

# CITY OF CRAWFORD

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## CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MARCH 14, 2023

Members of the City Council of the City of Crawford, Nebraska met in regular session at the Legend Buttes Golf Course Club House, 3440 Highway 20, Crawford, Nebraska on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2023, at 5:30 o'clock p.m. The following individuals were present: Mayor Tom Phillips, Council Member Susan Leeling, Council Member Shane Norman, Council Member April Grant and Attorney Adam Edmund. Absent: Council Member Zach Riggs – EXCUSED

Notice of 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 Phillips called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present at 5:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mayor Phillips announced to the public that a copy of the Open Meetings act is posted on the Club House wall. It is also available in pamphlet form.

Council Member Grant made a motion to accept the Minutes for February 28, 2023 and seconded by Council Member Norman. Mayor Phillips called for Roll Call Vote- AYE: Grant, Norman, Leeling. NAY: None. Riggs – Absent Motion carried.

### **Board Reports:**

**Ponderosa Villa:** Stacie reported there are 21 in the nursing home and 10 in assisted living. Construction for the two rooms and the bath house will start next week. Hoping it will be a short project about 4 to 6 weeks. Mayor Phillips asked/inquired about what their policy is on insurance by the contractor labor. Stacie replied they have to provide their own insurance. Mayor Phillips asked if they check on the commercial side to make sure they have business insurance. Stacie said yes, they do.

**Golf:** Council member Leeling said they met on March 6<sup>th</sup> and discussed a variety of topics, tournaments, where the money goes from the tournaments. Council member Leeling expressed concern about a member of the golf board that has not attend the golf meetings for almost a year now. She would like to get some direction or guidance from the Mayor and council on how to handle those situations. Something to work on in the future. Leeling said we have some good applications for grounds keeper, superintendent, grounds maintenance and club house. We'll be working on those. John Skavdahl said we need to focus on the pump out at the lake and the output from the lake for the water system. Golf Board has one tournament set for the Teammates tournament is set for July 21<sup>st</sup>. There was a suggestion they put kiosks in the carts that would show billing and treatment of the carts if they had been abused. They will be following up on that suggestion. The next meeting was supposed to be on March 13<sup>th</sup> but it wasn't held because they didn't post it. Leeling then added they did visit about a Junior's program. About trying to revitalize the golf program to get more little ones involved.

**Park:** Council member Grant reported they had their first meeting of the year on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Grant said it was attended by the two members and herself and did accept Paul Bernath's resignation. The board is looking for 2 board members because they were already down one. Grant asked if anyone is interested in being a member, they need to drop off a letter of interest at City Hall. Grant then said they talked about water drainage and water that's pooling around the park circle. Will have to wait until it dries out and then look at blading it differently for drainage. She also said Junior

Wrestling is done at the Community Building and we have a handful of events scheduled then a lull which will give sometime to figure out what to do with the floor in the building since it had a water leak on Christmas Eve.

**Rodeo:** Mayor Phillips asked Jody if there was anything to report on the Rodeo and she said they were having a meeting on that upcoming Saturday.

**Hospital:** Council member Leeling said she had reported on everything they had discussed at the last meeting. Said they have a new meeting scheduled for March 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. Mayor Phillips added that we had a water issue at the clinic and they are going to let people in tomorrow using temporary lighting and he's called several electricians and trying to get things fixed as quick as possible.

**SWANN:** Council member Norman said meeting is this Thursday night, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 or 7:00 pm.

**NNDC:** Council member Grant reported their first meeting is this Thursday morning on March 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 am.

**Chamber:** No report

**Library:** Kathy Storbeck said they had their meeting yesterday and they had their third history talk last Saturday and 13 people attended. Next one will be in June and Dale Rising will speak on the history of Rodeo in Crawford. Library board was also wondering since most of the other boards have a Council representative would a council member be interested in attending their meetings. Council Member Norman said he would be interested in attending. Mayor Phillips said if he can't attend to let him know and he would try to make the meeting.

Mayor Phillips asked Council member Grant to report about the PADD meeting they went to last Thursday in Scottsbluff. They are they the Regional version of our NNDC. They create support for businesses and nonprofits as far as grant funds and helping businesses start and remain. Also discussed was the weed program and how it wasn't being run properly so the Federal agency in charge of the program contacted PADD to temporarily take over the weed program because they need a non-profit to run it until they can find someone to take it over. She said by attending that meeting there may be a possibility in the future to bring those sources up our way.

