

REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEXINGTON CITY COUNCIL**March 25, 2019****7:00 P. M.**

The regular meeting of the Lexington City Council was called to order at 7:00 P. M. by Mayor Spencer Johansen in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mayor Johansen led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken to find the following physically present: Mayor Johansen, Alderman Schreiber, Alderman Stover, Alderman Franklin, Alderman Richard and Alderman Colclasure. Alderwoman Wilson was absent. Members of the staff and public present were: Chief Belvery, Luke Smucker, Bruce Klein, Kenneth Sours, Sarah Steidinger and Bill Elias.

It was moved by Alderman Colclasure and seconded by Alderman Schreiber to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2019 regular City Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Alderman Stover and seconded by Alderman Franklin to approve the Treasurer's Report in the amount of \$26,869.02. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Input: Sarah Steidinger proposed an amendment to allow chickens in town. She is an ISU graduate with a degree in horticulture and lives on the outskirts of the city limits. She has a huge garden and had a farm stand in the past. She would love to have chickens on her property.

Her son has been in FFA the last three years and being in town he has been unable to do animal husbandry. It would be awesome for the local FFA and the 4H to be able to have chickens for projects in town would allow students to learn money management, marketing, record keeping and animal stewardship. There is something about growing your own produce versus actually taking care of the actual animal. There is a heightened sense of responsibility that that entails.

She could be a front runner for local food movement. Showing support for our small specialty crop growers would be an example for other cities and towns to implement similar programs. Just promoting a small town community and growing and producing its own food. She knows a local farmers market just started as she was asked to run it this past summer but personal reasons prevented her. The ag community could have a local food movement and the revenue sold to support more local businesses and would not go to a big box store but to local residents and would promote our community as well. She sells three dozen eggs three times a week at \$3.00 per dozen. Her market generates \$468 per year. If five people were to do that, that would be \$2,300 per year put back into our community.

She would like to start a non-profit in Lexington to help families wanting to live a fuller focused life with an emphasis on food, nutrition, on growing a garden and canning, etc. I could teach a

classes on topics to help families grow a portion of their own food, and then provide support and encouragement. She had a very successful year with her farm stand two years ago. It was amazing the amount of people who were interested in growing their own food. I could have school programs, anything like that, and chickens could also be a part of those classes. Just to show how many capabilities there are to living on a farm that you don't have to live on 50 acres to be able to produce your own food.

Her daughter has food allergies and eggs are a product that she can eat. Growing eggs will be a huge benefit for her.

Cities that are not local that allow chickens in their town are Seattle, Denver, Chicago, Van Cover, Fort Collins, Madison and New York. These are all cities that have ordinances that allow chickens in their cities. Local towns with municipal codes that allow chickens are Chenoa, Village of Downs, Downers Grove and Champaign.

Chickens don't smell if you only have a small number and they are contained. That is part of the ordinance that she has proposed is that they will have to be contained. They are not noisy unless you have a rooster and she will have no roosters. There are already people doing chickens in town illegally. She wants to do it the right way. Free range eggs are more nutritional than conventional eggs. Illinois law states that chickens are not considered livestock. Illinois law classifies livestock as bison, cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and geese. Chickens can be raised for profit or fun.

Her proposal allows for no more than six chickens and roosters would be prohibited. They may or may not need a permit or restrictions on what type of coop you may have. They are not free range and would include a well ventilated shelter with water and heat. And how many square feet per bird you would need. She feels this just needs to be added to the already existing municipal code.

Mayor Johansen thought this is something we need to look at and study and see what some of the other towns around have adopted and had good luck with.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Discussion/Vote on Purchase of Mower

The old mower is 11 years old and needs to be replaced and there is some money in the budget to use to purchase a new one. The price is \$14,000 with the trade in of the old mower.

Mayor Johansen commented that the guys do a lot of mowing and do not like to have a lot of down time for repairs. This was purchased thru John Deere and is local plus the service will be in town. There is \$23,000+ in the equipment line item budget.

