

# CITY OF CRAWFORD

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## CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MARCH 28, 2023

Members of the City Council of the City of Crawford, Nebraska met in regular session at the Community Building, 1005 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Crawford, Nebraska on the 28th day of March, 2023, at 6:30 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: none

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 6:30 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 back wall. It is also available in pamphlet form.

Council Member Norman made a motion to accept the Minutes for March 14, 2023 and seconded by Council Member Grant. Mayor Phillips called for Roll Call Vote- AYE: Norman, Grant, Leeling. NAY: None Motion carried.

### 5) Board Reports:

**Ponderosa Villa:** Stacie reported there are 19 in the nursing home and 10 in assisted living. Construction began March 27 and they are making good progress.

**Golf:** Council member Leeling would like to merge the report into items 8 & 10.

**Park:** Council member Grant – no report. Mayor Phillips stated there is one person interested in serving on the Park Board. There is still 1 position left to fill. Please let City Hall know if you are interested in helping out.

**Rodeo:** Jody Bass – no report

**Hospital:** Council member Leeling said she had reported they met on Tuesday, March 27, 2023. Many small hospitals are running in the red, including Chadron Community Hospital but February showed improvement. The Dialysis Unit received a good report. They are also currently working on wound care protocol. The old hospital demolition has been completed and they continue to work on removal efforts.

**SWANN:** Council member Norman said he was working and unable to attend the meeting.

**NNDC:** Grant – no report. Next meeting in May.

**Chamber:** Jake Tollman stated that the Chamber is working with the National Honor Society at the High School on the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. It will be held Saturday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m. at the City Park. They are currently looking for volunteers to run the Information Booth for the summer. The Mayor asked how many were needed. Jake said he could better answer that question after their next meeting.

**Library:** No report.

6) Mayor Phillips noted that a few letters of intent have been received for the City Council opening. It is being advertised in the newspaper. Anyone interested needs to drop off a letter at City Hall.

7) Mayor Phillips asked to discuss/approve/disapprove adding City Clerk/Treasurer, Paula Schoenemann, to the bank signature cards. Motion was made to approve by Council member Grant and seconded by Leeling. Roll call vote – AYE: Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY – none Motion carried

8) Mayor Phillips stated that John Skavdahl submitted a request to remain on the Golf Board. It was moved by Leeling & seconded by Norman the John Skavdahl remain on the Golf Board. Voting : AYE: Leeling, Norman, Grant NAY: none motion carried.

9) Rachel Johnson was present to give the annual report for the RSVP program. She stated that it is in it's 51<sup>st</sup> year and there are more than 200 volunteers in Sioux and Dawes Counties. They provide the Food Pantry, Mobile Food Pantry, Blood Drives, assist the Post Playhouse, and do Bell Ring for the Salvation Army during the holidays. 6000 pounds of food was delivered, unloaded, and put away at the Food Pantry today. 204 units of blood were donated in Crawford in the last year. 84% of those surveyed said they had increased food security due to the Food Pantry. RSVP will be involved in Disaster Preparation again after July 1<sup>st</sup>. They will set up teams to assist in organization, etc. when there is a disaster such as a tornado. These volunteer hours go toward matching funds for Government Funding.

The City of Crawford donates in-kind donation funds through the donation of the RSVP building and use of the Community Building for Blood Drives.

10) The Mayor asked if there was any discussion for Golf Course hires. Council members Grant & Leeling stated that they interviewed Dalton Suchor for **Golf Course Superintendent**. They felt he was certainly qualified for the position and would be a good fit for that position. It was moved by Grant & seconded by Leeling that Dalton Suchor be hired as the Golf Course Superintendent with a wage of \$22.00 per hour or such salary amount. Roll call vote: AYE – Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY – none motion carried. Dalton thanked the Council and introduced his fiance', stating that he was excited to come to work at the golf course. It was asked why he'd been working when his hire hadn't been approved by Council. The Mayor said that Dalton was excited about the job so he had been volunteering some time to check things out at the course.

**Clubhouse Manager:** Grant stated that she and Council Member Leeling had done interviews for this position. They felt that Katrina Keller was the best applicant for that position based on her education, experience, and communication abilities. It was moved by Grant & seconded by Leeling that Katrina be hired for the Clubhouse Manager position. Her wages need to be negotiated. Roll Call Vote: AYE- Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY – none motion carried.

It was asked if tips will be considered in her wages. Grant said she will be doing many more things in addition to waiting on customers, tips will be discussed but not a major part of her compensation.

**Clubhouse Assistant Manager:** Grant stated they were no strong candidates for this position and she would move that they not hire one at this time. Leeling seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: AYE – Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY – none Motion carried.

