

City Council Meeting 2/26/24, 7PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mayor Brady Gragg, Grant Bowlin, Trent Clark, Ken Stringer, Dan Ravenscraft, Kathryn Coleman

Others In Attendance: Officer Tom Moore, Andrew Hanna, James Krstolich of IdeaTek, Mayor Mike Hammann of Burns, Councilman Travis Bailey of Burns, Willard Wiebe, Jean Thiessen, Terry Ullum, Don Berg, Brandon Maus, and Anne Morrow

7:00pm: Mayor Brady Gragg calls the meeting to order. Approval of both the agenda and last months minutes. Motion by Bowlin, Clark seconds, – all in favor. Approved. 7:02pm

Open to Public - N/A

Order of Business

7:03pm: Willard Wiebe, Whitewater Lakes Update

- **Mr. Wiebe has provided the City with plans for both the Sanitary Sewer & Water Distribution System for the Cottonwood CT section. Those plans have been sent to KDHE and are awaiting approval. The said plans were created by KE Miller Engineering and used Wichita's city standards for both.**

Wiebe also mentioned that digging a basement for one of the lots will be happening in the near future.

7:05pm: James Krstolich, IdeaTek

- **IdeaTeks Program:** The Kansas Office of Broadband Development launched the fourth round of Broadband Acceleration Grants, with the application window closing March 11, 2024, in an effort to improve broadband infrastructure access and affordability through rural Kansas.

This program is designed to address the critical broadband needs in rural communities that lack speeds of at least 100/20Mbps. In order to accomplish these goals through the entire state, the maximum award per project is \$1M. Applicants participating in this program will be required to provide affordable and reliable broadband services within the proposed areas, and will have 24 months to complete the proposed project.

WHITEWATER, ELBING, & BURNS:

This proposed fiber to the home build would offer symmetrical speeds up to 2.5GIG to over 600 premises in this rural area of Butler & Marion Counties, upgrading them to the connectivity need for the next 50-100 years of internet technology growth. This is a high cost per premise project, that would not be possible without state funding opportunities such as this. Reliable services in this area are well below the required 100/20.



The Mayor from Burns, Mike Hammann and Councilman Travis Bailey came along in support and to help with our questions. IdeaTek is also talking to Butler County as a whole. What IdeaTek is needing from us is a letter of support and financial promise to partner with IdeaTek for our city, nothing happens until they win their grant.

Bailey stated that he cannot work from home with the current options he has in Burns and that is why he sought out a company like IdeaTek. Jean Thiessen, Whitewater Librarian stated that this would increase the options and abilities of the library as well as be an added selling point to anyone looking to move to Whitewater. She has also agreed to host meetings and learning programs provided by IdeaTek at the Library so more can become educated on what it is and how to use it.

IdeaTek will start this process 30 days after the grant is approved and finish by the summer of 2025.

Velocity agreement from last year has set no time on when it may bring fiber to town.

AT&T has no interest in servicing fiber to smaller cities and will not be bringing fiber to Whitewater.

Through the underground fiber of IdeaTek people would be able to work from home, stream and not bog down their services. Installation fees are \$100, and range from \$50 - \$130 a month depending on what package would be chosen, it is not shared fiber lines. They also have Business Pricing. IdeaTek also has landline options for phones for those who desire it. Their customer service is located in house at their base of operations in Buhler, Kansas. They will also send out their techs, and others for special training opportunities, they would even come to nursing homes. Once partnered with IdeaTek, IdeaTek will invest in the community and be present for community events.

Their website is ideatek.com

March 11 is the deadline and fast approaching. What is required of Whitewater at this moment is a letter of support, stating how much we are willing to pledge to the project. No money will change

hands until after the grant is passed. The pledge does not have to be paid as a lump sum, can be accomplished through installments.

Bowlin motions to provide a letter of support to the company IdeaTek as they seek a Grant to bring Fiber to the City of Whitewater. Coleman, seconds. All agree with Stringer abstaining to vote due to not understanding much about the topic. Passed, 7:44pm

Ullum when asked stated that financially we have positive cash flow and would be fine to commit financially.

Bowlin motions to pledge \$15,000 to the IdeaTek proposal to bring Fiber to Whitewater if their grant is accepted. Coleman seconds. All agree with Stringer abstaining to vote due to not understanding much about the topic. Passed, 7:47pm

James Krstolich will keep the City of Whitewater updated as things progresses.