The question was asked if they needed to get more than one bid but the fact that the service was local outweighed getting another bid.

Motion was made by Alderman Schreiber and seconded by Alderman Colclasure to purchase the new mower. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Vote on Ordinance Number 2019-1: Adopting an Expense Reimbursement Policy for City of Lexington, Illinois

This ordinance is from the State of Illinois reimbursement policy and was passed January 1, 2019.

Motion was made by Alderman Richard and seconded by Alderman Stover to approve Ordinance Number 2019-1: Adopting an Expense Reimbursement Policy for City of Lexington, Illinois. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Mayors Report:

All Casey's documents are signed and anticipate an October closing or sooner. Mayor Johnsen is getting a timeline from them as to when we can start. The road intersection design will be done Friday. The intersection design study has to go to the County and the County has to sign off on it. Once they sign off on it we can start putting the culvert in and start bringing some fill dirt in.

Aldermen Stover and Richard along with Mayor Johansen walked thru the brewery and it is really looking nice. The bar is finished, the taps are in but not installed and the bathrooms still need work. There will be 22 taps with an ability to brew 250 gallons of brew at a time as well as small portions. He has not received his local license yet.

The property that was voted on to be put out for bid is moving along. Attorney Shields is working on separating the parcels that need to be separated. The Fire Station and the Water Tower and Salt Shed and the Parking Lot are two lots so he needs to put them together. The brick building and the Water Plant should be ready by the end of April should someone be interested.

Back when the Community Center was built the City had offered to buy Geneva Boyd's house. It is now for sale. The realtor has passed this information on to us and we have passed it on to the Community Center. They are seeing what they can do but if we want to get involved to help the Community Center that is something we need to think about and have further discussions. The parking lot would help the Community Center as well as when Fred gets open. It will be listed at \$125,000.

Mayor Johansen met today with Zack for address changes for E911 and the more we talk the more complicated it gets. He will meet with the County again, roughly we will need to change about 100 house addresses and maybe one street name that may need to be changed. We will need to decide if we are going to absorb the cost of putting new house numbers on or pass it

on the federal government. Some have stone on the house and they will be about \$238 and the rest will just be the house numbers. If we do nothing we could lose the chance of federal grants if we apply for any and the post office will not deliver mail. Mayor Johansen believes we are only obligated to change the numbers on the house because of the ordinance stating all houses must have a house number. There is the liability of someone needing emergence services and not having the right address. We need to put something in the budget for this.

Star is set to start taking credit card payments for water bills on April 1st but has taken a few early and everything seems to be going smoothly. Star is also looking into a water billing system for next year’s budget that will e-mail your water bill to you and you can pay it that way as well. We pay \$400 a month in postage. If we can cut that down the program will pay for itself rather quickly. We do not pay anyone to help stuff envelopes, all the stuffing is done by volunteers, but if we had to pay somebody, it would get pretty costly. The water billing program has not been upgraded in 12 years and Star really like this program.

Lights at the cemetery will be up soon weather permitting. There is a spot between the cemetery and Casey’s where no one seems to know who owns it. We need to find out who owns it, Ameren or Corn Belt Electric, so they can put the lights up.

Police: None

Building/Insurance None

Finance/TIF: Alderman Stover is working on two TIF applications requests. He is still working on the budget.

Water/Sewer/Sanitation: Mayor Johansen reported that all of the sediment has been taken out of the tanks at the old Water Plant which we were required to do. We have talked about taking the scrap out of that building. If the brewery wants to go in we will still have a decent building.

They found the problem with the Water Plant freezing this winter. It was determined that the problem was inside the tank and not outside. It was freezing to the pipe that disburses the salt brine and froze to the pipe that allows it to drain back and they have it figured out now.

Street/Alley: None

There being no further business, motion was made by Alderman Franklin to adjourn at 7:33 P.M. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Pati Pease

City Clerk

Approved: April 8, 2019