

Minutes  
Special City Council  
May 16, 2017

The City Council of the City of Tecumseh, Nebraska, met in a special session in the Utilities Conference Room at the Utility Shop on the 16th day of May 1, 2017, at 7:00 p.m., in a publicly convened session, the same being open to the public and having been preceded by advance publicized notice, a copy of the same being annexed to the minutes of the meeting as Attachment #1, said attachment showing how the availability of an agenda of then known subjects was communicated and the time and specific place of the holding of this notice, the same having been transmitted to each Council Member simultaneously. The Mayor presided and the City Clerk recorded the proceedings.

**Routine Business**

The following Council Members were present: Renee Carter, Travis Goracke, Jesse Grof (arrived at 7:01 p.m.), Kim Jansen, Jim Philippi, and Jim Reed. Others present: 3 Staff, 1 media outlet, and approximately 25 members of the public.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M.

Mayor Montz read a statement of availability of current copy of Open Meeting Act.

Additions or Corrections to Agenda – None.

**Regular Agenda**

New Pool Design

- a. Pool Committee Recommendation – Diane Newman made the presentation. She reviewed the history of the committee's work over the past year and presented the proposed pool design with one new modification. The committee recommends removing parking on the south side of Clay Street and adding a new parking lot on the west side of the pool. The proposed change was presented with an engineer's drawing. The change would add \$10-12K to the project, but addresses safety concerns with children crossing the street to get to the pool, and concerns about a narrow driving lane on Clay Street with parking on both sides of the street. The committee recommends the current design with the parking change at a total estimated cost of \$3,230,006.
- b. Council Discussion/Action – Council members each provided some input on the design and need for the project. Renee Carter likes the parking change and added safety for the kids (not having to cross the street). Jim Reed said we need to do something now. He likes the new parking proposal, thinks the City is in a better financial position than ever before. Likes the \$250K goal the Tecumseh Aquatic Association has set for fundraising. The project is not going to get any cheaper and would like to see the project move ahead. He indicated it is a struggle keeping the current pool open and that we owe it to future generations to build a new pool. Even if it would affect property taxes he would be glad to pay more for this project. He feels it is time to move ahead. He has heard comments from people that they would consider moving if we don't keep a pool in town. Jim Philippi said that we need a new pool now. It is a necessity for our children and

grandchildren. Travis Goracke indicated that he was on the Pool Committee and that the plans are the best we could come up with. The project needs to happen – it is comparable with other communities of our size. We need to look at the future of the community. Kim Jansen likes the design – particularly the zero entry and shaded areas. She thinks we need to do something now. Jesse Grof said he agreed with most everyone. He indicated it doesn't matter what he thinks because he represents his constituents who say they don't want a new pool because of the price. He also noted that the price does not include engineering costs.

Public comments were also heard at this time. Steve Mercure asked what the number of passes sold were and the average number of people at the pool daily. Thinks we should consider adding a wellness center to the project with an indoor pool. Chuck Murphy thinks planning for competitive swimming seems outrageous and doubts that any nearby communities participate in swimming competitions. Said we should build 3 splash pads around town and just see what gets used more – the pool or splash pads. Takes no chemicals, little water, and no lifeguards. He said he thinks the swimming pool is a waste of time. Tammie Parrish thinks the pool is a good idea. The current pool is old and we are dumping too much money into an old pool. Olivia Little said she used the pool everyday growing up, but she now finds herself taking her kids to larger cities with larger water parks with amenities. A new pool will draw younger people to town. You won't draw people here if you remove amenities like the pool. Jed Droge thinks the new pool is a wonderful idea. He supports growth and amenities for young families. He indicated that research shows young millennials are willing to take cuts in pay and benefits in favor of amenities, like a pool, in their community. Dave Holthus said the pool is for all generations, not just the kids. The zero entry design makes it easier for everyone to get into the pool. It can also be used for physical therapy and exercise for older patrons. Brienne Stephens works at the school and works with the parents and kids everyday – she sees the kids at the pool and park everyday. If we did not have a pool they would just be playing video games all day – is that what we want? She also said that people in Nebraska need to know how to swim – swimming lessons are important in our community. Diane Newman responded to an earlier comment about having 6 lap lanes – she said it costs about \$75K for the additional lane for competitions and that it helps plan for future activities at the pool. Jim Philippi said we need to look 20-30 years down the road – the 6 lanes is for the future.

Motion by Carter, second by Reed to accept the design of the pool as presented (with parking change). Voting Aye: Carter, Goracke, Grof, Jansen, Philippi, Reed. Voting Nay: None. Motion Carried.

Pool Construction Timeline – Discussed whether we think we can keep the pool open this year and next year, or if we should plan not to open next year and move the construction timeline up to March 2018 (instead of August 2018). Jim Reed indicated that we don't know if we can keep it open, but we don't want to put more money into the old pool. Motion by Reed, second by Carter to keep the current construction timeline proposed by the engineer (start construction in August 2018). Voting Aye: Carter, Goracke, Grof, Jansen, Philippi, Reed. Voting Nay: None. Motion Carried.

Pool Financing Proposals – Ms. Beethe presented some documentation outlining some projected financing options for the council to consider. She showed the minimum amount that the City has

already committed to saving per year for the pool project. These savings would equal about \$1.5 million, then showed about \$400K in proposed grants. The Tecumseh Aquatic Association has set a \$250K fundraising goal for the project as well. Additional small foundation grants will also be sought to bring the amount to finance down. She proposed that the remaining balance after these options be borrowed via bank loans. Steve Mercure addressed the Council and indicated that they need to uphold previous commitments to fund the match for the Downtown Historic Square project. He did not think it was appropriate for the Council to divert any saved DTR money for the pool project. He is concerned that the total project cost will be higher than our current agreement indicates and that we need to save additional money for the DTR project. Staff showed that another \$150-\$300K (as projected by Doug Goracke) could be reserved for the project if necessary before construction is expected in 2021/2022. These funds can be allocated in future budget cycles. Jesse Grof proposed taking the project to a vote of the people. It was generally felt that this is not needed because the proposal presented does not recommend any property tax or sales tax increases to fund the project. It can be funded with current revenue streams. Motion by Reed, second by Philippi to accept the financing proposal recommended by Ms. Beethe. Voting Aye: Carter, Goracke, Jansen, Philippi, Reed. Voting Nay: Grof. Motion Carried.

Hiring of Lifeguards – List of lifeguards proposed for hiring was presented. Motion by Grof, second by Carter to approve the list as presented. Voting Aye: Carter, Goracke, Grof, Jansen, Philippi, Reed. Voting Nay: None. Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 P.M.

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Lisa Beethe, City Clerk

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William J. Montz, Sr., Mayor