COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF LUVERNE

April 8, 2019

The City of Luverne Council met in regular session on April 8, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., in the City Hall Building. The following members were present:

Mayor Ed Beasley

Charlie Johnson, Councilman

Kip Smith, Councilman

Kathy Smyth, Councilwoman

Elliott Jones, Councilman

Eddie Billings, Councilman

Margie Gomillion, Clerk

Mike Jones, Attorney

Michelle Royals, Engineer

William Neal, Building Inspector

Matt Hutcheson, Editor

Visitors:

Merrill Sport

Mayor Beasley called the meeting to order. The mayor called on Eddie Billings to lead the pledge of allegiance to the flag and Mike Jones to say a prayer.

Mayor Beasley called for the approval of the minutes of March 25, 2019. Councilman Billings made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Councilman Jones seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved.

Attorney Jones stated he mentioned an article at the last council meeting about a vicious dog ordinance that was in a municipal magazine. Mr. Jones stated he read the article again and he recommended staying with the vicious dog ordinance we have now.

The mayor called on Engineer Royals’ departmental reports. Ms. Royals reported the gazebos at Person Park have been painted. The drainage ditch close to the high school has been cleaned out. Ms. Royals stated AMEA is good about forwarding emails of interest to the city. They forwarded information about a nationwide grant application called AARP. This grant tends to be for large city community projects. Ms. Royals discussed some ideas for the different categories such as: adding new sidewalks, new street signs, gazebos at Turner Park and a new playground for the lower fields. Ms. Royals asked for some direction from the council. The council discussed if it would be possible to use the grant for smart meters. After some discussion, the council agreed for Ms. Royals to apply for the grant to purchase smart meters.

Mayor Beasley called on the city clerk for the administrative report. Routine work was performed.

The mayor stated everyone has a copy of the chief’s report and called on the chief to speak. The chief stated the last couple of weeks have been the busiest since he has been here. There have been several burglaries in some new homes under construction. The chief reported the police department along with two other counties have recovered 90% of the items stolen from the homes. The school resource officer has resigned so she will have to be replaced. The police department is down four officers. The chief stated the traffic seems to be flowing.

Councilman Johnson reported the park opened last week. There has been a good crowd and everything has been running smooth. The lake is open and busy.

The mayor stated the airport is running smooth. Engineer Royals stated they are still working on the agreement for the new lease. The new tenants have not moved in yet.

Mayor Beasley reported everything at the library is running well.

Councilwoman Smyth reported everyone has a flyer in their packet for the *Don’t Litter On Luverne Bicentennial Clean Up* which is Saturday morning May 4th from 10 am – 12 noon. There will be groups around the city that will organize at the Pepsi Pavilion that morning such as: school groups, scout groups, youth groups, families and individuals. They will be partnering with the PALS group out of the north end of the county. The city will bring a few of the recycling bins to central locations that day. Along with this, the Bicentennial Grant will purchase two trash receptacles to replace the dilapidated ones downtown. The Eric Dusenbery exhibit is coming to the John D. Harrison cultural center May 3rd – May 31st. School groups will be invited the first day to come between 1 pm – 3 pm. Also, there will be a reception May 3rd from 4 pm – 6 pm to view the exhibit and meet Mr. Dusenbury and the 20 people he will be featuring. These are two of the three projects that the Bicentennial Grant will be funding.

Councilman Smith reported everything is running good with the rescue and fire departments.

The mayor called on Mr. Neal for his report. Mr. Neal stated he has been doing various things such as: answering questions about zoning and setbacks, making sure contractors have business license and approving building permits. Mr. Neal reported Ms. Evans was sick on the last court date and could not come.

Councilman Jones discussed Mr. Neal talking with him about how beneficial it would be to use a city vehicle for his day to day activities. The mayor stated he is working on a city vehicle for Mr. Neal that would serve all his duties without having to change vehicles throughout the day.

Mayor Beasley stated the Water Board has requested the city council consider appointing Mr. S.W. Jackson, Jr. as an Honorary Water Board Member and do a resolution for him. Councilman Smith made a motion to appoint Mr. S.W. Jackson, Jr. as an Honorary Water Board Member. Councilman Billings seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved.

Mike Jones stated he emailed information to the council on the assignment of the cell tower lease. There should be some surveyors on the property this week. They will also be meeting with contractors and hope to have a contract by the end of the month for the construction of the site. Then the towers should be up within 60 days. Councilman Jones made a motion to give the city attorney the authority to negotiate the cell tower lease agreement. Councilman Johnson seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously approved. Councilman Jones made a motion to give authorization to the mayor to sign the cell tower lease agreement once the city attorney has approved. Councilwoman Smyth seconded the motion and all was in favor.

Councilman Smith stated the city lost a retired employee, Bobby Jeffcoat, this past week. Mr. Jeffcoat had over 40 years of service with the street department.

Councilman Jones discussed the difficulty of keeping police officers due to the pay and what can be done to keep the officers. The chief said several quality people have applied but will not come for what we offer to pay. After some discussion, Councilwoman Smyth requested a Budget Committee meeting now that we are two quarters in and look at the situation. The mayor stated once the date is set the council will be notified.

Councilman Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned.