will be submitting a joint application on behalf of Anthony and Harper and the City will be submitting an individual application for the same scope of work; committing \$536,477 in matching funds to be paid from the ARPA Fund (\$200,986), Street Infrastructure Sales Tax (\$114,746); Infrastructure Sales Tax (\$210,746) and Economic Development Funds (\$10,000), to whichever grant receives award, and to authorize the City Administrator to execute necessary documents to fulfill the requirements of the grant. Yea-Barker, Earls, Leu, Teel, Voegel; Ney – 0; Motion carried 5-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS The Street Committee had been working with Street Superintendent Randy Miller on options for the street sweeper.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS Police Chief Burns reported business as usual with the department.

Motion by Brande Voegel second by Ken Leu to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0.

Tiffany M. Hartson, CPM, CMC
City Administrator/Clerk