

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 5, 2021
6:00**

NOTE TO PERSONS REVIEWING THIS DOCUMENT: THIS IS NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT. WHILE AN ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO DOCUMENT PERTINENT POINTS, THESE MINUTES CONTAIN ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION AND VOTING

The meeting was held in person at the Community Center. Mayor Gilkey also signed onto ZOOM and guests and council members followed COVID-19 guidelines.

Mayor KayDee Gilkey called October 5, 2021 regular council meeting to order at 6:02.

Town Council members present were Jamie Paden, Steven Walk, Valerie Rogers and Emily Thomas. David Watling was absent.

Others present were Perry Paden; Angela Walk; Dawn Hillsbery; Teresa Holm; Terry Phillips; Tony & Mary Sparks; Donald Harris; Lon & Terry Ottosen; Melissa Lunsford; Devin Billington, and Cheryl Loeffler.

Approval of the Minutes

ACTION

Steven Walk moved to approve the September 21, 2021, as presented; seconded by Jamie Paden. The motion was approved 4-0.

Approval of Claims

ACTION

Emily Thomas moved to approve the October 5, 2021 claims with EFTs for \$14,610.96 and checks 20620 and 20638-20650 for \$10,403.65, seconded by Jamie Paden. The motion was approved 4-0. There was a clarifying question asked about the hours paid to Terry Ottosen.

	10/05/21
Claims	\$9,60.60
Payroll	15,354.01
Total Paid	\$25,014.61

Signed by Jamie Paden, Steven Walk and Emily Thomas

Public Hearing for Ordinance 397 Imposing Excise Tax on Sale of Real Estate (REET)

Mayor Gilkey opened the public hearing at 6:04. She explained that REET is a tax that is only paid when property is sold. The town is asking to collect one-quarter of one percent of the selling price. The seller is responsible to pay this but if they don't, the buyer is responsible. The funds collected can only be used for capital projects. She explained that it had been brought up to past councils, but it was never approved. It is being brought up again at this time as it is one of the items on the Threshold Check List for the Broadband grant. We would join into broadband outside of town on Prairie View. The State and County both collect REET, and the State allocates a percentage for the towns and cities. Fairfield has collected nearly \$21,00 so far this year. Even though it is a requirement for the Broadband grant, it is not a requirement that the funds collected be spent on the Broadband grant. They are to be used on any capital project.

Some questions from the audience:

- Who pays this tax? The seller is responsible but if he should fail to do so, the new owner will be held responsible for this payment.
- Why would we want broadband, and will it require more wires? The internet service we have now will not be able to keep up with demand if we want to grow. Having broadband available is something that potential new businesses look at. The internet service in town now has several areas around town that it is not adequate for the students to do their homeschool or homework. This was discovered during 2020 and the pandemic with so many students being homeschooled.

- Will it be mandatory that everyone signs up whether they want it or not? No, it will be no different than any internet service. You will also be able to sign up with the providers that have agreed to join forces with the town.
- What other grants that require REET to be in place? We did not have an answer for this question.

With no further public comments, Mayor Gilkey closed the public hearing at 6:14 pm.

ACTION

Emily moved to approve Ordinance 397 Imposing an excise tax on sale of real estate (REET); seconded by Jamie. The motion was approved 4-0.

Old Business

Ordinance #396 for ATV

It was suggested to add that wearing an appropriate helmet while riding on go-karts is mandatory.

Solid Waste Ordinance

The council reviewed the ordinance as presented and questioned why recycling and garbage are combined. Expressed that they are two different processes where recycling is a free service while the garbage is a paid service. Perry is looking into what happens if a property refuses service. He is still working with Empire Disposal regarding fees. He continues to accept the edits on this ordinance from the council.

Utility hardship grant forms

With the moratorium lifted for the utility late fees, a payment plan has to be offered to everyone that is having trouble paying their utilities. Emily has researched the hardship grants and has discovered that this time around the application is very invasive. Proof of hardship due to COVID-19, social security numbers must be provided as well as other personal information. The town will have to develop a policy for handling this type of information for about five years.

