

**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, Cherokee, Iowa**  
**October 27, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.**

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

Mayor Murphy reported that there are 635 registered ATVs in the county, which doesn't include farm units. The City had received an email from a safety advocacy group asking the City not to pass an ordinance allowing ATVs and ORVs on city streets. Administrator Eikmeier said it hard to argue against ATVs/ORVs on the street when State law allows 14 year olds to operate a moped without a helmet. However, the Mayor pointed out that mopeds are designed for street use, but ATVs and ORVs are not. A motion by Brown, seconded by Miller, approved the first presentation of an ordinance amending provisions of City Code Chapter 75 pertaining to All-Terrain Vehicles and Snowmobiles by allowing ATVs and ORVs to operate on city streets. Roll call was: AYES: All. NAYS: None.

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

City council minutes of October 13.

Renewal of Class "C" beer permit – Dollar General Store.

Renewal of Class "E" liquor license – Liquor on the Corner.

Reviewed Parks & Recreation Board minutes of October 19.

Library Director, Mary Jo Ruppert and Library Board members Betty Berigan and Ruth Hayes were present to discuss the City's employee residency requirement. Mary Jo is planning to retire next summer and is concerned that applicants for her position may be significantly less if the current residency requirements remain in effect. Currently, "essential" personnel are required to reside in the city, which also includes Cherokee and Pilot Townships. "Non-essential" personnel can reside outside of the city limits. The Library Director is considered "essential". Mary Jo noted that many cities have relaxed the residency requirements except for essential personnel, which are normally police and fire personnel. She said her position requires certain educational requirements and she is concerned about finding qualified applicants who live in the designated area. Administrator Eikmeier noted that residency requirements for municipal employees have evolved over the years, usually based on judicial cases in which residency requirements are challenged. Council member Brown agrees with Mary Jo and Council member Miller felt a 30-minute response time would be adequate. Council asked whether the Library Board could determine the residency issue. The Administrator said that although State Code allows the Library Board to operate the library as they see fit, he said the Board has always worked hand-in-hand with the council. Mary Jo feels the position's salary and benefits will draw good applicants. The Administrator will work with the City Attorney on establishing a workable residency requirement for all personnel.

At a past meeting, the Council questioned the timing of the traffic signals along Hwy. 59 between Elm St. and Willow St. Randy Reeves, Champion Electric, was present to explain the sequencing and answer any questions. He has been taking care of the traffic signals for about 30 years. Administrator Eikmeier commended Randy for his immediate attention to any traffic signal problems and noted that Randy also has a storeroom where he keeps inventory for repairs. Randy explained that there are actuators in the street that detect traffic flow. If more traffic is detected, a few seconds are added to the cycle. If even minor changes in timing are made to one intersection it will affect the sequence of the lights through all 4 downtown intersections. Randy also reported that the controller at the Bluff/Hwy. 59 intersection should probably be replaced in the near future. Currently, between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. these lights flash red on Bluff and yellow on Hwy. 59. However, if there is a problem, the lights all flash red, which causes traffic problems. He said the cost to change the controller would be about \$6,000 and that the current controller could be used as a spare for other signals. Funding will be reviewed either in this budget or next fiscal year.

Administrator Eikmeier reported that the DOT opened bids on the N. Roosevelt Street Improvement Project on Oct. 20. This is a federal aid project with the federal share being \$420,000 (construction costs

only). The City is responsible for the balance of construction costs, plus engineering, inspections, and surveying. Bids were: Steve Harris Constr.-\$784,937.42; Cedar Valley Corp.-\$846,309.41; Wicks Const.-\$1,007,815.25; Croell & Subsidiary-\$1,113,843.45. The DOT is expected to accept the low bid from Steve Harris Const. The council reviewed a report on the City's current long-term debt schedule showing a decrease of \$330,000/yr. over past fiscal years. If no new debt is issued, next year's debt would decrease by another \$100,000. The Administrator said the council should consider re-investing in the infrastructure to maintain a stable overall tax levy. Scott Stevenson, with D.A. Davidson, has estimated that the City could issue up to \$800,000 in bonds this year without increasing our debt payments. If the council continued to add projects every couple of years, they could still maintain a level debt service levy. Projects to be considered for rebuilding, in addition to N. Roosevelt, include Riverview Dr., Bow Dr., Sac St., and/or Chief St. The council was asked to submit other streets they feel are a priority.

1. Administrator's report – Dennis Bahr's house has been moved to the new location on E. Cedar St. Although the rain has slowed down some of the work, Dennis should be able to move in by the first of next week. Sara Lucas started in the Clerk's office today and training is in full force. Sam Kooiker will close on his house Dec. 18th and plans to move in on the 19th.
2. Mary Jo Ruppert, Library Director, presented her quarterly report to the council. The summer reading program was attended by over 100 children and also included an adult program this year with the larger programs being held at the Sanford Museum; a program was presented at the county fair; book check outs are down; the July crazy days book sell netted about \$850; in August the library joined the Sioux County libraries to provide downloadable books; after school programs began in August; the Children's Librarian goes to ECLC, head start, pre-K, and adult day care; in Oct. Mary Jo attended the Iowa Library Conference and learned how shifts in generations are affecting library management; the Friends of the Library book basket sale begins Nov. 6; the Friends have contributed \$5,000-\$6,000 toward the summer reading program, Wall St. Journal subscription, Wilbur subscription, audio books, and DVDs; for 15 years the library has provided volunteers to read during the WIC clinics, but this service will end as it is harder to find volunteers; the planter in front of the building has been removed, but concrete has not yet been poured and the Board would like that completed before winter if possible.

Police Chief, Nate James, reported that Kris Alesch will graduate from the police academy on Friday, Oct. 30th and Jake Dyslin will graduate Dec. 4th. Zach Smith will begin the 14-week academy course on Jan. 11th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

News media – Ken Ross, *Chronicle Times*.

Mark Murphy – Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Taylor  
City Clerk-Treasurer