

THE OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GERING CITY COUNCIL, MARCH 8, 2021

A regular meeting of the City Council of Gering, Nebraska was held in open session on March 8, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Gering Civic Center, 1050 M Street, Gering, NE. Present were Mayor Kaufman and Councilmembers Smith, Gillen, Backus, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison and Cowan. Councilmember Morrison was present via video/teleconference per an Executive Order issued by Governor Ricketts. Also present were City Administrator Pat Heath, City Clerk Kathy Welfl and City Attorney Matt Turman. Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Star-Herald, the designated method of giving notice. All proceedings hereafter were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public except as otherwise indicated.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kaufman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and stated that there was a quorum of the Council present and City business could be conducted.

1. Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer
2. Roll Call
3. Excuse councilmember absence (None)

OPEN MEETINGS ACT - NEB.REV.STAT. CHAPTER 84, ARTICLE 14

Mayor Kaufman stated: As required by State Law, public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room. Agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Mayor. As required by State Law, additions may not be made to this agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under this section of the agenda and Council determines that the matter requires emergency action.

CONSENT AGENDA:

(Items under the Consent Agenda are proposed for adoption by one action for all items unless any member of Council requests that an item be considered separately.)

1. Approve minutes of the February 22, 2021 regular City Council meeting and the March 2, 2021 special City Council meeting
2. Approve Claims

