



WATONGA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 1, 2020

In accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Law, this Agenda was posted November 25, 2020 Prior to 5:00 PM. at the Watonga City Hall, on the door of the City Clerk's office, located at 117 North Weigle, Watonga, Oklahoma.

The City Council of the City of Watonga did meet at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 in the Auditorium of Watonga City Hall, located at 117 North Weigle, Watonga, Oklahoma for a scheduled meeting.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:

Council Present: Julie Almaguer, Kendra Baker, Travis Bradt, Ryan Bruner, Allen Cowan, Mina Green and Bill Seitter. Also present, Mayor Gary Olsen, City Manger Larry Mitchell, City Attorney Jared Harrison and City Clerk Verlen Bills. Lindsey Doyel absent.

Declaration of a Quorum: at 6:01 PM

CONSENT AGENDA

A. **Approve the Minutes** of the previous Council Meeting held November 17, 2020.

Allen Cowan made the motion to approve the Minutes from the previous Council Meeting held November 17, 2020.

Travis Bradt seconded the motion and added that he wanted to ask a question about the Sales tax and Use tax that the City is required to refund.

After several minutes of discussion on Sales tax and Use tax, Mayor Olsen called for a vote to approve the Minutes of the previous Council Meeting held November 17, 2020;

J. Almaguer abstained K. Baker abstained T. Bradt aye R. Bruner aye

A. Cowan aye M. Green abstained B. Seitter aye

Vote was considered a tie, Mayor Gary Olsen voted aye, motion carried.

ACTION AGENDA

1. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Resolution No. 2020-16 fixing the date of the Election in the City Of Watonga, Oklahoma; Further designating the Offices to be filled at said Election, including the qualifications and voting information necessary for conducting said Election; Directing submission of same to the Secretary of Blaine County Election Board; And Notice of Election.

City Manger Larry Mitchell: We verified the dates with the Blaine County Election Board. The Election will be Tuesday, April 6, 2021 and the filing period will be February 1 through February 3, 2021. Wards One and Two will be for four year terms. Ward Three, Ward Four and the Council Member at-large will be for 2 year terms initially.

As a City Manager, what bothers me, in section six, if a runoff election is required it would be scheduled for June 8, 2021. The City has to have a budget adopted no later than June 20, 2021. This could be tight, trying to get a budget approve between June 8 and June 20.

Mr. Cowan added, especially if a runoff is required for two different Wards.

Mr. Seitter noted that this could be a serious issue when three Wards are up for election.

Mayor Olsen suggested that a Council Member could be appointed, at least temporarily.

City Attorney Jared Harrison: After this first election, in the event that a runoff election is required, then the current Council Member will continue to serve until a new Council Member is seated. This first election should be the only time this might be an issue.

Mr. Bruner asked as to which Ward is Roman Nose Park in. The Ward map (handed out at the meeting) did not show that area.

Mayor Olsen replied that the Park is in Ward 4. This Ward is all of the north side of Watonga and extends to and includes most of Roman Nose Park.

Alan Cowan made the motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-16 fixing the date of the Election in the City Of Watonga, Oklahoma; Further designating the Offices to be filled at said Election, including the qualifications and voting information necessary for conducting said Election; Directing submission of same to the Secretary of Blaine County Election Board; And Notice of Election. Motion was seconded by Kendra Baker.

Mayor Olsen called for a vote;

J. Almaguer aye	K. Baker aye	T. Bradt aye	R. Bruner aye
A. Cowan aye	M. Green aye	B. Seitter aye	

Motion carried.

- 2. Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve Resolution No. 2020-17 instructing the Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group to either refund the full amount of \$26,867.68 to the City of Watonga or to maintain the City's Escrow Account.

Mr. Mitchell: This is what we see every year, if we have a good history with Worker's Comp. We pay in a monthly premium to Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group (OMAG). At the end of the year OMAG looks at our experience and history, and then offers to either reimburse the City a certain amount of our premium or have that amount applied to next year's premium. This year, we are recommending that the Council take the pay-out and not rollover the \$26,000 into an escrow for next year's premium.

Mr. Seitter asked how much are our monthly premiums?

Mr. Mitchell replied that he did not know and referred to City Treasurer Rodney Jacks.

Mr. Jacks did not know either. He offered to look this up.

City Clerk Verlen Bills suggested that an accurate number for monthly premiums may be difficult to determine as we have rolled over this escrow in previous years.

Mr. Cowan: If we take this cash, then we will be paying the premiums from next year's budget?

Mr. Mitchell: Every year we pay into this program. Last year, if we applied this refund to the premium, then obviously we would pay a lower amount. As our experiences (claims) are going down, I would think that the premium for next year will be lower anyway. I can not tell you what the amount will be, these rates are set in June. I would guess that a refund of \$26,000 is fairly significant. Our annual premiums might be \$80,000 or \$100,000. If that is the case, then we are saving 20 to 25 percent?

Mr. Seitter asked, do we keep track of this premium?

Mr. Mitchell: We do know what the premiums are, I just do not have those numbers at hand. I will find out.

