

Mayor Diana Merdian called the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, January 15, 2024. Roll call. Present: Alderperson Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Joseph Martin, Kaitlyn Ekquist, and Jim Wise. Absent: None

Also attending were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Police Chief Alex Chavira, Fire Chief Michael Dettman, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Superintendent of Waste Water Cory Bradshaw and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

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

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of Bills and Payroll
- C. Pay Request #2 to Nicam Construction in the amount of \$450,462.02
- D. *No item for D.*
- E. Proclamation for National Mentoring Month
- F. Proclamation for YWCA

Seconded by Strabala-Bright. Voting: Ayes – Alderperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Ekquist, Martin, and Wise. Nays – None.

Mayor Merdian read the YWCA Proclamation into the record and presented it to Rebecca Munoz-Ripley from the YWCA.

Chief Alex Chavira announced the recipient of the Cadet T. Thorpe award as Officer Travis Nease. Chief Chavira stated Officer Nease was nominated for the award by his peers. Officer Nease is the current SRO, he is a range instructor, as well as a member of the Twin City Emergency Response Team. Officer Nease is dedicated to the profession, he is willing to train and mentor the new officers. The Council congratulated Officer Nease.

Chief Alex Chavira announced the recipient of the Non-sworn employee of the year as Roxanne Glazier. Chavira stated Roxanne has been with the department for 22 years, he said Roxanne is the “go to” person in the records division. Roxanne recently filled a vacancy in the evidence division and has made several changes there and she streamlined several of the antiquated processes. Chief Chavira said Roxanne is thorough, efficient, professional and most importantly she is kind. The Council congratulated Roxanne on her award.

Aldersperson Elston made a motion to approve the Proclamation honoring the life and lasting legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr; Seconded by Strabala-Bright. Voting: Ayes – Aldersperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Ekquist, Martin, and Wise. Nays – None

Mayor Merdian opened the discussion on Ordinance 2024-01-01 Amending Chapter 90, By Adoption of a new Article VII of the Sterling Municipal Code Entitled Non-Highway Vehicles. Aldersperson Wise recommended that all of West 3rd Street, West 4th Street and all of Lynn Blvd be added to the ordinance as streets that would not be permitted to drive non-highway vehicles on. Wise stated the character of the traffic on these streets consist of semi-tractor trailers. Aldersperson Johnson stated he was in agreeance as long as there is a way for these vehicles to enter County Market parking lot. It was stated that these vehicles could enter off of Ave C into the parking lot. Aldersperson Ekquist stated she was in agreeance with not allowing travel on these streets.

Chief Chavira reported they are continuing with the process of hiring two officers. Chavira suggested watching the video of Officer Hackbarth and Officer Kraus performing CPR on the dog rescued from the housefire, Chavira stated he is proud of the officers. The video is on social media and has been on the news. Chavira reminded everyone about the birthday party for Brinkley that will be held Tuesday night at PetSmart.

Chief Dettman reported that crews responded to a structure fire on 15th Avenue. The fire was contained quickly. Dettman reported that he received his new department vehicle on the 15th.

Finance Director Cindy Von Holten reported the budget study sessions will start at the February 5th Council meeting. The Public Hearing will be on April 1st and the budget ordinance will be on the April 15th Agenda. Staff has been given worksheets to prepare their budgets.

Superintendent of Waste Water Cory Bradshaw reported they had a pump controller fail to operate at a lift station, he had a new sent over night and they had it operational by the next day.

Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader reported they are fully staffed. They continue to perform cleanup from the storm. We received 5.5” of snow during the first storm and 9.3” during the second storm.

Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt reported the first payment for the CDAP Grant was made. The house was resided and the homeowner is very happy. The next house will receive windows as soon as they are shipped.

City Manager Shumard reported the CDAP Grant pre-dates his and Schmidt's employment. Shumard reported there had been some recent discussion in regards to licensed contractors and how to determine if your contractor is licensed. This has been placed in the FAQ portion of the City's website. Shumard reported trash was delayed due to weather, Republic Services will be picking up extra bags without fees due to the trash being missed. Shumard also reported a letter has been sent to the owner of the property at 402 Avenue D and an email was sent to Rock Island Economic Growth Corp. in regards to the property on West 7th Street.

Shumard reported the contract with animal control is due, there is a moderate increase in the fee, however, nothing else has changed, he asked if there have been any issues he should be aware of prior to putting it on the next agenda for approval.

The Phase II on the Waste Water site did return some questions. We are currently waiting on a response from the environmental engineer to see what would need to be done for remediation.

Shumard requested input in regards to a policy for employees that are not able to make it to work due to extreme weather. Other municipalities allow employees to use any of their PTO, the Council agreed with this policy, it will be placed on the next agenda for approval.

Aldersperson Martin congratulated the two officer that performed CPR on the dog, Martin stated it made the National news. Alderman Martin requested clarification on the odd/even parking, the plow driver on his street did not follow the odd/even for plowing. Superintendent of Public Works, Schrader, stated it was probably the result of a new driver and he will look into it. Martin reported the policy for replacing mailboxes damaged by the snow is on the City website, if the box is damaged directly by the plow the City will reimburse for the damages up to \$100, if the box is damaged by the snow the City will not reimburse.

Aldersperson Strabala-Bright thanked staff for the keeping the roads cleared and responding to calls in the cold weather.

Aldersperson Elston asked about ticketing for the odd/even parking and how long the snow emergency lasts. Schrader reported the emergency typically lasts for 2 mornings to allow for cleanup. Chief Chavira reported the parking fines are between \$20 and \$25. Elston stated the fines may need to be increased. Elston asked if snowmobiles are allowed in the City limits, Chavira stated they are not allowed to be in town and if you see them please call the non-emergency police department number.

Aldersperson Wise thanked Superintendent of Building and Zoning, Amanda Schmidt, for placing the contractor information on the City website. Wise also thanked City staff for the humor that has been put on social media reference the snow removal and trash pickup. Wise stated they are more readable and eye catching.

Mayor Merdian thanked everyone for all the hard work, she reminded everyone of the bitter temperatures and to stay safe.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Teri Sathoff

City Clerk