ACTION

Jamie moved to approve the proposed utility hardship program due to COVID-19; seconded by Val. The motion was approved 4-0.

Cheryl will get the word out about the application process in the upcoming newsletter and Facebook page.

Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat

Val reported that she has had a pretty good response so far. The Service Club will be providing hot dogs, hot chocolate and cider. Emily will be bringing the Fall Festival games out to the street and there will not be any charge for the kids to play. We will put out a donation bucket for the pillars at the museum. Cheryl will contact Barbara Neal to see if a cost has been determined for the repairs and if the museum will be open with activities.

PCIB Recommendations

None tonight.

Budget

Budget workshops will be held on Oct. 26 and Nov. 9 at 6:00.

NEW BUSINESS

Community center

There was a wedding on Sept 25th then decided to have us provide the cleaning and relinquished their cleaning deposit of \$75. The garbage was left inside along with a large arch that we will have to store. Cheryl worked for 3 hours and then brought in another person that worked for 2.5 hours. There was nothing damaged, but it was a mess. The \$75 deposit is not enough to cover all the time spent cleaning so Cheryl would like to keep a portion of the damage deposit to help cover the additional time to clean. The amount of the cleaning deposit was discussed and needs to be updated. With the facility not being used like it has been in the past, it takes a lot longer to get it back into shape when someone does rent it out. Cheryl and Elizabeth Sainsbury spent about 10 hours prior to the wedding getting everything clean, which included a thorough cleanup after the Summer Lunch Program was accomplished at this time.

ACTION

Steve moved to raise the Community Center's cleaning deposit to be \$150 and the damage deposit to \$500; seconded by Jamie. The motion was approved 4-0.

Fundraiser for local family

Val and Cheryl brought information to council about a local family whose daughter has been diagnosed with a very rare blood disease. She is need of a stem cell transplant, which is forcing them to move to Seattle for months. They have other children that have special needs as well and disrupting their routine would be very detrimental, so it is very important to them that they keep their family together during all of this. The financial strain of running two households will be huge. There is a group that wants to put on a spaghetti feed fundraiser in the community center the second Friday in November. Val and Cheryl are asking the council to allow community service hours for this fundraiser, which the council granted.

Public Works Report

Sewer:

- WW Samples going in this week.
- Sewer service install coming up for Northridge

Streets:

- Grading will continue to take place for fall as we receive some rain.
- Main St. Sidewalks are peeling already. Bryan has been made aware.

Parks:

- Scheduling removal of pine trees.
- Looking into potential dates for Chipping Day.

Water:

- Bacteria Sample will be going in this week.
- Water Meter Replacement Project.
- 404 N. 1st St Water Meter Repair – Completed.
- Fire Hydrant # 14 W. Seward and S. 3RD replaced.

An Example of a Regular Task:

Trimming Trees (HRS)

The Town of Fairfield is in the process of trimming tree limbs back from the roads and fire hydrants. We need to ensure that the roads are clear for traffic, especially with winter coming allowing our plow trucks proper access and ability to plow efficiently. Hydrants also need to stay clear for the fire department. We always appreciate your assistance with maintaining the trees around your property.

Other

Perry asked to have the Veteran's Day Military Wall of Honor ceremony pushed out to the public. There will only be the ceremony and no program that day. Plaques can be ordered at town hall.

Compliments/Complaints

Lon Ottosen gave the public works team accolades for keeping the town and treatment plant looking so good.

Dates to Remember

October 12-14

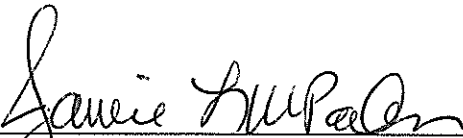
Cheryl at RMSA annual meeting and member expo

October 19

KayDee gone for meeting. Jamie will run meeting

ADJOURN

With no further business, the council meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.



KayDee Gilkey, Mayor



Cheryl Loeffler, Clerk/Treasurer