Grant said a PADD member invited them to another meeting in Gering. This meeting was for the Western NE Housing Development. A coalition of multiple communities in Western NE in attendance was 9 to 12. Representatives from Scottsbluff, Gering, Sidney, Mitchell and Bridgeport. Others were attending via video feed. Their main goal is to make sure they work together to take care of their communities housing needs. Many have different housing needs compared to Crawford. A lot discussed was having open lots, lots were already subdivided, and had ready to serve available and couldn't find developers to come in and build. Scottsbluff commented they needed 427 homes. Developer in town homes and gave a presentation on the aging society and how they affect our societies and talked about building town homes for the baby boomers to free up the bigger family homes for families. Grant said they did mention their main concern for Crawford was blite properties or properties that are abandoned. They asked for recommendations on what they could do. They did receive assistance they were told about an organization called Land Bank. They are a non-profit and work as their own real estate fund. They come in and help buy those properties, clean them up and then re-sell them. They take the liability away from the City. Mayor Phillips commented where Crawford is landlocked we're going to have to do some property clean ups and get some things done.

Mayor Phillips asked to approve the resignation of Council member, Zac Riggs. Motion to approve resignation was made by Council member Leeling and seconded by Grant. Roll call vote – AYE: Leeling, Grant, Norman. NAY – none. Motion carried.

Mayor Phillips asked to discuss/approve/disapprove applications for Assistant grounds keepers, Fred Kruse and Douglas Williams and returning pool manager, Buffy Hourt. Grant pointed out those were the only applications received for those positions and where they are returning employees and didn't see any problem with approving their rehire. Motion was made to approve by Council member Norman and seconded by Grant. Roll call vote – AYE: Norman, Grant, Leeling NAY – none Motion carried

Mayor Phillips said they would take no action on #8 as the representatives for the 4H group had been called out of town so they will be moved to the next meeting.

Mayor Phillips asked to discuss/approve/disapprove Transportation grant. Cindy Drinkwalter explained she has been working with Joni Jespersen from Hemingford on the grant and she has been amazing to work with. Cindy said they came to a final number. Council asked which number and it was \$157,409. The comma was accidentally replaced by a period showing \$157.409. Grant verified the amount \$157,409 being applied for grant money. Cindy said 90% is for non-operating and 75% is for operating. Norman asked what determines the split. Cindy said non-operating is bookkeeping and utilities then operating is driver and gas. Grant ask if this was a renewal and if it is a decrease or increase of what we've previously done. Cindy said it was renewal and it was an increase from what was applied for last year because numbers have gone up. Motion to approve grant application was made by Council member Leeling and seconded by Grant. Roll call vote – AYE: Leeling, Grant, Norman NAY – none Motion carried

Mayor Phillips gave the floor to Dave Nixon representing the CRA board. He said he was going to visit about CRA but Nina Anderson had been to the meeting before to explain about the CRA so he was going to give his thoughts. It's not a development corporation it's a tool using tax incentives for development. But we have to decide what the development is going to be and that takes a consensus. Pointed out most of the council is brand new. He suggested to take a tour of the water department, street department and get a handle of what Crawford has. Nixon said most are not aware of the recreational complex we have which includes half section of park, golf course, motor cross and gun club. Said it was easier to apply for grants when it was presented as a recreational complex. He said to pull out the comprehensive plan blite study and he said that 25% of the city was officially blighted and in networking with the other municipalities, PADD, etc the common knowledge there when it comes to clean up is if you can't finish it, don't start it. Because you come off looking worse than you did going in. Mayor Phillips asked when the blight study was done and Nixon said almost six years ago and then commented the previous comprehensive plan sat on the shelf for nineteen years and nobody did anything about. Nixon said they were very similar. He said they only reason they did the new one was so that they could get an approval for USDA loans. There was no way they were going to observe it. Nixon said they really need members so they can continue the CRA. Mayor Phillips asked if the CRA runs under a 501 C3 and Nixon confirmed they were and then Phillips as they are allowed to own property but not allowed to develop. Attorney Edmund said they are a component of the city. So, they wouldn't be able to own property without being under city authority.

