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**CITY OF CRAWFORD**  
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## **CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

### **FEBRUARY 22, 2022**

Members of the City Council of the City of Crawford, Nebraska, met in regular session in the Crawford City Hall Council Chambers, 135 Elm Street, Crawford, Nebraska on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2022, at 5:30 o'clock p.m. The following individuals were present: Mayor Connie Shell, Attorney Adam Edmund, Council Member Ed Kuhnel, Council Member Ronnie Thompson and Council Member Susan Leeling. Absent: Council Member Zac Riggs.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publishing in The Crawford Clipper/Harrison Sun as shown by the affidavit of publication filed in the City Clerk's office at City Hall. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice of the Mayor and City Council of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Mayor Shell called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present at 5:30 p.m. and announced to the public that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the wall in the Council Chambers. It is also available in pamphlet form.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council Member Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2022 regular council meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kuhnel. The following Council Members voted AYE: Thompson, Kuhnel and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. Council Members ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

#### **Board Reports:**

**Ponderosa Villa:** Rhonda Schoenemann and Stacie Jones were in attendance. There are currently 27 in the nursing home and 6 in assisted-living. Villa Board met last Thursday and discussed the budget for advertising for an administrator – in NE Works and the Crawford Clipper; had several inquiries; set up 3 interviews with committee; debt is down to \$160,000; asked Council to consider using the building and land as collateral for a loan with possible 2.5% interest; borrowing \$200,000 would result in a monthly payment of about \$898 for 25 years, with no penalty to pay it off early. Concerns were expressed about cash flow, not incurring more debt and the ability to service the debt. The Villa is currently only using one agency staff person, have 11 empty rooms in assisted-living. A lot rests on the administrator; might consider the possibility of a revolving loan credit or operating loan. The Council agreed that any and all options are worth considering and they will think about it. The Villa's current CD is used as collateral for payroll. The Villa has been making headway on reducing their debt: October was \$275,000, November was \$246,000, December was \$196,000 and January was \$160,000. Improvements are credited to a higher census, less agency staff and employees wearing many hats and working extra shifts. An agency administrator could cost \$12,000 per month. The Villa is advertising \$70,000 to \$120,000 annually, depending on qualifications, no health insurance provided. The Villa is still looking for used beds.

**Rodeo:** Brooke Bass stated that the leach field on the top has probably collapsed; repair will require a licensed approval, could possibly be done by Tim Hruby or Ty Watson; it was asked if the City crew could

do it with approval from a licensed person. Old West Trails Rodeo annually reimburses the City for utilities. The current invoice is \$1,702.91, with another \$1,000 approximately since then. Mayor Shell suggested using \$2,700 in Keno funds to assist OWTR for electricity and heat. Council Member Leeling would like to see the past history of the OWTR financials. Brooke agreed to bring us the financials. A new event will be the Women's Breakaway. OWTR will probably start their meetings again as early as Friday 25<sup>th</sup>. Council moved to item #10 to vote on Keno funds for OWTR.

Council Member Kuhnel made a motion to approve Keno funds of \$2,700 for the Old West Trails Rodeo. The motion was seconded by Council Member Thompson. The following Council Members voted AYE: Kuhnel, Thompson and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. Council Members ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

Annual Report from the Librarian: Lisa Stocker of the Library Board discussed the Library budget, answered questions on the "weeding" of books as meaning getting rid of books that are in disrepair, have not been checked out in 10 years, and then those books are sometimes sold in book sales. Currently, the proceeds from the book sales go to the Friends of the Library, this is seen as fundraising, and in turn the Friends use the money for the Library. The process of selling books was discussed – that the books should technically be declared as surplus and the money from the sales would be remitted to the City, who purchased the books, and the proceeds could then be transferred to the Library fund.

Discussion was held on wages for the Librarians. There is currently a cushion in the budget, discussion on other state-wide averages and panhandle peers. Since the head librarian's hours have been down this year, it was asked if they had looked at how the raises would impact next year's budget. Lisa Stocker agreed that, if necessary, they could cut in other areas to make up for any increase due to the proposed wage raises. Comments were made that it is a balancing act to find the funds for all of the different departments, but everyone values the Library. It was proposed to increase the Head Librarian by \$0.50 to equal \$13.06, Assistant Librarian I by \$0.11 to equal \$10.67 and Assistant Librarian II by \$0.74 to equal \$10.04.

