

**Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, Cherokee, Iowa
February 24, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.**

A regular 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.

Dr. John Chalstrom, Cherokee School Superintendent, was present to give a brief report. He said the transition in Police Chiefs from Steve Schuck to Nate James has gone very well. Nate used the high school this past weekend to test police applicants. Dave Ellis has done a great job coordinating use of the middle school for recreation programs. Dr. Chalstrom recently met with Duane Mummert to coordinate Earth Day cleanup on April 22. High school students will work on the west side of town and middle school students on the east side. The school will provide the transportation.

Greg Stieneke, 800 E. Spruce St., was present during the public forum. With long-time employees retiring, the City will lose a lot of knowledge. Does the City have a plan in place when future flooding occurs? Administrator Eikmeier said they have been working on this, as well as other information, for the past several months and will continue with those plans. Greg indicated that if the Park Dept. isn't included under Public Works, there wouldn't be a benefit to the taxpayer. Since Streets, Water, and Sewer aren't General Fund, there won't be a change in property taxes. Council member Brown said the savings would be seen in the employee benefits levy. Greg also feels the Fire Dept. should have only a full-time Chief and a part-time fireman/inspector. No other cities our size have full-time firemen. He asked that an item discussing the fire department be placed on the next agenda.

A motion by Brown, seconded by Peck, approved the second presentation and waived the third presentation of Ordinance No. 609, amending provisions pertaining to Off-Street Parking regulations for retail stores, and ordered its publication. Roll call was: AYES: All. NAYS: None.

On a motion by Brown, seconded by Pingel, the council approved the second presentation and waived the third presentation of Ordinance No. 610, amending provisions pertaining to accessory buildings in R-1 and R-2 residential zoning districts, and ordered its publication. Roll call was: AYES: All. NAYS: None.

A motion by Miller, seconded by Johnson, adopted Resolution No. 15-3, supporting the submittal of a grant application for funding for Surface Transportation Program projects for FY19 for the 5th St. Reconstruction project. Roll call was: AYES: All. NAYS: None.

On a motion by Peck, seconded by Pingel, the council unanimously approved the following under "Consent Business".

City council minutes of February 10th, 16th, and 17th.

Renewal of Class "C" liquor license – Country Club.

Reviewed Planning & Zoning Commission minutes of February 3rd.

Approved change order #2 for \$1,575 to Alloy Specialty for asbestos surveys – Flood Buyout Program.

At previous meetings, Central Insurance and Bixenman Insurance each made presentations as representatives for the City's ICAP and IMWCA insurance. As there have been no problems in the past with Central Insurance's representation and Central Bank's long-standing history in the community, a motion by Brown, seconded by Pingel, unanimously authorized continuing with Central Insurance as the City's representative. The Council thanked Bixenman representatives for their competitive offer.

A motion by Brown, seconded by Miller, unanimously appointed Cindy Wilberding to the Park & Rec. Advisory Board for a 3-year term ending 12/31/17.

Administrator Eikmeier reported that the current revolving loan program provides no-interest or low-interest loans for start-up or growing businesses with a maximum loan of \$50,000. A prospective owner/investor is exploring the restoration and rehabilitation of the Lewis Hotel, including repairs,

restoration of the back wall, removal of mold, and renovation of the 24 living units. This investor has successfully completed similar projects, as well as does new construction. Part of the financing would be use of the revolving loan program through a forgivable loan, which isn't allowed under the current guidelines. The council was agreeable to amending the program guidelines to include forgivable loans. The Administrator will proceed with amending the guidelines, which includes holding a public hearing.

As reported during budget workshops, 2 of the 4 heaters at the Bacon Aquatic Center are inoperable. To get the heaters ordered, shipped, and installed before the pool opens this spring, the council was asked to approve the purchase of 4 heaters from Modern Heating for \$16,885. Council member Pingel questioned the need to replace all 4 at this time. Duane Mummert and Modern Heating feel that for the best efficiency they should all be replaced at the same time. A motion by Brown, seconded by Miller, authorized the emergency purchase of 4 pool heaters from Modern Heating for \$16,885. Motion carried.

Administrator Eikmeier gave a brief overview of the 2015-16 budget as modified following the budget workshops held last week. With the changes made by council, cash reserves in all major funds have increased or remained the same. This is a much better result than expected since the closing of Tyson Foods was announced. The proposed tax levy is \$16.00/\$1,000, which is a decrease of \$1.65/\$1,000, mainly due to a decrease in debt service obligations. A motion by Pingel, seconded by Peck, set the public hearing for the 2015-16 budget for 7:00 p.m. on March 10th. Motion carried.

Mark Napier, Water Supt., presented his quarterly report to the council. As he hasn't made a report since July, Mark gave a recap of the shut-down of the Tyson plant: there is minimal water in the tower, which will be drained and cleaned this spring; tapped the water line and relocated it to serve the sewer plant; ran a water line to the office for the temporary workers; drained lines to the control building; requested and received from the DNR a reclassification of the Tyson plant to inactive so no monitoring and sampling is required; they will have to continue quarterly exercising of the valves and wells. On the City side, they have had several water line breaks; 2 possible leaks they are trying to pinpoint; replaced a hydrant and valves; relocated Hwy. 59 services from Kennedy Chiropractic to Lake St.; a couple low pressure incidents that were softener related; fall flushing; valve exercising; backwash tank cleaning; clear well transducer; working on stripping and recoating pipes at the plant; replaced 75 water meters; and had 392 locates from August to present.

Administrator's report – the Chamber, CAEDC, and CIC have completed their move to the new location and will host Chamber Coffee on Friday. The council reviewed a letter from HomeServe offering water and sewer service line insurance. The letter indicates the insurance covers the service line from the house to the property line; however, City Code states that the homeowner is responsible from the house to the main. He will get clarification from HomeServe so residents can be informed properly. The Mayor received a letter from ICAP indicating that the City's annual savings voucher is \$11,460. A sample ordinance was provided for council review regarding water and sewer service to customers outside city limits for a possible change to our ordinance. Downtown snow parking restrictions will be reviewed at a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m

News media – Ken Ross, *Chronicle Times*; Nikki Thunder, KCHE.

Mark Murphy – Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Taylor
City Clerk-Treasurer