Mayor asked to pass a resolution on the No Smoking policy for City employees and volunteers. It's based off a 2009 statue from the State of NE and we increased to include vehicles, equipment and city owned property. Grant read the policy to those in attendance. Stacie, with the Villa, asked if this covers the Villa as well. She said they have a resident who is a smoker and will not quit. Mayor Phillips asked if they have a designated smoking area and she said yes. Grant said as long as it's designated that would be fine. Mayor Phillips explained that most people now days won't buy a vehicle that's been smoked in and rate of return drops. Grant explained the State of NE has had no smoking inside business and facilities for quite some time so this is nothing new. We are just behind the times. Questions and discussion were held about smoking down in the park and rodeo grounds. Motioned was made to accept the policy was made by Council member Leeling and seconded by Grant. Roll call vote - AYE – Leeling, Grant, Norman NAY – none Motion carried.

Mayor asked to discuss/approve/disapprove the hiring of a structural engineer. He explained the city is running into trouble with blighted property such as houses and other property that could become dangerous. So, we'd like to get a professional opinion. Plus look at the pool and some of the city facilities are structurally sound. Mayor was asked how much it would run and he said \$120 an hour from the time he leaves Scottsbluff. If we do more than one property at one time, he will give us a little bit of a break and he's a lot cheaper. Mayor said he called two other places pricing one was \$250 and the other was \$500 plus. The engineer we'd be using the City has used before. Someone asked about the bridge being inspected and the Mayor replied it takes a different engineer. Mayor said he was also going to visit with him about being able to send pictures to him. Engineer thought it would take about 4 hours to the inspection and then sixty-three cents a mile so Mayor estimated around \$1,000 dollars to get him up here. Tony Storbeck asked if it would be advantageous to bring him up here and stay a night and get all of the inspections done. Motion was made by Grant to approve hiring a structural engineer at the rate quoted. Then it will be brought back to the council to approve the

actual charge amount with specific locations. Seconded by Leeling. Roll call vote – AYE: Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY: none Motion carried

Mayor Phillips asked to discuss/approve/disapprove Stumph Sanitation contract. Becca Smith spoke up and said they did not have time to discuss with their lawyer the new additions or changes by the City. Mayor Phillips said they will upon time constraints for the current contract they will take no action until the next meeting.

Mayor Phillips then tabled #14 – Elmer Wilson regarding the Legend Buttes Golf Course and said if we don't hear from him, we will take him off the agenda.

Mayor Phillips asks for approval of bills and claims. Motion made by Council member Grant to approve bills and claims and seconded by Norman. Roll call vote – AYE: Grant, Norman, Leeling NAY: none Motion carried.

Mayor Phillips asked for anything else from the floor. Tony Storbeck shared there was going to be a speaker in Chadron on March 16<sup>th</sup> talking about the state epic consumption tax.

Council also reminded people the next meeting will be at 6:30 pm at the Community building.

**3/14/2023 CLAIMS**

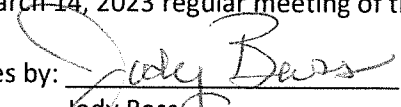
SU=SUPPIES; SE=SERVICE

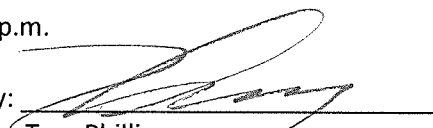
**Checks**

BARCO	Stop Signs, Barrier Cones		\$1,224.04
Century Business Products	Copier Maint Contract		\$85.92
City of Chadron	SEWER JET		\$456.58
Core & Main	Iperl meters, actuator		\$2,227.65
Net Payroll		3/17/2023	\$9,086.65
NPPD	ELECTRICITY		\$1,184.73
NW RURAL POWER	ELECTRICITY		\$212.50
Skavdahl, Edmund & Stecher	Legal Fees		\$1,160.74
Utility Services	Water Tank Maint Contract		\$5,128.75
TOTAL			<b>\$20,767.56</b>

Council Member Grant made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council Member Norman. The following Council Members voted AYE: Grant, Norman, Leeling. NAY: none Motion carried.

The March 14, 2023 regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes by:   
Jody Bass  
Deputy Clerk

Approved by:   
Tom Phillips  
Mayor