Claims 2-23-21 to 3-8-21

21ST CENTURY EQUIPMENT \$102.95; 24/7 FITNESS \$360.00; ADA COORDINATORS VIRTUAL \$425.00; ADVANCE AUTO PARTS \$124.73; AICPA \$527.20; ALLISON RODRIGUEZ \$75.00; ALLO COMM. \$2,120.85; AMAZON \$1.29; AMAZON CAPITAL SRV., INC \$164.52; AMERICAN SEALANTS CO. \$179.37; AMERITAS LIFE INS. COPR. \$1,085.64; ASHLEY SCHULTZ \$75.00; BAKER & ASSOC., INC. \$5,453.00; BEELINE SERVICE NC \$103.00; BIBLIONIX LLC \$2,200.00; BIG MACK HEATING & COOLING \$4,100.00; BLACK HILLS ENERGY \$3,486.63; BLACKSTONE AUDIO, INC \$481.23; BLUFFS FACILITY SOLUTIONS \$214.82; BOOYA DIRECT \$68.07; BORDER STATES IND., INC \$83.25; BRETHOURS HONEYWAGON EXPRESS \$200.00; CENTER POINT LARGE PRINT \$55.71; CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE \$1,100.00; CENTURY BUSINESS PRODUCTS, INC \$72.17; CHRISTY RODRIGUEZ \$75.00; CITY INS. FUND \$176,093.53; CITY PAYROLL TRUST \$2,323.42; CLARK PRINTING LLC \$366.25; CLARK PRINTING LLC \$147.68; CONSOLIDATED MANAGEMENT CO. \$33.24; CONSTANT CONTACT \$45.00; CONTRACTORS MATERIALS, INC. \$13.90; COOK'S COUNTRY \$36.87; CORE & MAIN LP \$2,475.55; CRESCENT ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO. \$49.93; DAS STATE ACCOUNTING-CENTRAL \$158.46; DEARBORN LIFE INS. CO. \$120.40; DENNIS SUPPLY CO. \$86.30; DOLAN CONSULTING GROUP \$995.00; DOOLEY OIL \$1,814.62; DUTTON-LAINSON CO. \$5,419.56; DYKES OIL INC. \$51.85; EJS SUPPLY, LLC \$7,665.56; ELITE TOTAL FITNESS \$63.00; ELITE TOTAL FITNESS \$63.00; ELLISON, KOVARIK & TURMAN LAW \$2,888.75; ENERGY LABORATORIES INC. \$353.00; ERIC REICHERT CONSTRUCTION \$36,086.71; FAIRFIELD BY MARRIOTT NORTH P \$96.00; FASTENAL CO. \$765.06; FBI NATIONAL ACADEMY ASSOC., I \$125.00; FEDEX \$345.87; FELSBURG HOLT & ULLEVIG INC \$4,175.35; FIRST STATE BANK \$339.96; FLOYD'S TRUCK CENTER, INC. \$2,595.60; FRANK PARTS CO. \$779.79; FREE CONFERENCE CALL.COM \$4.00; FREMONT MOTOR SCOTTSBLUFF, LLC \$184.38; GALE \$344.98; GERING VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT. \$114.00; GKEK ENTERPRISES, INC \$37.00; GROUND UP CONSTRUCTION \$590.00; HARRINGTON INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS \$86.81; HENNING BROTHERS \$83.00; HGTV MAGAZINE \$39.97; HOBBY LOBBY \$27.00; HOBBY LOBBY \$66.11; HOLLIS CO. \$53.50; HOME DEPOT CREDIT SRV. \$986.88; INDOFF INC. \$495.92; INGRAM LIBRARY SRV. \$1,320.99; INTERNAL REVENUE SRV. \$39,068.34; INTERNATIONAL INST OF MUNICIPAL \$115.00; INTERSTATE BATTERIE/RAPID CITY \$261.90; INTRALINKS, INC. \$3,293.40; JL BECKER INC \$3,320.00; JOHN HANCOCK USA \$14,321.21; JOHN HANCOCK USA FIRE \$6,702.80; JOHNSON CASHWAY CO. \$439.22; K L WOOD & CO., LLC \$38,700.00; KAREN SUE BRUNTZ \$425.00; KWIK STOP \$26.90; LEAGUE OF NE. MUNICIPALITIES \$335.00; LIFT SOLUTIONS, INC \$154.99; LOGOZ LLC \$232.24; MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT, LLC \$508.31; MAGNOLIA JOURNAL \$20.00; MAVERIK \$92.25; MAX POWELL \$150.00; MEAT SHOPPE \$7,603.28; MEDLINE IND. \$380.00; MENARDS \$307.12; MID-PLAINS HOSPITALITY GROUP \$289.36; MIDTOWN ANIMAL HOSPITAL, P.C. \$30.00; MIDTOWN HOLIDAY INN \$219.90; MIDWEST AUTO SUPPLY, INC. \$35.00; MIZUNO USA, INC. \$228.37; MIZUNO USA, INC. \$251.87; MOBIUS COMM. CO. \$30.00; MOTOR CONTOLS INC \$40.00; MOUNTING SOLUTIONS PLUS \$161.03; MRC GLOBAL \$9,144.87; MSC 410526/DOLLAR GENERAL CORP \$13.64; MUNICIPAL SUPPLY, INC. OF NE. \$2,307.45; MUNICIPAL SUPPLY, INC. OF NE. \$(71.76); MURDOCH'S RANCH & HOME \$1,384.68; NE CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENT CENTER \$462.93; NE DEPARTMENT OF REV (PR) \$12,401.25; NE PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRO LAB \$36.00; NEBRASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION \$305.00; NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL CLERK ASSOC \$45.00; NEBRASKA PGA \$100.00; NEBRASKA PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT \$42.46; NEBRASKA TURFGRASS \$90.00; NKC TIRE \$461.00; NORTHWEST PIPE FITTINGS, INC \$129.71; OCLC, INC. \$160.66; ONE CALL CONCEPTS, INC \$192.14;

PANHANDLE COOP ASSOCIATION \$35.00; PANHANDLE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVIC \$1,982.00; PANHANDLE HUMANE SOCIETY \$3,168.50; PATTLEN ENTERPRISES, INC \$52.65; PATTLEN ENTERPRISES, INC \$161.39; PAYROLL \$121,230.52; PGA PROFESSIONALS \$95.00; PIPE WORKS PLUMBING LLC \$1,807.77; PLUM SUPPLY CO. \$268.94; POSTMASTER \$1,493.14; POWERPLAN OIB \$57.50; PUMP & PANTRY \$29.71; REAL SIMPLE \$22.00; RUSSELL & GAYLENE REISIG \$3,500.00; RUSSELL IND. \$501.76; RYAN BLAKE \$150.00; SANDBERG IMPLEMENT, INC. \$800.09; SCB. COUNTY AMBULANCE SERVICE \$316.23; SCOTTSBLUFF-GERING UNITED WAY \$128.75; SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER \$525.00; SHAWNA WINCHELL \$520.00; SIMMONS OLSEN LAW FIRM, P.C. \$770.00; SIMON CONTRACTORS \$1,083.16; SIRCHIE ACQUISITION CO., LLC \$250.00; SOLUTIONS EAP \$11.51; SOUTHWESTERN EQUIPMENT CO. \$5,208.06; SPOTIX INC \$314.50; STAPLES CREDIT PLAN \$49.03; SUGAR VALLEY FEDERAL CREDIT \$528.37; TARGET \$47.06; TERRY CARPENTER, INC. \$650.00; THE TORO CO. \$155.00; TIME SUBSCRIBER SRV. \$42.75; UNANIMOUS, INC. \$1,250.00; UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA \$80.00; VALLEY AUTO LOCATORS LLC \$347.64; VERIZON CONNECT \$38.38; VERIZON WIRELESS SRV., LLC \$1,284.94; WAREHOUSE FITNESS CENTER \$184.00; WESCO RECEIVABLES CORP. \$1,523.15; WESTERN COOPERATIVE CO. \$292.51; WESTERN STATES BANK \$33,503.55; WESTERN STATES BANK - POLICE \$550.00; WYOMING BEARING & SUPPLY \$23.07; WYOMING BEARING & SUPPLY \$22.38; WYOMING BEARING & SUPPLY \$49.64; YMCA OF SCOTTSBLUFF \$357.00; ZAC BIBB \$75.00; ZOOM VIDEO COMM. \$14.99

