

BELT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

July 23, 2025

7:00 PM

The second meeting of July 2025 was called to order beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance were Mayor James M. Olson; Clerk-Treasurer Lynn Schilling; Council Members including April Wells, Sally Miller, Becky Gorton and Michelle Stinson; Council Members absent were Paul Heikkila and Corbin Keaster; members of the public including Travis Page.

PUBLIC INPUT: Travis Page commented that it is important to address issues of dogs at large as well as the report of a beehive being kept in town.

REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINT LOG: reviewed and discussed with special attention to bee hives as a Nuisance Ordinance violation, and the locking of the city tennis courts by Little League. It was decided to have members of public works get photographic evidence of the beehive in question and the existence of multiple dogs whose excrement was not being picked up, at the same address before proceeding further.

The Minutes and the claims and warrants were submitted for approval. All were approved with the exception of the claim for monthly garbage pickup services from Republic Services. The Council decided to hold back the next invoice from Republic pending a meeting with Republic Services Management. Long-standing issues with substandard service and the lack of credits issued for failure to complete services were cited as a problem that needed to be addressed without further delays or lack of accountability from Republic Services.

NEW BUSINESS: Logan Dunlap called in representing Great West to present change order 3A for additional project payment to JR Civil. After some discussion the Council approved by majority vote, the change order which had already been signed and approved by Mayor Olson on July 15th.

The Council discussed the possibility of purchasing a spare well house pump to keep in the case of a future failure of both water pumps at the same time. The current cost of \$105,000 to replace Well House 1 and Well House 2 pumps, which were recently burned out, was discussed, as well as the proposed \$34,000 cost of having a spare pump. No action taken.

The Council reviewed the Nuisance Ordinance as it pertains to bee hives in town, as well as the sections of the Dog Control Ordinance which deal with excrement, excessive barking, lack of registration, and kennel license requirements. It was decided to verify that the beehive and the dogs existed and were causing a problem and then to send a warning letter and engage the sheriff. No specific action taken.

OLD BUSINESS: The Council discussed further, contract negotiations and parameters of the FY26 Law Enforcement Contract that has yet to be signed or agreed upon. Mayor Olson reported that he had met with Sheriff Slaughter and that Slaughter was in favor of Belt purchasing another Resident Deputy House as a way to decrease the proposed increase of 29% to the current fiscal year contract. It was agreed that

such a proposal should be presented to the Council in a regularly scheduled meeting or at least submitted in writing to the city's official email. The Council went on to discuss HB333 Arbitration possibilities and to hammer out some contract clauses that would be agreeable to the town, including no more than a 15% increase, the possibility of phasing in an increase over multiple years, enforcement by the Sheriff of local ordinances, and added features to the 20 hours weekly of "additional enforcement" which is what is currently provided by the contract. It was decided that Sheriff Slaughter should be invited to the next meeting and that the Council would continue to draft a contract to the city to further an agreement and in the event of Oct.1st arbitration by Local Government Center MSU.

The Council discussed and approved by unanimous vote, Resolution 820 to create and appoint a position of Flood Plain Administrator. Parameters of a job description and job posting will be considered at the next meeting.

Next addressed was proposals to amend the current policy with respect to Public Works personnel on call and callout hours. After some discussion it was agreed to keep the current policy and not to provide or use dedicated cell phones for call outs that are unscheduled. The current policy makes both public works employees responsible for being available every other weekend for emergency and unscheduled callouts as the mayor requests. If an employee wants to be outside the Belt area and unavailable on the weekend that is scheduled for them, they must notify and get the approval of the mayor and make sure that their shift is covered by the other public works employee. If the public works employees agree to switch weekends they must first notify and get the approval of the mayor.

COUNCIL REPORTS: Council member Michelle Stinson reported that the "barn property", which is located in the floodway on 1st Avenue South and has no water/sewer system access, is again being inhabited in violation of law. Mayor Olson stated that he would have the deputy go over there.

Stinson went on to inquire as to whether the \$13,000+ in flooding damage experienced by the City Library in August of 2024 had been covered by the city's property insurance. Mayor Olson indicated that it was "in the works".

Council member April Wells suggested that it would be a good idea to review the current Growth Policy for the incoming mayor.

CLERK-TREASURER INPUT: None

MAYOR'S REPORT: None

PUBLIC INPUT: Travis Page, the sole candidate for mayor in the upcoming election, stated that he was just listening and learning

There being no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.