

Sidney, Nebraska, April 1, 2020 A Fair Housing City

A special meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Sidney, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session at 7:15 P.M. on April 1, 2020 via Zoom video conference. Present by video conference were Mayor Gallaway and Council Members: Sherman, Arterburn, Radcliffe and Olsen. Others present via video conference: Interim City Manager Scott, City Attorney Leef, and City Clerk Heilbrun. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Sidney Sun Telegraph, a designated method for giving notice, a copy of the proof of publication being attached to these minutes. Advance notice of the meeting was also given to the members of the City Council and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of notice is attached to these minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the City Council. All proceedings shown hereafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Mayor Gallaway informed the public that the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Interim City Manager David Scott reviewed proposed changes to the Administrative policy re: Utility Disconnect for Non-Payment; Procedures for Domestic Subscribers, which would incorporate an appeal process in the case of immediate and serious health hazard, as well as serious financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 virus. This would ensure that utility customers who cannot afford to have uninterrupted utility service will have a process to follow. It does not, however allow every utility customer to continue with no consequences for non-payment. The proposed policy meets all state and federal requirements. He warned that allowing customers to forego their utility payments indefinitely would be detrimental to utility accounts that ride close to the line.

Anita Pennell, a landlord who lives at 1525 Cedar Street, voiced concerns regarding tenants being disconnected. She currently has her rental accounts roll into her name if a tenant is disconnected. The City's current policy of having all landlords sign a card with their preferences as to whether to allow a tenant's account to be disconnected or roll into the landlord name to avoid disconnection was discussed. It was determined that the City was already giving the landlord the choice on disconnection of rental property.

Arterburn moved, Olsen seconded "That the revised Utility Disconnect for Non-Payment; Procedures for Domestic Subscribers including Section 2B including stipulations for disconnection of service and an appeal process to those affected by COVID-19 be approved." Roll call vote: Yeas: All council members present.

Comments by Staff and Council: **Interim City Manager Scott** described the changes to City services in regards to COVID19 which included closing the drive-thru window and no access to the City Offices, i.e., customers can pay at the drop box, online or by telephone; restricting golfers at the Hillside Golf Course to those living within a 10-mile radius and limiting the number of individuals in a cart to 2. **Councilmen Arterburn and Olsen** suggested only one individual be allowed in each golf cart. **Mayor Gallaway** encouraged anyone with questions regarding COVID19 and programs available to help individuals and business to reach out to City staff with their questions as well as contacting the State and Federal offices regarding Stimulus checks and Unemployment waivers. He urged everyone to follow the information provided on the PPHD.org website and to practice social distancing to prevent the spread. Interim City Manager Scott was commended on his leadership during this volatile time by staff and council.

Mayor Gallaway stated that he would entertain a motion to go into closed session for the protection of the public interest to consider Personnel Matters re: City Manager candidate review. Olsen moved, Sherman seconded "That the City Council adjourn to closed session for the purpose of consideration of personnel matters." Roll call vote: Yeas: All council members present. Mayor Gallaway announced that the City Council will now go into closed session at 8:52 p.m. Upon Council's return from the closed session, Radcliffe moved, Olsen seconded "That the closed session end and that the Council has come out of the closed session at 9:32 p.m." Roll call vote: Yeas: All council members present

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

/s/ROGER GALLAWAY, MAYOR

ATTEST: /s/CYNTHIA K HEILBRUN, CITY CLERK