



**CITY OF CENTERTON
SPECIAL
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CALLED BY MAYOR BILL EDWARDS
JANUARY 25, 2022**

(1) Roll Call-

The Special City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor, Bill Edwards at 6:00 p.m. Those present and answering roll call were Mayor Bill Edwards, Darren Warren (via Zoom), Josie Reed, Keith Higginbotham, Justin Cowgur (via Zoom) and Amy Rochette. Misty Elam was absent. Those present and not answering roll call were City Clerk Todd Wright, City Attorney Brian Rabal, Finance Assistant Shannon Zappettini, Police Chief Cody Harper, Director of Public Works Lance Johnson, Fire Chief Matt Thompson, Centerton Utilities Director Frank Holzkamper and Animal Services Director Cody Wilson (via Zoom).

(2) American Rescue Fund Presentations –

Mayor Bill Edwards addressed the City Council, stating that tonight's meeting is to allow for presentations by those requesting to use American Rescue Funds. He said the City Council does not have to make any decisions at this meeting. He said he will summarize the requests for Council after this meeting. He said we have already received \$1,131,375.58 in Rescue Funds, and will receive another \$1,678,331.18 in July 2022, for a total of \$2,809,706.76. He said that we have received guidance from the Arkansas Municipal League, as well the Treasury Department, for use of these funds. He said originally, these funds were only to be used with Water & Sewer projects, Broadband, Loss of Revenue and Premium Pay, but it has recently been opened up for most uses. He said the funds need to be used by 2024, with any remaining funds to be returned.

PRESENTATIONS:

- **Centerton Utilities –**

Centerton Utilities Director Frank Holzkamper made a presentation to Council, requesting funding assistance for \$1,275,000.00 for two (2) projects: 1) 24" Water

Main on Walters Road, and 2) 12” Water Main on Ginn Road; to provide more volume for our water system, during times of high demand. He said CWSD has multiple projects, but these are “shovel-ready”. He provided a detailed outline of the bid costs for these projects. He said they do have a \$12 million project they are looking at putting out for bid for later this year, which would include a new Water Tower in the southern portion of the city, to support the needs of that area. He said the use of these Rescue Funds would also help keep Centerton Utilities from having to raise rates at this time.

Holzkamper requested \$650,000.00 from the Rescue Funds the city currently has and another \$650,000.00 from the second installment. He said if they are not approved for assistance from the Rescue Funds, they will likely look at rolling this need into a Bond Request for the \$12 million Water Tower Project.

- **Police & Fire Training –**

Fire Chief Matt Thompson and Police Chief Cody Harper made a presentation to Council, requesting funding assistance for a mutual Training Facility to be housed at Fire Station #3, west on Hwy 102. He said both Police and Fire have a small amount of current Bond funds to go toward this project, but the Rescue Funds would allow the current Bond funds to be used toward other needs in both departments. They provided illustrations of Burn Buildings and Modular Training Buildings, as examples. There was discussion about current mutual training options in Northwest Arkansas, and how this would help our own departments, as well as those of the surrounding communities.

Thompson and Harper requested \$500,000.00 from the Rescue Funds, to go toward this project.

- **Streets / Parks & recreation –**

Director of Public Works Lance Johnson made presentations for 1) Football/Soccer field at Kinyon Sports Park. 2) Baseball fields at Keller Road Sports Park.

Johnson said the Football/Soccer field at Kinyon Sports Park has already been leveled and established. He said they have already purchased the combination goals for the field, but have not installed them yet, because they don’t have lighting for the field. He said the field has been used for practice by different leagues. He said he did have someone reach out to him recently, regarding starting a Soccer League. He said the cabinetry is installed and the electrical has been stubbed out for the lighting at the field. He estimated the cost of the lighting at \$200,000.00, \$40,000.00 for Engineering and \$10,000.00 for Bermuda seeding. He said the total estimated cost is \$250,000.00, and requested Rescue Funds for this project.

Johnson said he was asked to come up with numbers for completing baseball fields at the Keller Sports Park at the last Council Meeting. He estimated the Phase 1 cost of

three (3) 200-ft fields at approximately \$200,000.00 for engineering, dirt work, portable fencing (including the dugouts), and improving the gravel parking lot. He said Phase 2 would likely include asphalt for the parking lot, finishing the trail around the site, stubbing out electrical service, and a concession stand. He said Phase 3 would be lighting. He estimated the total cost of the fields at approximately \$1.5 million. He requested \$200,000.00 for Phase 1 at this time.

- **Centerton Animal Shelter –**

Animal Control Director Cody Wilson made presentations for 1) Latch hardware repair/replacement for all 34 kennels. 2) Concrete/Drain repair for all 34 kennels.