7:50pm: Maintenance Allowance

- The Mayor feels that \$500 is a bit high. Clark, Bowlin and Stringer agree that they appreciate a boot allowance but maybe not anything else like jeans. The council likes the idea of creating a more professional look and also a sense of recognition and representation for the City Employees. The Allowance and expenses will come out of the General Fund.
- At time of employment each would be provided with 5 short sleeved shirts and 5 long sleeved shirts with the City of Whitewater logo embroidered on them. Only to be worn on the job. This will be provided by the city each year.

Stringer motions that Maintenance Employees will be granted up to \$200 as a Boot Allowance per year. Ravenscraft seconds, all agree. Passed, 8:02pm

8:02pm: Resolution Proposal for City Officials and Those Appointed to Attend Training

- Mayor Brady Gragg would like everyone who can be able to take advantage of the opportunities to learn about government, how cities can run, etc. but also realizes that this could take someone away from their day jobs, creating a lose of money. With more and more opportunities being offered he feels it would be wise to create a better learning and growing possibility for those in Office.

Stringer proposes that a Resolution be created stating that the city will pay for City Officials and Those Appointed who attend training opportunities dealing with the municipality: The city will pay for the registration and expenses plus \$150 per training opportunity. Reimbursement will be granted when presented with Completion Certificates and expense accounts. Bowlin seconds. All Agree, 8:20pm

8:21pm: Create City Projects List

- Leaf Vaccum – safer/quicker
- Sidewalks
- Lift Station Upgrades* - possibly look into grants, bond issues?
- Along with the Lift Station the Control Panel*
- Marking Main Streets parking spaces – need to talk to the County, its a county road
- ADA Bathroom for the Library, possible addition to the building
- Storm Shelter/Bathrooms/Concessions Stand at the Ballfields – grants?

- **Informational Systems – more efficient and effective communications with the public for emergency, or FYI information – by replacing the HWY sign and City Building Sign with Full Electronic Messaging Boards.**

Financial Report – Terry Ullum, 8:42pm

Everything is looking good, moved some more money over to 5 month CD's

Police Report – Tom Moore, 8:45pm

- 4 verbal warnings, had to flash his lights a couple of times when ppl were going 24mph. Not a lot going on during the day time.
- Bowlin asked about the homeless situations and what is in place, if we have any loitering laws. Both Morrow and Moore will look further into this and see what we have in place. Moore stated that most camp out in Post Offices because they can't get removed. We have had some issues with certain individuals coming through town and staying in our parks. Because it is city property we can post park hours. Morrow will look into this further.
- Clark brought up the need to have police presence at the middle school when kids are being dropped off, kids are running through the crosswalks and cars are going fast at that time as well. Talk of extending the school zone, do we need better signs, more signs, different signage...Officer Moore stated that he will start changing his hours to where he will be in town at that time and monitor the area.

Mayors Report – Brady Gragg, 8:53pm

- Mayor Reads the Severe Weather Preparedness Proclamation, Proclaiming that **March 4-8, 2024 will be SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK for the City of Whitewater.** The National Weather Service, in conjunction with the State of Kansas and local jurisdictions, will be conducting a **statewide tornado drill on Wednesday, March 6th at 11:00am.**

Maintenance Report – Brandon Maus, 8:55pm

- Once again has been cleaning leaves out of the street gutters.
- Had to replace the battery on the City Buildings generator.
- Cleaned out the Car Wash pit 3 times including today in the last month. The car wash has been extremely busy this last month.
- Replaced a tire on the Backhoe.
- Has started to place rock on some of the alleys now that we have rock and the alleys have started to dry out.
- Jan. 30th, repaired a water leak @ 4th & Locust.
- Still waiting to get bids from Concrete companies for the Main St. sidewalks.
- The Annual Water Usage Report has been submitted.

City Clerk Report – Anne Morrow, 8:58pm

- Whitewater Municipal Court met Feb. 6th and finally resolved the issue on the docket from 2023. Small discussion on how court is going and what might need to change in the future.

New/Unfinished Business – 9:04pm

- Community Bulletin Board – Morrow has picked out a board that will work but will not order until we have a place for it to go. Stringer has started talks with the Post Office personnel and the issue is now being passed around by their higher-ups. Should know if we can post it outside their door within 30 days.

Next Months Meeting – March 25, 2024

Bowlin motions the meeting be adjourned, Coleman seconds. All agree, 9:06pm