Motion by Councilmember Gillen to approve the Consent Agenda. Second by Councilmember Wiedeman. There was no discussion. The Clerk called the roll. "AYES": Smith, Gillen, Backus, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison, Cowan. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

BIDS: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

1. Consider Keno Fund Requests

- **Western Wheels Chapter, Studebaker Club - \$1,500.00**
- **Western Nebraska Pioneers Baseball Club - \$22,000.00**

Darrell Bentley, Keno Committee Chairman, commented (regarding the Western Nebraska Pioneers application) that the Committee doesn't do things for private entities; this is going for the Parks Department. His understanding is that the playground equipment has been approved by the Parks Department, and they will help install it - it will remain at the ball diamonds and is for the City. Councilmember Wiedeman attested to the use of the playground at the new stadium. It is heavily used by children during the games.

Motion by Councilmember Morrison to approve the Keno Fund Requests as presented - \$1500 for the Western Wheels Chapter Studebaker Club and \$22,000 for the Western Nebraska Pioneers Baseball Club. Second by Councilmember Smith. There was no discussion. The Clerk called the roll. "AYES": Smith, Gillen, Backus, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison, Cowan. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

2. Council to consider Change Order and Authorization to Proceed with Trihydro Corporation for site investigations and drafting of a permit for a new landfill

City Engineer, Annie Folck, stated that the Cities of Scottsbluff and Gering entered into an agreement with Trihydro Corporation in September of 2018 with the purpose of siting a new landfill. The original agreement was for Step 1 of the process, which was to determine a suitable site and do all of the due diligence required in order to be able to draft a permit. The original budget for Step 1 was \$264,512. In the time since then, Trihydro has worked with the Cities and investigated several different options for landfill sites, as well as assemble documents with conceptual designs and cost estimates to give the Cities a better idea of the overall scope of the project.

A suitable site has been found, and both Cities acted on an Option to Purchase in December 2021. The original cost proposal included costs for site investigations, a significant portion of which was for the drilling of boreholes and groundwater monitoring wells. The original proposal anticipated groundwater being around 50 feet deep. The site that the communities have an option on appears to have groundwater at around 170 feet deep. This is excellent for the long-term viability of the site, but will come with a considerable amount of additional cost due to the extra depth of drilling required for all of the groundwater monitoring.

The proposed change order is for \$233,012 to cover the cost of the additional drilling depths in addition to some additional expenses that have been incurred due to completing documents that were somewhat outside of the original scope of work, such as the Cost Analysis study.

The task order will authorize Trihydro to move on to Step 2 of the project, which is drafting the permit for the new landfill. This will ensure that as soon as all of the testing, surveys, and analysis have been

complete, Trihydro will be able to move on to drafting the permit for the new landfill. This is anticipated to take place between September 2021 and February 2023. This will ensure that we have plenty of time to complete the final landfill design, bid, and construct the project before the existing Gering landfill is due to sunset in 2026. There is no change in cost for Step 2 from the original proposal. The cost for Step 2 will be \$186,296.

