



**CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF PRAIRIE VILLAGE  
NOVEMBER 1, 2021**

The City Council of Prairie Village, Kansas, met in regular session on Monday, November 1, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Mikkelson presided. Due to technical issues, the start of the meeting was delayed until 6:33 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll was called by the City Clerk with the following Councilmembers in attendance: Chad Herring, Jori Nelson (via Zoom), Inga Selders, Ron Nelson, Tucker Poling (via Zoom), Bonnie Limbird (via Zoom), Piper Reimer (via Zoom), Courtney McFadden, and Ian Graves (via Zoom). Staff present: Byron Roberson, Chief of Police; Keith Bredehoeft, Public Works Director; City Attorney David Waters, attorney with Lathrop & Gage; Wes Jordan, City Administrator; Jamie Robichaud, Deputy City Administrator; Tim Schwartzkopf, Assistant City Administrator; Meghan Buum, Assistant City Administrator; Nickie Lee, Finance Director; Cindy Volanti, Human Resource Manager; Adam Geffert, City Clerk.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mrs. McFadden made a motion to approve the agenda for November 1, 2021. Mr. Herring seconded the motion, which passed 9-0.

**PRESENTATIONS**

- Mayor Mikkelson read a proclamation recognizing November as National Native American Heritage Month.
- Mayor Mikkelson, along with Mr. Jordan and former Mayors Sue Weltner and Ron Shaffer, reflected on the life of former Councilmember and Mayor Roe Taliaferro, who had recently passed away at age 98.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Mikkelson asked if there were any items to remove from the consent agenda for discussion:



1. Approval of regular City Council meeting minutes - October 18, 2021
2. Approval of expenditure ordinance #3007
3. Consider installation of stop signs at the intersection of 74<sup>th</sup> Street and Village Drive
4. Consider memorandum of agreement with Little Government Relations for government relations and lobbying services in 2022

**Mrs. McFadden made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. A roll call vote was taken with the following votes cast: “aye”: Herring, J. Nelson, Selders, R. Nelson, Poling, Limbird, Reimer, McFadden, Graves. The motion passed 9-0.**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Insurance Committee**

- Consider approval of 2022 employee medical, vision, and dental plans and other supplemental employee benefits

Mrs. Robichaud stated that the City’s benefits consultant, CBIZ, advised staff earlier in the year that they anticipated the City’s health insurance rates through United Healthcare (UHC) would increase significantly in 2022 due to a higher number of claims during the rating period of May 2020 through April 2021. During that period, claims on the City’s insurance increased by 32.5% compared to the same timeframe the previous year.

In anticipation of this increase, staff recommended to the Insurance Committee to instruct CBIZ to go out to bid for the City’s health insurance renewal for 2022. It had also been 5 years since the City went out to bid on employee medical insurance, so staff felt it was important to go out to the market to ensure the City and employees were getting the most competitive rate while not sacrificing the quality of coverage. The Insurance Committee agreed with staff’s recommendation, and CBIZ accepted proposals on the City’s behalf this fall.

Several competitive health care bids were received from UHC, Cigna, Humana, and Aetna. After a thorough review, staff made the recommendation to the Insurance Committee to change from United Healthcare to Cigna for medical insurance in 2022. The Insurance Committee voted unanimously in October to support staff’s recommendation and switch the employee medical plan from UHC to Cigna in 2022.

Cigna provided a very comparable bid to the current plan through UHC, but the cost of their plan was about 3% less per year than UHC for 2022, resulting in a savings of \$36,160. Cigna also agreed to a 12% rate cap for the 2023 renewal and to fund the City’s wellness fund at \$30,000 per year, which is currently funded at \$10,000 per year through United Healthcare.



Ms. Robichaud added that dental, vision and life insurance providers had not changed, though the Employee Assistance Program would be moving from New Directions to LifeWorks. Overall, a 12.5% increase in medical premium contributions was anticipated in the 2022 budget, but the proposed rates would result in a budget savings of approximately \$81,000.

