

Mayor Charles L. "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, January 6, 2020. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Retha Elston, Josh Johnson, Joe Martin, John Stauter, Christine Wilen, and Jim Wise. Absent: None.

Also present were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Fire Chief Gary Cook, Police Chief Tim Morgan, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Dick Card addressed a couple problem areas in town the City should focus on before the riverfront – the 500 block of Avenue G, the southwest corner of 16th Avenue/15th Street, and the sidewalks in the northeast area of the City.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- A) Minutes of December 16, 2019
- B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$1,193,273.24
- C) Refer to Plan Commission the petition from Greg Majeski to rezone the 400 block of 17th Avenue) and to vacate a portion of right-of-way in this block
- D) Final Pay Request for Dillon Avenue Reconstruction Phase I to Twin City Construction in the amount of \$10,583.88

Motion seconded by Alderman Martin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring January 6 through 12, 2020 to be Fall State Champions Week; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried. Mayor Lee read the proclamation into the record. Coaches from Newman Football and Sterling Girls Volleyball commented on their seasons. Proclamations were presented to the teams.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve **Ordinance #2020-01-01 Annexing Certain Territory Wholly Bounded by the City of Sterling between West Third Street and the Union Pacific Railway**; seconded by Alderman Johnson. Alderman Martin moved to amend Section three (3) of Ordinance #2020-01-01, to add the following subparagraph (a) to the end of the paragraph, so as now to read "All newly annexed property parcel owners, listed on Exhibit A, shall be afforded a decreasing

property tax abatement, of the City imposed property taxes, for a period of three years on the following schedule, tax year 2020 (payable in 2021) of 100%, tax year 2021 (payable in 2022) of 66-2/3% and tax year 2022 (payable in 2023) of 33-1/3%. The City Attorney is directed to prepare the necessary Ordinance to provide for implementation of the same. Motion to amend the ordinance was seconded by Alderman Elston. Concern was expressed about setting a precedent. Alderman Martin stated this does not pertain to other properties annexed because they signed pre-annexation agreements when they hooked onto sewer. The cost of the abatements will be approximately \$15,000.

Voting on amendment to **Ordinance #2020-01-01**: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried. Voting on motion to approve amended Ordinance #2020-01-01: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve **Ordinance #2020-01-02 to Increase the Number of Available Liquor Licenses Based on Annexation**; seconded by Alderman Johnson. This ordinance permits Wagon Wheel and Silver City Slots to obtain City liquor licenses and not change the number of available licenses in the City. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Superintendent Schmidt announced that Christmas trees will be picked up through January 17.

Alderman Martin acknowledged that West Third Street is under litigation but asked that it be added to the list for repairs when the litigation is resolved.

Alderman Elston thanked staff for their work on the annexations and issues in Ward 1.

Alderman Wise is looking forward to another great year.

Several property owners in the newly annexed area voiced concern about the increase of their property taxes, funds the City will receive when additional population is counted during the Census, need to hook onto City sewer, and exceptions for dumpsters in place. Mayor Lee explained taxes will be abated over a three-year period and did not feel support to lengthen that time. Attorney Zollinger stated taxes are based on the valuation of the property. Manager Shumard stated although federal tax money is distributed based on population, only a small amount trickles down to the City. Zollinger noted these annexations are to offset the loss in population over the last ten

years. No one will have to hook up to City sewer until it is available within 300'. The ordinance sets forth exemptions to the City code pertaining to specific properties. If work is underway on a County building permit they may continue; however, if work has not started a permit must be obtained through the City.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Marie Rombouts
City Clerk