Council Member Kuhnel made a motion to approve the raises as proposed. The motion was seconded by Council Member Leeling. The following Council Members voted AYE: Kuhnel and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. Council Members ABSTAIN: Thompson. Council Members ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

**Golf:** tournament dates will be provided to NE Panhandle Golf; will probably discuss the possibility of drawing down on the credit line loan; the \$2,000 extra spent on the tractor was balanced out by not needing to buy tires (it came with good tires); strive to do as well this year as last year; the \$27,000 came out this year and let what they came out ahead last year address the deficit; a leaking sprinkler head was fixed; not ready to surplus the old tractor yet; the order of golf balls has arrived; mentioned the community clean-up day on March 22.

**Park:** regarding the moto-x area, last year we talked about doing some controlled burning. There is someone interested in using a big loader to knock the rubbish down so it would be easier to maintain – just need to sign a volunteer waiver form. A sign will be ordered, but for now, Jane Dailey put up a sign at the moto-x entrance.

**SWANN:** meets March 17.

**Sub-committee on Property Sales:** has not met for months. There might be interest in purchasing the City property north of the park entrance; ask Charlie's Garage to move vehicles parked there.

**Water Loss Report:** there were no questions on the report. The percentage of water loss was at 3.32% after accounting for leaks and repairs.

Update on warning siren: the siren is up; waiting on electrical wiring and the communications signal.

Update on the portable generator at the water plant: just waiting on one part to hook up the power for the battery charger and block heater, hopefully done by Friday 25<sup>th</sup>.

The dump truck from Aulick is a very good deal, is in very good shape with a new box and hydraulics. May have to add more side-boards to it. Consensus was to use street savings, if needed, for the purchase and replenish it with the USDA funds if/when received. Any kind of warranty was discussed.

Council Member Kuhnel made a motion to approve the purchase of the dump truck from Aulick for \$43,000 from street savings. The motion was seconded by Council Member Leeling. The following Council Members voted AYE: Kuhnel, Leeling and Thompson. Council Members voted NAY: None. Council Members ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

Comments received on using a service plan for city-owned vehicles included: we have competent people to provide service, oil changes, transmissions, engines; need to address the issue of trusting your employees; waste of taxpayer money; do it on a short-term basis. The proposal was to use Charlie's Garage for the three public transportation vehicles and one other city truck, and use Pine Ridge Service Center for the other four city trucks.

Council Member Leeling made a motion to approve trying the proposed service plan for six months and then revisit it. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kuhnel. The following Council Members voted AYE: Leeling, Kuhnel and Thompson. Council Members voted NAY: None. ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-03 would increase the limit of Keno funds granted to applicants from \$2,000 to \$5,000 and eliminate the restriction of meeting a certain percent of a project.

Council Member Kuhnel made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-03 regarding Keno fund applications. The motion was seconded by Council Member Thompson. The following Council Members voted AYE: Kuhnel, Thompson and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

Council Member Thompson made a motion to approve seasonal wages for park and cemetery maintenance to begin at \$10 per hour and allow for the \$0.25 per year returning for former employees; and \$12 per hour for the pool manager. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kuhnel. The following Council Members voted AYE: Thompson, Kuhnel and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

The Open Meetings Act was discussed. Comments included that group texts and emails can easily become a violation when it involves a quorum or more; violations are discoverable; now that the law is allowing the Mayor to be part of a quorum when only two Council Members are at a meeting, the Mayor should also not get involved in group texts and emails; the Clerk will try to get more Open Meetings Act posters for the Boards; sub-committees can be a tricky issue, so don't necessarily rely on the Act not applying to sub-committees. Board minutes also need to be done and available for viewing within 10 days of the meetings. Board minutes are probably not required to be published, but posted on the City website would be a good idea. Executive sessions can be held for the protection of the public interest (protects the City, such as negotiations and legal matters) or to prevent needless injury to an individual (protects the individual, such as an employee); really should have an attorney present to go into executive session for "legal matters"; must only talk about the stated reason, nothing else; cannot talk about what is said in executive sessions; violations of the Act can result in a Class IV misdemeanor with a possible fine, Class III misdemeanor for subsequent violations to include a fine and/or imprisonment. When the Council or Board does not go into executive session and should have, they can open themselves up to civil action.