**Clubhouse Help:** Council member Leeling stated that they interviewed Kaily Klein and felt she would be a good candidate. They also interviewed Judy Gortsema, who would be a returning employee. They would recommend hiring both of these candidates. It was moved by Leeling and seconded by Grant that they both be hired as Clubhouse help. Roll Call Vote: AYE – Leeling, Grant, Norman. NAY – none. Motion carried. Their wages, as advertised, will be negotiated as advertised up to \$15/hour + tips.

Leeling stated that they would like to hire 1 or 2 more employees for the clubhouse. Anyone interested can pick up an application at City Hall or apply on the website, male or female!

**City Street Employee:** An application was received for a Street Position that has been open for quite a while. Tom and Susan interviewed Curt Walden. He is a Veteran who has experience with machinery and welding. He also has supervisory experience. He does not know how to operate a blade but is willing to learn. Susan stated that he would be a good addition to the City staff. It was moved by Leeling and seconded by Grant that Curt Walden be hired for the Street Department. Wages negotiable around \$18/hr. Roll call vote: AYE: Leeling, Grant, Norman. NAY: none Motion carried.

**Lifeguards:** Buffy Hourt-Allred, Pool Manager, reviewed applications for lifeguard. She recommended that Gunner Lemmon, Carly Lemmon, Mahayla Allred, Keslyn Vogel, Kyla Vogel, Kyler Gortsema. It was moved by Grant and seconded by Leeling that they be hired as lifeguards. Roll Call Vote: AYE – Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY-none. Motion carried.

11) Mayor Phillips approve Paul Bernath's resignation from the Park Board. The Park Board accepted his resignation at their previous meeting. Grant made a motion that Mr. Bernath's resignation from the Park Board be accepted. Seconded by Norman. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Grant, Norman, Leeling. NAY: none Motion carried.

12) It was asked that restructuring of job titles be tabled until the next meeting as the Council has not had enough time to research it.

13) Mayor Phillips asked for discussion regarding utilizing the Chadron Natural Gas Group for the 2023 Nebraska Choice Gas Selection Program. The City has been part of this in the past. The group negotiates natural gas prices for the upcoming two years. The more accounts that participate, the lower the negotiated price will be. It was also noted that individuals and businesses are eligible to participate in the bidding group. It was move by Grant, seconded by Leeling that the City utilize the Chadron Natural Gas Group for

gas price negotiation. Roll call vote: AYE – Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY – none Motion carried. Paula will get the City accounts signed up with the group.

14) Miranda Betson, Corn Valley 4-H member and Jake Tollman, Corn Valley 4-H leader, presented a project for the local 4-H Clubs. They would like to make a Quilt Block sign, to go along with the other quilt block signs in the community, to place by the Information Booth. The previous sign needs to be replaced. It will be 16' X 6'. "CRAWFORD" will be in the middle row. It will be surrounded by quilt blocks made by the local 4-H Clubs. Miss Betson shared drawings of the completed sign. It may have to be a portable sign per NDOT regulations. Grant volunteered to double check regulations. The Council members voiced support of their project. Councilman Norman made a motion to allow the sign to be constructed and placed by the Information Booth. Grant seconded the motion. Roll Call vote: AYE – Norman, Grant, Leeling NAY – none Motion carried.

15) The mayor asked for discussion regarding the termination of the Verizon cell phones. Verizon was costing the city over \$500 a month. He recommended giving full time employees a \$20 a month stipend for use of their own cell phones. There are 2 employees who have requested not to use their phones. They will receive a minute card for their old city cell phones for work use only. It was moved by Grant, seconded by Leeling to discontinue the Verizon contract, and proceed as noted. Roll call vote: AYE-Grant, Leeling, Norman. NAY: none Motion carried.

16) Moody Land Lease was the next order of business. It is a lease in which Moody pays the taxes on the property in return for its use. It is land where there is no water, no fences, and no regular access. In the future, it will be available for lease at a higher rate, if requested. It is available for people to use it for fossil hunting, but you have to walk on to the property. The money for this has been used in the past as an emergency fund when needed, and can be used that way in the future if needed. It was moved by Norman and seconded by Leeling to accept the lease as presented. Roll call vote: AYE – Norman, Leeling, Grant Nay – None Motion passed.

17) Discuss, approve, disapprove hiring a forensic CPA for accounting processes and in preparation of the next Budget. Mayor Phillips noted that it would be beneficial at this time to help with bookkeeping assistance, etc. so everyone could understand the accounting as it is set up. There was discussion about the difference between a forensic accountant and a regular accountant. They will offer assistance in the bookkeeping processes, offering suggestions on how to do things better and more efficiently. It will be short-term. This is just opening the process of finding a forensic CPA. No one has been hired and there is no idea of the price. It will be returned to a City Council meeting for approval of contract and cost at a later date. The Forensic CPA is more proactive. The accountants we have now are strictly for auditing not for suggesting better ways of doing things. Elmer Willson noted concern in the Golf Course funding. Mayor Phillips stated that they will be looking at the entire City spending, including the golf course. We cannot change what has been done in the past but they can help us do better in the future. Councilman Norman made a motion to visit with the CPA and find out the cost, then bring is back for City Council approval. The motion was seconded by Grant. Roll call vote: AYE-Norman, Grant, Leeling. Nay-None Motion carried.

18) The need for a Code Enforcement Officer for the City was presented. This would be a way of noting and recording nuisance properties, providing necessary documentation. The City Council President, Susan Leeling, was recommended for this position. It was moved by Grant, seconded by Norman that the Council President be assigned the duties of Code Enforcement Officer. Roll call vote: AYE-Grant, Norman, Leeling NAY-none. Motion carried. Council member Leeling will also be attending the Planning Committee meetings in her new capacity.

19) Council member Grant presented information and explanation of the "When I Work" app for payroll. Each staff member would be required to use it to clock in and out of their work site. It can be used on their phone or at the computer in their work area. It would be set up so clocking in & out could only be done from their work area. The current thumb-print clock in has proven to be user Unfriendly and time consuming to obtain the timecards. There are many other benefits such as scheduling and making sure all shifts remain covered. This new app usage is an attempt to curtail the massive amounts of overtime that are being turned in on timesheets. It will not allow employees to have unapproved overtime. All overtime for emergency situations, i.e., water main breaks, can be recorded. The cost for the program is \$2520 annually, this includes set up and training. More is charged in the summer months when we have more employees. It was asked if all employees will be given the \$20 stipend for their phones to use that app. Grant stated probably however, they can use computers as well. That will need to be discussed more. Library personnel asked if they could use it on their Windows 7 computer. Mayor Phillips stated that as much as we are paying for Library internet, the computers should be updated to be able to use the app. Motion was made by Grant to replace the current paper time sheet system and purchase "When I Work" app and seconded by Norman to purchase and use this app for all employees for payroll. Roll call vote: AYE-Grant, Norman, Leeling NAY-none Motion carried.

21) Mayor Phillips addressed the 90-day probation period all city employees were placed on at the beginning of his term of office. The 90 days are over, and he would like to recommend Attorney Adam Edmunds be appointed and removed from probation. He would also like to continue the probationary period for all employees and address it at the next meeting

22) Mayor Phillips said that they had received a letter of termination from Stumph Sanitation. The mayor stated that the City Council has not accepted the letter of termination. They do not want to give up on Stumph Sanitation. They would like to table this until the next meeting. Lori Palomares stated that a 90-day termination clause was unacceptable. She also stated she feels many comments have been made by the Mayor against Stumph Sanitation. Attorney Edmund stated that the contract was open for renegotiation but it should not be done in a public meeting. Edmund asked if they would meet with the Mayor & City Council before the next meeting. Becca & Brandon Smith of Stumph Sanitation propose to meet with the attorney, mayor & city council on or before April 7. Council member Grant made a motion to have a negotiation meeting with Stumph Sanitation on or before April 7, 2023, and address the contract at the next City Council meeting, April 11, 2023. In addition to this, tabling item #23 advertising for Notice of Bids for garbage collection until the next meeting, if it is determined to be needed. A second to the motion was made by Leeling. Roll call vote: AYE-Grant, Leeling, Norman NAY-none. Motion carried.

23) Advertise for bids for garbage collection - tabled in the previous section until the next City Council meeting, dependent upon agreement with Stumph Sanitation.

24) Council members Grant and Norman presented the dumpster audit they were conducting. They have driven around town, counting dumpsters, noting where they are situated, and noting changes that may need to be made. They almost have it completed. They were also speaking with some customers & businesses to see if they need any different services than they have currently. This is being done in an effort to determine if billing is being done correctly & accurately in our system. They are trying to pinpoint some inconsistencies in billing that need to be corrected. Brandon Smith, Stumph Sanitation, offered his assistance in any way needed. Grant thanked him for that and stated it was more of a bookkeeping audit on the City's part but she will contact him when/if they have questions or need any help. Norman made a motion to table this until the next meeting, Leeling seconded. Roll call vote: AYE-Norman, Leeling, Grant NAY-none Motion carried.

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.

