

City of Stewart Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2025

7:00 pm Call to Order the Regular Council Meeting

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call; Mayor: Jason Peirce - here
 Council Member: Carol Altrichter - here
 Council Member: James Eitel - here
 Council Member: Wes Holtz – here
 Council Member: Daniel Broucek – here

Approval of Minutes from March 10th;

-Councilmember Altrichter disagrees with the wording of the minutes in reference to her telling Taylor to take her address of the rental unit list

-Laura pointed out that she wrote the minutes as the conversation occurred and that she included that Councilmember Altrichter disagreed with how the events occurred

-Councilmember Altrichter agreed that should cover it

Motion to approve March 10th minutes, Eitel/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Consent of Agenda;

-Gerri would like to be added for the Girl Scouts

Motion to approve agenda, Altrichter/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Balance Sheet;

Motion to approve Balance Sheet, Broucek/Eitel, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures;

Motion to approve Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, Holtz/Eitel, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Payments (Claims);

Motion to approve Payments, Eitel/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Utility Billing Information;

Motion to approve Utility Billing Information, Altrichter/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Bank Reconciliation;

Motion to approve Bank Reconciliation, Altrichter/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Emergency Services Report

1. Fire Department

a. Nate Hardel's Resignation Letter

Motion to accept Nate Hardel's resignation letter, Altrichter/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

Motion to approve Fire Department Report, Altrichter/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

2. EMR Department

a. 4 medical runs

b. Completed first round of EMR training

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- c. Captain Maiers is keeping a spreadsheet of all trainings to make sure that nothing is lost in the transition

Motion to approve EMR Department Report, Eitel/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

Petitions, requests, and communications

1. Bolton & Menk Update

- a. R&R was anticipating a June 1st start date, but it may be moved up, as they are ahead of schedule

- b. The railroad permit has been approved

2. Review and Approval of Council Policies & Procedures Manual

Motion to approve Council Policies & Procedures Manual, Eitel/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

3. Review and Approval of Council Code of Conduct

-There was a written complaint filed about a councilmember's behavior after March's meeting discussing a city employee in a negative way

-The written complaint was sent to the attorney

Motion to approve Council Code of Conduct, Broucek/Eitel, all in favor, motion carries

4. IGA Building – motion for law enforcement to move forward with citation

Motion for law enforcement to move forward with citing the owner of the IGA Building at 360 Bowman St, Eitel/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

5. Clarke Mosquito Contract

- a. 1 year contract @ \$535/treatment

- b. 3 year contract @ \$460/treatment

Motion to approve Clarke Mosquito contract for 3 years, Broucek/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

6. Aerial Project Contribution

-Laura will contact the county to get a better explanation

7. Curtis Wangen – interest in purchasing land

-Curtis Wangen was informed that when he first mentioned his interest to the city, he was told the city would contact him after they spoke with the attorney

-He has not heard anything since, so he is revisiting the issue

-Mayor Peirce stated that the City plans to sit down this summer and discuss plans for the City's land at a special meeting

-The Council agreed to discuss the land at the same time as they discuss the land by North Street

-Laura will contact Curtis Wangen when they city plans to discuss the land

8. Review current Asset Inventory

-This would be a good topic to bring up at the special meeting as well

-The City needs to figure out an asset policy to determine depreciation values

-Councilmember Broucek will look into what the City of Hutchinson does for their asset policy

9. Increase in Agent Fees for GO Bond 2017A

-The fee has increased \$100

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10. Nordic Solar projects
 - This is the solar farm North of Hector
 - The City of Stewart gets credited for our energy bill due to solar panels we bought into
11. RS Fiber update
 - The city agreed to contribute to legal fees
12. McLeod County Forum Invite
13. Girl Scouts'
 - Gerri Fitzloff is wondering if it is ok to put up 4 ft tall fence around the garden
 - They also have a 6'x8' garden shed they would like to put out there for their gardening tools- they plan to put it on a concrete slab
 - She is wondering if they need permits and who will pay for it
 - Mayor Peirce stated the shed would require a zoning permit
 - The concrete is too permanent, but pavers may be a better option
 - Mike will help Gerri determine any zoning/permit requirements for the fence
 - Nate is the point of contact for any modifications to the land
 - Motion to allow Mike, Nate, and Laura to make decisions on what happens with the project, Eitel/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

Ordinances and Resolutions;

1. Resolution 2025-33 Approval to Attend Clerk's Institute
 - Motion to approve Resolution 2025-33, Eitel/Holtz, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries
2. Resolution 2025-34 Acceptance of Fire Donation
 - No need for Resolution- It went directly to the Relief Association
3. Resolution 2025-36 Approve Lease Agreement – Hansen
 - Motion to approve Resolution 2025-36 for \$500 plus fuel, Eitel/Altrichter, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries
4. Resolution 2025-38 Portable Restroom Rental
 - Motion to approve Resolution 2025-38 using MiniBiff, Altrichter/Holtz, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries
 - Nate asked if we need to take bids every year for the portable restrooms, or can we go with the cheapest bid
 - Mayor Peirce stated that we should take bids, but Laura will ask the auditor to clarify
 - Mike informed the council that if you have a company you trust and does regular work for you, you can go with that company without having to get bids
 - Nate will ask about getting a multi-year contract
5. Resolution 2025-39 Transition STWR Debt to Sewer Debt Service
 - We have enough in our STWR account to pay back our bond in full
 - Laura and Mike suggest moving \$15 per water connection from the revenue for the STWR and putting it towards the Sewer Debt Service to help cover payment for our upcoming street project
 - This enables the City from having to raise the water bills higher to cover upcoming debt service

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-The remaining revenue coming into the STWR fund will be used for any repairs/maintenance on the water ponds