Wilson provided evidence of improper latches, with fatigued metal on the gates to the kennels. He provided an estimate from NWA Fence for approximately \$2310.00 for labor and material, for the same existing hardware. He said he would plan for approximately \$3000.00, to cover any modifications that might need to be done. He said three (3) kennels are not useable at this point, and it appears that all of the kennel gates have the same issue, and will eventually fail.

Wilson said he also has an issue with drainage in the new portion of kennels, where they only have a 1” fall to the drain. He said this causes backup and overflow when rinsing out the kennels. He said it takes longer to clean the kennels, as well as the overflow issue. He said the cost of the plumbing is approximately \$5000.00, and the concrete repair would be approximately \$1000.00 per kennel, for a total of approximately \$40,000.00 to repair all 34 kennels. He said it would have to be done after our contract with Bentonville ends in 2023, and would still have to be done in sections.

Darren Warren recommended repairing the latches out of the General Fund in the current budget. Council agreed.

- **Centerton Cares –**

Wendy Henson of Centerton Cares (with assistance from Fire Chief Matt Thompson and Police Chief Cody Harper) made a presentation to Council of the service her non-profit group provides with small food pantries in the city, and shared some of their needs. She said everything they get is from donations by the community. She said all donations are documented, but there is a limit of \$50,000.00 that they can receive as a non-profit, without creating paperwork challenges. She said the most she would ask for would be \$40,000.00. She said in-kind donations are handled differently. She said they are looking at adding small pantries, but need help funding them. She said they also have issues with storing food and supplies.

Council discussed options for donating to Centerton Cares, or other non-profits that may be interested in using the Rescue Funds. Mayor Edwards said he would research how the Rescue Funds would work for non-profit organizations.

Darren Warren recommended the following Use of the Rescue Funds:

- **Centerton Utilities - \$450,000.00 now and \$450,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Police & Fire - \$250,000.00 now and \$250,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Parks & Rec - \$350,000.00 now and \$350,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Animal Shelter - \$25,000.00 now and \$15,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Centerton Cares - \$25,000.00 now and \$15,000.00 in July, 2022**

Warren said that would be \$1.1 million now, which we currently have, and \$1.08 million in July, 2022, for a total of \$2.18 million; still leaving us approximately \$630,000.00 in funds for other needs that could arise, or redistribution among the current requests.

Keith Higginbotham recommended the following Use of the Rescue Funds:

- **Centerton Utilities - \$650,000.00 now and \$650,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Police & Fire - \$500,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Parks & Rec - \$450,000.00 now**
- **Animal Shelter - \$40,000.00 in July, 2022**
- **Centerton Cares - \$40,000.00 now and \$40,000.00 in July, 2022**

Darren Warren said he was in favor of Higginbotham's recommendation, which would be \$1.14 million now, and \$1.23 million in July, 2022, for a total of \$2.37 million; still leaving us approximately \$430,000.00 for other needs that could arise.

Keith Higginbotham recommended that the City Wash Bay project be completed as well. There was discussion.

City Clerk Todd Wright recommended that Council earmark the funds as discussed. He said Centerton Utilities has true numbers for their project, and is ready, but recommended that we let the Department Heads get their bids together for these other projects, and fund them as they come available. He said supply and demand will dictate the order of things. He asked City Attorney Brian Rabal if he was in favor of an ambiguous motion from Council on these amounts. Rabal said the Agenda to the Public states that tonight's meeting was for presentation purposes. He recommended waiting for the February Council Meeting to vote on anything. Council agreed.

No action was taken by Council.

(4) Other Business –

- **City Hall Update** – Mayor Edwards gave an update on the schedule for the New City Hall.

- **Approval to Advertise for the Accounts Receivable Position** – Mayor Edwards asked for Council approval to advertise for the Accounts Receivable position, which already included in the 2022 Budget. He said we need to fill the position and would like to advertise, so we can start interviewing candidates.

Keith Higginbotham made a motion to allow for the Advertisement of the Accounts Receivable Position, with a 2nd from Amy Rochette. All Council Members voted in favor and the motion carried.

- **Mayor's Assistant Position Update** – Mayor Edwards said we have several candidates for the position. He said we did make an offer, which was not accepted, due to the pay. He said we do have other candidates we are bringing in for 2nd interviews and skills testing.
- **Financial Director Update** – Amy Rochette asked if we have an update on our Financial Director. Mayor Edwards said we do not.
- **Executive Session – Personnel Matter** –

Josie Reed made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:39 p.m., with a 2nd from Amy Rochette. All Council Members voted in favor and the motion carried.

Keith Higginbotham made a motion to exit the Executive Session and re-enter the City Council Meeting at 8:27 p.m., with a 2nd from Josie Reed. All Council Members voted in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Edwards said no Action was taken in Executive Session.

(5) Adjourn-

Amy Rochette made a motion to adjourn at 8:28 p.m. with a 2nd from Keith Higginbotham. All Council Members voted in favor and the motion carried.

Bill Edwards, Mayor

Todd Wright, City Clerk