Motion by Councilmember Wiedeman to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign a Change Order and Authorization to Proceed with Trihydro Corporation for site investigations and drafting of a permit for a new landfill. Second by Councilmember Smith. There was no discussion. The Clerk called the roll. "AYES": Smith, Gillen, Backus, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison, Cowan. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

3. Fire Department Annual Report

Chief Flowers thanked Council for the opportunity to report on the Fire Department's activities this past year. The new records management system implemented in 2019 allows them to create various graphs and data that is easier to read. The report outlines all activities at the Fire Department for 2020.

2020 was a record-breaking year supporting the needs of the community. The department again saw an increase in calls for service - up 85, or 11% more than the previous year, and a large overlap in calls (up 8%). The first pages in the report provides various data on incident statistics for 2020. They had a substantial increase in fire response over previous years. They ran 76 total fires which accounted for 10% of the incidents. 65% of their response related to EMS and the remaining 25% was various fire-related incidents. They averaged 11 personnel per call; the busiest month was July.

Property affected by fire was around \$9.7 million in valuation, and fire loss were estimated at just over \$618,000 (up from the previous year). In communicating with other agencies, it appeared the nationwide trend had a direct relationship with the lockdown and people staying home. In March and April alone, they were responding to multiple fires each week. EMS calls took the opposite turn, seeing a drastic drop in requests for an ambulance; then October and November came. Gering seemed to be the epicenter of the COVID outbreak. In November they ran 51 confirmed COVID patients, which was more than the rest of the year combined. Personnel did an outstanding job following infectious control procedures and maintaining humility with the patients they encountered. men and women of the department exceeded expectations and were able to mitigate exposures effectively.

They spent in total seven days and seven nights on large wildfire events within the Wildcat Hills. They also provided fire standby for 17 nights during the filming a reality TV show south of Gering. Even though they suspended non-essential trainings and activities, they focused on company drills every week and limited out-of-town training. Even with community events cancelled, in total, the department captured 16,546 in man hours, meeting the needs of our communities. That is the equivalent of 8 full-time employees.

Through the support from the Mayor and Council, they budgeted and purchased a 2020 fire engine that replaced a 23-year-old apparatus. They feel very lucky to have this high-tech fire engine.

This is the twentieth year of the Mutual Finance Assistance Fund from the State of Nebraska. The City received \$45,421 and the Rural Board received \$22,264. The Fire Department also received three additional grants totaling \$20,600 for PPE, training and fire prevention equipment and one Keno grant for \$24,000 to update radios. For services provided during the filming of a reality TV show, the department received \$18,130. Members spent 30 days on requests for fires in Colorado, Idaho and South Dakota. Including \$30,000 in CARES ACT funding, the department has seen approximately \$210,000 additional revenue for the City and Rural Board.

Finally, the department was recognized for commitment to keeping fires small. Nebraska State Forester, John Erixson, awarded the fire department the prestigious State Forester Award in 2020. Our department has provided local and state leadership in fire mitigation and has led the way in innovation through developing training opportunities for the state. They have worked with state agencies and developed cooperater agreements that paves the way for fire departments to obtain critical experience and additional revenue. This award is the cumulative work of many volunteers over several years and they were very humbled to receive such recognition.

On behalf of the Gering Fire Department, Chief Flowers thanked Mayor Kaufman and the City Council for their commitment to public safety and continued support of the fire department.

Councilmember Backus asked what the current Covid numbers are like; Chief Flowers replied, minimal; maybe less than one per week.

4. Appointment of Ward IV City Council candidate

Mayor Kaufman stated this was a really tough decision; he and the Council really appreciate both of the applicants putting themselves out there for this process and willing to serve in this capacity. Both candidates are great representations of our community. He encouraged the candidates, no matter how it ends, to consider serving in the community in the future; there are always opportunities every two years. With that, Mayor Kaufman entertained a motion to approve the appointment of Cody Bohl as the new City Council Member to fill the unexpired term in Ward IV.

Motion by Councilmember Gillen to approve the appointment of Cody Bohl as the new City Council Member to fill the unexpired term in Ward IV. Second by Councilmember Wiedeman. There was no discussion. The Clerk called the roll. "AYES": Smith, Gillen, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison. "NAYS": Backus, Cowan. Abstaining: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

CLOSED SESSION: (Council reserves the right to enter into closed session if deemed necessary.) None

ADJOURN:

Motion by Councilmember Gillen to adjourn. Second by Councilmember Cowan. There was no discussion. The Clerk called the roll. "AYES": Smith, Gillen, Backus, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison, Cowan. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.



Mark A. Kaufman, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathleen J. Welfl, City Clerk