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-39, Eitel/Altrichter, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

6. Resolution 2025-40 Go Improvement Bond 2025A

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-40, Holtz/Broucek, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

7. Resolution 2025-42 Approval to pay back 2004 GO Bond in full

-Councilmember Altrichter asked Mike if he expects anything to go wrong with the water ponds this fund supports

-Mike said the ponds hardly get water in them

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-42, Altrichter/Eitel, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

8. Resolution 2025-46 Approval for building and rental contract

-Laura informed the council that Prokore had reached out to the city about a possible building inspector contract

-Our contract with 101 Development Resources has come to an end

-There are concerns going forward with a new contract with them

-Prokore is more cost effective and has a lot better system in place for tracking permits

-The turn-around schedule for permits is significantly faster

-Brownton has signed on with them, which gives the City of Stewart an additional 5% discount

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-46 with payment option #1 with a one-year contract, Eitel/Holtz, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

Reports of Officers, Boards and Committees;

1. Police Department Report –

-Councilmember Holtz asked about the cost

-Mayor Peirce said we are in a 2-year contract with 30 hours a week coverage

-Laura stated that Brownton had mentioned a possible joint-town police force, rather than contracting through the county

Motion to approve Police Department Report, Broucek/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

2. Public Works Reports

A. Maintenance Report

-Mayor Peirce stated that some vandalism was done on the ball field

-Mike caught the kids in the act and had the kids clean up their paint mess

-Mayor Peirce stated that someone stopped at his house to complain about the state of the ball field. Someone took red rocks and filled in trip hazzards

-Nate will be replacing the lock on the shed, and he will give coaches key/code for access

-Nate wanted to discuss painting curbs

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- He priced out some options and wanted the council's opinion to have it done before StewartFest
- Nate stated that for torching, the city has 2 acetylene tanks and 1 oxygen tank
- The oxygen tanks costs \$487 per year
- One of the acetylene tanks is \$460 per year
- If the city did a lifetime lease, it would cost \$250, plus \$50 every 5 years for tank inspection
- Oxygen is currently not leased, it is month to month
- One of the acetylene tanks is month to month and the other is a 5 year lease, which ends next year
- The council agreed to allow Nate to switch to the lifetime lease for both oxygen and acetylene through Central McGowen
- Currently for shop rags, we are spending around \$1600 a year, and they have not been to the shop to swap out rags
- Laura will reach out to Vestis for lack of service in the last 2-3 months

Resolution 2025-37 Nate Hardel Wage Increase

- Nate passed his Water Exam to get licensed, class C
- Councilmember Altrichter asked if Nate needs to work under Mike for a couple years
- Nate said that he is not required to

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-37 for \$1.50 raise, Broucek/Altrichter, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

- Nate's increase will be effective starting today

Resolution 2025-41 Approval for Dust Coating

- Mike recommends Loftness

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-41 with Loftness, Eitel/Holtz, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

Resolution 2025-43 Approval for Seal Coating

- Nate recommends to not do replay this year, but to do all of the chip coating
- Nate recommends M.R. Paving, they are the cheapest and Nate has heard good reviews from other cities
- Councilmember Eitel stated they did not do the best work in the past

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-43 with M.R. Paving Option 'b' with Granite, Peirce/Broucek, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

Resolution 2025-44 Emergency Street Repairs

- Nate said the damage was caused by no chip sealing when it was needed
- Every time the garbage truck drives over it, it sinks 8-10 inches
- Mayor Peirce asked if we could take the back-hoe down and dig it out and fill it in with Class 5 gravel
- Nate said it would be a 40x50 area to get to good tar
- Mayor Peirce is asking how badly it needs to be done
- Nate highly recommends doing it because it will not last another winter
- Mike said the gravel would hold if they dug it out and filled it in, but people may complain about the gravel

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- Councilmember Holtz suggested we budget it for next year, and this year dig it out and fill it in ourselves

- Mayor Peirce advised them to get the gravel at the same place they got it last time

Resolution 2025-44 is tabled for now

Motion to approve Maintenance Report, Altrichter/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

B. Water/Waste Water Report

- Because we filled the THMs again, the testing failed

- Mike was hoping they got the ammonia project started soon enough that they would pass, but that did not happen

Resolution 2025-35 Acceptance of Bid for Annual Lift Station Maintenance

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-35 with Tristate pump and control, Holtz/Altrichter, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

Motion to approve Water/Waste Water Report, Eitel/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

Building & Planning & Zoning Permits

Approved Building Permits;

Unfinished business;

Employee Review: Laura's Annual Review

- Laura scored 38.5 which is between meets and exceeds expectations, closer to exceeds

- To ensure compliance with pay equity, Mayor Peirce recommended giving Laura an additional raise on top of her annual 3%

- The raise will be paid back to her anniversary date

Resolution 2025-45 Wage Increase for Laura

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-45 to increase Laura up to Grade 9 Step 5 at \$30.01 per hour, Broucek/Eitel, all in favor, Broucek-yea, Eitel-yea, Holtz-yea, Altrichter-yea, Peirce-yea, motion carries

Next Month

Miscellaneous;

- A special meeting will be set in June to discuss land use, Buffalo Lake's ambulance service, and the City's assets

- Laura will get a copy of Buffalo Lake's Audit and their Ambulance Audit before the special meeting

- Next meeting the council will set a date for a special meeting

- Councilmember Altrichter will inform Curtis Wangen of the special meeting planned for June

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ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn at 9:31pm, Altrichter/Holtz, all in favor, motion carries

By:

Jason Peirce – Mayor

ATTESTS:

By:_____

Laura Ranieri, City Clerk - Treasurer