

**Special City Council Meeting
City Hall, Cherokee, Iowa
July 29, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.**

A special meeting was called to order on this date by Mayor Murphy. Present: Council members Johnson, Brown, Miller, Pingel, Peck, City Attorney Miller, Administrator Eikmeier, Clerk-Treasurer Taylor.

The council met in special session to review the impact of the closing of the Tyson Plant the end of September. Administrator Eikmeier said the negativity has been over dramatized in the press. It is a major loss, but we need to move forward and work on bringing in a business or industry to fill the facility. Although the facility is 50 years old, it has been updated over the years and does have life left. CAEDC and the Iowa Economic Development Authority are working on marketing the facility. Information disseminated through the Iowa Economic Development Authority office has been very positive in finding new business or industry. Iowa Workforce Development will be staffing a temporary office in Cherokee beginning next week to help employees with benefits, employment opportunities, and training. The community impact of the closing will be felt by all Main St. merchants. The Administrator reported that since the Tyson facility is not in the city limits, debt service for the repayment of general obligation bonds wouldn't be impacted. Also, State Revolving Loans for wastewater improvements are the City's obligation only, so the closing won't have any impact on the repayment of the loans. Administrator Eikmeier indicated that 50 years ago the City built separate water and wastewater plants specifically for Wilson Foods (now Tyson). City employees have operated these plants along with the City's water and wastewater facilities. An agreement adopted in 2013 by City and Tyson spells out the obligations of both parties in the event the Tyson plant closes. Tyson is required to give the City "as much prior notice as it may reasonably provide under the circumstances, but in no event less than 180 days notice". The agreement also addresses specific plant closure requirements, which include cleaning of the wastewater lagoons, aeration basins, clarifiers, disinfection tank, and associated piping. Tyson will pay all costs incurred in these closure requirements. The Administrator explained that the Industrial (Tyson) budgets have funded 40% of employee wages and benefits. These are the most direct costs the City will have to offset. He explained that it isn't as easy as laying off 40% of the water and wastewater staff, as these same employees operate the City's facilities, and basic maintenance and safety issues require a certain number of employees.

On a motion by Brown, seconded by Johnson, the council went into executive session at 7:13 p.m. to discuss strategy involving public employees as per Iowa Code Chapter 20.7(3) and to discuss strategy with counsel in matters where litigation may be imminent as per Iowa Code Chapter 21.5(c). Roll call was: AYES: Brown, Miller, Pingel, Peck, Johnson. NAYS: None.

A motion by Pingel, seconded by Peck, returned the council to regular session at 7:55 p.m. Roll call was: AYES: Pingel, Peck, Johnson, Brown, Miller. NAYS: None.

No action was taken in executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

News media – Nikki Thunder, KCHE; KTIV TV news.

Mark Murphy – Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Taylor
City Clerk-Treasurer