Consensus on the surplus sale was to hold it in June. The surplus list will be finalized in April, confirmed with a Resolution on April 26. The sale will be advertised in May.

Community clean-up day, initiated by Crawford Public Schools, will be in the morning on March 22, 2022. Ponderosa Villa may be interested in receiving some help. The City will offer curbside pickup also.

All three HVAC units at the community building quit working. Fire and Ice repaired the two north HVAC units for the time being, but they will probably both need to be replaced soon. Parts have been ordered for the south unit. With this expense in mind, no action was taken on acquiring a new sound system at this time.

Consensus from the council was to move forward with researching a cash-less payment system that could be offered to customers. It will be on the March 8 agenda.

Council Member Kuhnel made a motion to approve the lease between the City of Crawford and Moody Ranches, Inc. The motion was seconded by Council Member Thompson. The following Council Members voted AYE: Kuhnel, Thompson and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

Council Member Kuhnel made a motion to approve the bills and claims. The motion was seconded by Council Member Leeling. The following Council Members voted AYE: Kuhnel, Leeling and Thompson. Council Members voted NAY: None. Council Members ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

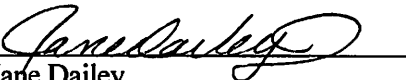
ACH = automatic bank withdrawal; P = Payroll/Payroll-Related

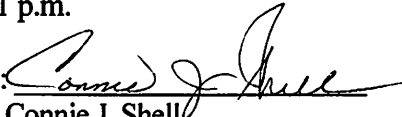
AFLAC	HEALTH INS SUPP	1,030.24	
BLACK HILLS ENERGY	HEAT	1,785.53	
BCBS	HEALTH INS	4,600.62	
CAPITAL GUARDIAN	PENSION	534.26	*P
CARDMEMBER	LIB SU 6.64/TRAININGS/GOLF BALLS	1,443.22	
CORE & MAIN	BACKFLOW PREVENTER	3,500.00	
CRAWFORD RURAL FIRE	FIRE/RESCUE	7,868.34	
DANA COLE & CO	ANNUAL BUDGET	5,370.00	
DAWES CO TREAS	LAW ENF	17,266.00	
DEARBORN INS	LIFE INS BENE	495.00	
EFTPS	PAYROLL TAX	2,925.44	*P
ENVIRO SE	WTR LAB	50.00	
FLORIDA SDU	CHILD SUPP	37.38	
FOLLETT SCHOOL SOL	LIB CHKOUT	922.19	
HACH	REAGENT	358.66	
KELLI HAYNES	CELL PHONE REIMB	25.00	
MURPHY TRACTOR	MODEM PARTS	553.89	
NE DEE	POOL LIC	40.00	
NE PANHANDLE GOLF	DUES	100.00	
NE DEPT OF REV	PYROLL TAX	781.26	
NE PUB HEALTH	WTR LAB FEES	380.00	

NE TOTAL OFF	INK	37.31	
NET PAYROLL	2/22/2022	10,402.47	*p
NW PIPE	WTR SU	1,544.00	
PETTY CASH	POSTAGE/SU	17.14	
SECURITY FIRST	RETURNED CHK	128.88	*ACH
SECURITY FIRST	NSF FEE	3.00	*ACH
SECURITY FIRST	RETURNED CHK	170.28	*ACH
SECURITY FIRST	NSF FEE	3.00	*ACH
SECURITY FIRST	WIRE FEE	10.00	*ACH
SUMMIT FIRE	FIRE EXT INSP/SE	450.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>62,833.11</b>	

Council Member Thompson made a motion to adjourn at 7:41 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kuhnel. The following Council Members voted AYE: Thompson, Kuhnel and Leeling. Council Members voted NAY: None. Council Members ABSENT: Riggs. Motion carried.

The February 22, 2022 regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Minutes by:   
Jane Dailey  
City Clerk/Treasurer

Approved by:   
Connie J. Shell  
Mayor