Fred Kruse asked to make a comment. He wanted to publicly recognize Kelli Haynes for the outstanding work she did while employed at Legend Buttes. He stated that she will not be returning this year as she has moved to Oklahoma for new opportunities. He said that she was given a golf course in bad shape and she was able to turn it around into a beautiful one. And he felt it was proper to commend her for her hard work. Mayor Phillips stated that he agreed and had the opportunity to give her a wonderful reference for her new job.

### 3/28/2023 CLAIMS

SU=SUPPIES; SE=SERVICE

#### Checks

AFLAC		\$555.66
APRIL GRANT	REIMBURSE FOR PHONE CARDS	\$75.00
BEEF STATE AGENCY	SURETY BOND	\$100.00
BLACK HILLS ENERGY	GAS SERVICE	\$1,818.62
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD		\$5,438.46
BRANDON SMITH	SE	\$5,430.57
CENTURY BUSINESS PRODUCTS	COPIER CONTRACT	\$50.30
CHADRAD	SE-HELP WANTED ADS	\$80.00
CITY OF CRAWFORD	SE-TRASH	\$143.50
COLE GAREY	REFUND COMM BLDG	\$50.00
CRAWFORD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	ANNUAL DUES	\$400.00
CRAWFORD RURAL FIRE DISTRICT	CONTRACT SERVICES	\$8,104.39
CUMMINS CENTRAL POWER	GENERATOR-WATER PLANT	\$25,403.94
DAWES COUNTY TREASURER	CONTRACT SERVICES	\$17,164.67
DEARBORNE INSURANCE	EMP LIFE INSURANCE - QUARTERLY	\$227.00
DEMCO	LIBRARY LABEL PROTECTORS	\$103.68

DENNIS KROTZ	WATER TEST PAYMENT	\$1,500.00
ENVIRO SERVICE, INC	LAB FEES	\$50.00
FOLLETT SCHOOL SOLUTIONS	LIBRARY SOFTWARE	\$991.35
HACH	DPD REAGENT SET	\$350.22
HAWKINS	SU WATER	\$212.81
HERREN BROS	SUPPLIES	\$423.57
JARROD ALLEN	WATER TREATMENT PLANT GEN	\$7,067.83
MOBIUS	SE	\$836.77
MURPHY TRACTOR	FRONT END LOADER SU	\$194.92
NDEE	ANNUAL POOL PERMIT	\$40.00
NDEE - WATER LICENSING	DENNIS KROTZ WATER III EXAM	\$50.00
NE LICENSED BEVERIDGE ASSN	ANNUAL DUES - GOLF	\$200.00
NE PUBLIC HEALTH ENV LAB	WATER TESTS	\$98.00
NEBRASKA LIFE MAGAZINE	LIBRARY - ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION	\$25.00
NEBRASKA STATE PATROL	BACKGROUND CHECK	\$15.50
NET PAYROLL	3/31/2023	\$10,315.34
NPPD	ELECTRICITY	\$4,743.05
PINE RIDGE SERVICE STATION	FUEL, ETC	\$412.74
REGINA RANKIN, DVM	ANIMAL SHELTER SERVICES CONTRACT	\$250.00
STAR-HERALD	HELP WANTED ADS	\$430.00
SUMMIT FIRE PROTECTION	FIRE EXTINGUISHERS - ANNUAL CHECK	\$294.00
SWANN	LANDFILL	\$8,095.10
US Postmaster	Utility Bill Postage	\$228.13
WESTCO	FUEL JAN & FEB	\$5,239.30
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$106,653.76</u></b>


<b>ACH</b>		
CAPITAL GUARDIAN	PENSION 3/17/23	\$370.64
CAPITAL GUARDIAN	PENSION 3/31/23	\$366.32
EFTPS	FEDERAL PAYROLL TAXES	\$2,701.20
NE Dept of Revenue	Sales Tax-Golf	\$92.69
NE Dept of Revenue	Sales Tax-Gen/Wtr/Swr	\$1,750.05
NEBRASKA DEPT OF REV	STATE PAYROLL TAXES	\$732.63
UMB BANK	INTEREST-WATER PLANT REFI BOND	\$2,842.50
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$8,856.03</u></b>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENDATURES</b>	<b><u>\$115,509.79</u></b>


**TRANSFERS**

WATER RTS TO WATER SAVINGS	\$2,526.54
MONTHLY TRANSFER FOR SEWER BOND PAYMENT	\$12,381.92
CHECKING TO SAVINGS FOR OCTOBER INSURANCE PAYMENT	\$7,725.00
	<b><u>\$22,633.46</u></b>

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

March 28, 2023, regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes by:   
Paula Schoenemann  
City Clerk/Treasurer

Approved by:   
Tom Phillips  
Mayor