Mr. Seitter asked, what would happen if the premium were less than the \$26,000?

Mr. Mitchell answered, we would not get 100% of that back.

There were several questions and discussion about how the escrow account actually works.

Mr. Mitchell replied that it rolls over just to the following year. It does not continue to build up. Part of the problem in trying to figure out an exact amount, is that it is paid with several other insurance premiums with our local Broker.

Mr. Seitter asked, who is our Broker?

Ewing Insurance was the reply from several.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Bills if he could remember the amount from last year?

Mr. Bills hesitated to answer, but suggested it might have been some where around \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Others suggested it may have been higher, \$20,000.

Mr. Seitter noted, the Property Insurance Board that I sat on, our agents received 10 percent of the premium. I assume the local agent is receiving a percentage of our premium?

Mr. Mitchell: We just went through a review of all of our insurance coverage, buildings and equipment. They walked us through the whole policy and asked what we needed in the way of coverage. There will be a representative here December 10 to inspect the buildings.

Mr. Seitter: That is for property coverage, this is Worker's Comp being discussed. What is the local agent doing to earn their percentage of our premium?

Mr. Mitchell: We have little say in the Worker's Comp Insurance. It is set by OMAG.

There was some brief discussion as to how the Insurance Pools work.

Mr. Mitchell answered that the local agent does coordinate our claims with OMAG. I think we have one outstanding claim that I know of.

Bill Seitter: I think that is a good recommendation. We will find out what the premium is. But, I will make the motion to approve resolution 2020-17, instructing the Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group to refund the full amount of \$26,867.68 to the City of Watonga. Motion was seconded by Julie Almaguer.

Mayor Olsen called for a vote;

J. Almaguer aye K. Baker aye T. Bradt aye R. Bruner aye
A. Cowan aye M. Green aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

3. **Consideration, Discussion and Action:** To approve longevity stipends for City Employees as follows;

Part-Time	\$50.00
0 to 6 months	\$25.00
6 months to 1 year	\$50.00
1 – 4 years	\$100.00
5 – 9 years	\$200.00
10 – 14 years	\$300.00
15 years or longer	\$400.00
Department Supervisors	\$150.00

Mr. Seitter asked, the supervisors would receive both stipends?

Mayor Olsen replied yes, they could.

Mr. Mitchell noted that someone like Light and Water Supervisor Warren Rice, who has been here more than 15 years, will receive a total of \$550.00

Mayor Olsen added, Park Supervisor Donnie Dunn will also fall into this category.

Mr. Mitchell: This is the same schedule as last year. Total cost of this program will be about \$12,000. I recommend this for Council approval. If you remember, we did not make any cost-of-living adjustments for the employees this year in our budget. They have not had any changes in their wages other than a few new employees, after they finished probationary period, they get a small raise, but that has been the only change in salaries.

Mr. Cowan asked, does the City also have a Christmas Bonus.

Several answered, no, just this stipend.

Bill Seitter made the motion to approve the longevity stipends for City Employees as listed on this Agenda. Travis Bradt seconded the motion.

Mayor Olsen called for a vote;

J. Almaguer aye K. Baker aye T. Bradt aye R. Bruner aye

A. Cowan aye M. Green aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried.

4. **Council Comments;**

(none)

5. **Mayor Comments;**

Mayor Olsen: I want to thank all the City Employees for getting all the tree limbs picked up. I think all of the north-south streets are completed, now they are working on the east-west streets. Good job by all.

6. **City Manager Comments;**

Mr. Mitchell: The new City Ordinance Book that Council approved at the last meeting is now on the City's website. You can find it either under the City Administration tab or the City Clerk tab. The Book was large enough it needed to be split into two sections. You will see a link for Sections One through Eight and the another link for the balance of the document. That is the only way we could get it up on our website. It is officially on our website. Now, Mr. Harrison and I will start work on revising again over the next three months.

We have received notice from our Auditor, FSW&B, that the audit is complete and they would like to be on the December 15 Agenda to present the Audit and other reports. (Audit for 2019 - 2020) My understanding is that there were no significant changes made during their field review. I have not seen a Management Letter or anything similar. There may be some management issues or comments they want to make. But as far as the actual financial report for the City, we are in great shape and they had no significant changes to the report.

And finally, we received the Bid Documents and Construction Plans for the bridge work at Workman and A Street. We will have this on the December 15 agenda for Council approval so that we can solicit construction bids in January of next year.

7. **Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Julie Almaguer and seconded by Bill Seitter.

Mayor Olsen called for a vote;

J. Almaguer aye K. Baker aye T. Bradt aye R. Bruner aye

A. Cowan aye M. Green aye B. Seitter aye

Motion carried at 6:24 PM.

Mayor Gary Olsen

City Clerk, Verlen Bills

NOTICE:

As of November 15, 2020 Open Meeting Regulations are back in full effect. At least five (5) Council Members must be present in order for the Mayor to declare a quorum. Others may attend by teleconference if need be. Please allow the City Clerk's Office 24 hours notice at 580 623 4669.