**Mrs. McFadden made a motion to accept the Insurance Committee's unanimous recommendation to approve the 2022 employee insurance benefit package as presented. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion, which passed 9-0.**

- **Police Pension Board**

- Consider revisions to Council Policy 055: Investment Policy Statement for Police Pension Retirement Funds and new Council Policy 054: Investment Policy Statement for City Supplemental 401/457 Retirement Funds

Ms. Robichaud stated that Council Policy 055 was amended in 2019 to shift oversight of the City's supplemental retirement plans from staff to the Pension Board of Trustees. Since that time, the City's plan administrators at Voya requested that the City adopt an investment policy for its supplemental retirement plans. In working on this policy, staff recommended to the Pension Board the creation of a new Council Policy (CP054), which would be specific to the City's supplemental retirement plans. Staff also recommended separating the two policies due to the nature and structure of each of the plans. The Police Pension Plan (governed by Council Policy 055) is a defined benefit plan in which the Pension Board of Trustees is directly involved in how the funds in the plan are invested.

The City's supplemental retirement plan is a defined contribution plan and employees have oversight of the investment of their individual funds. The Pension Board of Trustees' role in oversight of the supplemental retirement plan is limited to determining the investment options offered to employees and receiving performance updates on those investment options. The Pension Board of Trustees unanimously recommended approval of new Council Policy 054 and revisions to Council Policy 055 at its October meeting. The city attorney has reviewed the policy.

**Mrs. McFadden made a motion to accept the Pension Board's recommendation and adopt COU2021-79, revisions to Council Policy 055 and new Council Policy 054. Ms. Reimer seconded the motion, which passed 9-0.**

- Ms. Selders stated that at the Diversity Committee meeting on October 20, a recap of the first Racial Equity in Communities workshop was provided. UMKC professor



Dr. Sandra Enriquez was also present to discuss a project that her Public History students were working on to compile a history of the community for an interpretive panel project. Further, Mayor Mikkelson and Chief Roberson discussed the Citizens Advisory Board, and the committee provided feedback on the upcoming Diversity Arts show.

- Mr. Graves said the Environmental Committee met the prior week to discuss the City's commitment to the "Cities Race to Zero" program. A presentation on electronics recycling programs was given by a representative from PCs for People. An electronics recycling event is planned for 2022, as is an Earth Day event with other cities in northeast Johnson County. Lastly, Committee members went on a tour of a local recycling facility.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

- The Mayor provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that trends were stable, with Johnson County remaining in the "substantial" category. New cases over the previous seven days totaled 93, a slight increase from 91 at the last meeting. The percent positive rate also increased slightly from 4.9% to 5.3%. The vaccination rate of those 12 and older had increased to 64% per the Johnson County Health Department and to nearly 80% per the Center for Disease Control. Both hospitalizations and deaths continued to decline. The total vaccination rate in the 66208 zip code had reached 78.6%.
- The Mayor noted that outgoing Councilmembers Jori Nelson, Tucker Poling, Sheila Myers, and Dan Runion would be recognized at the first meeting in December.
- The Mayor served as the judge of a children's Halloween costume contest at a neighborhood block party on October 30.
- The Mayor attended a retirement party for Mayor Sissom of the City of Merriam.
- The Mayor said the Johnson County Charter Commission met for a final public comment session the previous week, and would next meet on November 8 to review proposed charter amendments.
- Councilmembers and staff attended virtual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training sessions.
- Every representative Rebecca Galati will attend an upcoming Council meeting to discuss the ongoing upgrades to electrical infrastructure in the City.
- The Mayor's Tree Lighting event, a fundraiser for the Prairie Village Foundation, will take place on December 2.
- The Mayor will host a Johnson County / Wyandotte County Mayors meeting on November 3. Representatives from United Community Services will be present to discuss their affordable housing toolkit.
- A ribbon cutting for the new Hunter Family Vision office will be held on November 4 in the Corinth Quarter shopping center.



### STAFF REPORTS

- Mr. Jordan stated that the November plan of action and projects update was included in the meeting packet. He noted that a request for proposal was being prepared for the planned 2022 salary study, and that the nearly ten-year old phone system at City Hall would need to be replaced in the near future.
- Chief Roberson said that the mental health co-responder had taken a new position with Johnson County, and that the Prairie Village and Leawood Police Departments were in search of a replacement employee. Additionally, the Chief provided an update on department staffing, noting that the City was allotted up to 47 officers, and currently had 41. Nine officers had left the agency during the past 13 months.
- Ms. Robichaud said that Building Codes staff would move into the new Public Works facility on November 18 and 19.

### OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to come before the Council.

### NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to come before the Council.

**Mr. Herring moved that the City Council move into the Council Committee of the Whole portion of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. McFadden and passed 9-0.**

### COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**COU2021-77      Consider adoption of Ordinances 2459, 2460, and 2461 to clarify and clean up the nuisance, unsafe structure and abatement provisions in the municipal code**

Ms. Robichaud said that there were currently two sections in the Prairie Village Municipal Code that addressed nuisances, unsafe structures, and abatements. These sections included Chapter 8, Article 2 and Chapter 4, Article 1. In some instances, the language in each section conflicts with the other. She added that it becomes confusing for staff when researching the process for handling abatement or nuisances and unsafe structures to have to reference multiple sections in the municipal code.

Staff worked with City Attorney David Waters to improve the language in the municipal code regarding these provisions to provide better clarity and eliminate conflicting language. Staff recommends adopting Ordinance 2459, which would create a new Article 6 of Chapter 8 (Health and Welfare) which will address all provisions related to nuisances, unsafe structures, and abatements. The recommendation also includes adopting



Ordinance 2460 and 2461, which amend and eliminate the current provisions in Article 1, Chapter 4 and Article 2, Chapter 8 related to nuisances, unsafe structures, and abatements. These changes will result in a nuisance and abatement code that is clearer and easier to understand for staff and residents.

Ms. Robichaud noted that the Environmental Committee Chair also recently approached staff with a request from the committee that the municipal code be amended to clarify that milkweed was permissible in native gardens. Staff agreed to present this requested change to the City Council by revising the definition for rank weeds in Section 8-207.

**Mr. Herring made a motion to recommend approval of Ordinances 2459, 2460 and 2461 as presented. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion, which passed 9-0.**

**COU2021-81          Consider approval of the hiring of part-time Crime Analyst**

Chief Roberson stated that in 2004, the Police Department added a sworn position titled Crime Prevention Officer, which was designed to help the department reduce crime by educating citizens on ways to keep their homes and businesses safe. At times, this employee would also assist command staff with crime statistics. Unfortunately, due to work force shortages, the position has frequently been vacant.

The Police Department uses intelligence-based policing as its strategy to respond to and deter criminal activity. In order to effectively use this strategy, the department must have current and relevant statistical data. Numerous data collection points for criminal activity, persons, places and other statistics can be tracked. The department currently has a volunteer who has the technical expertise needed to accomplish this goal. Jeff Collins started working for the Police Department in late 2020 as a volunteer. Mr. Collins has created several data programs and search engines that have been used to improve the efficiency of police operations.

Since Mr. Collins is not an employee of the department, he does not possess the credentials needed to access several other regional and local computer systems. If employed, Mr. Collins will be able to fully access all necessary data sources after passing a background check.

Chief Roberson proposed hiring Mr. Collins as a part-time Crime Analyst at a rate of \$25.00 per hour, for not more than 20 hours per week. The position would not include health care benefits, and the cost would be shared with the City of Mission Hills as part of the 2022 police budget. The cost for the remainder of 2021 is estimated to be no more than \$4,500, and in 2022, no more than \$26,000, minus the Mission Hills portion. If approved and found to be an effective asset, the position will be funded in the 2023 Police Department budget.



Mr. Nelson made a motion to recommend approval of the hiring of a part-time Crime Analyst as presented. Ms. Selders seconded the motion, which passed 9-0.

**COU2021-82      Consider property tax rebate program**

Mr. Geffert noted the Governing Body voted to allocate \$20,000 from the City's general fund to a property tax rebate program designed to alleviate the burden of rising property values as part of the 2022 budget process. The program's goal is to offer financial assistance in the form of a property tax relief grant to low income residents in need. Staff researched similar programs in Mission, KS and Roeland Park, KS, which both utilize the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Very Low Income" guidelines to determine eligibility. Only property owners that are Prairie Village residents, are current on payment of their property taxes and special assessments, live in their own home, and meet the income guidelines would be eligible for the program.

The Mission and Roeland Park programs differ in the types of fees that can be rebated to eligible residents. In Roeland Park, only the City's portion of a resident's property taxes are offered, whereas in Mission, other items, such as solid waste fees are also included. Mr. Geffert stated that staff was seeking direction from Council to determine whether rebates for stormwater and/or solid waste assessments should also be included, by selecting one of the following proposed options:

- Option 1: Rebates for City Property Taxes Only

The average Prairie Village homeowner pays \$845 per year for the City's portion of their overall tax liability. Theoretically, 23 homeowners could be assisted if these were the only fees rebated ( $\$20,000 / \$845$ ).

- Option 2: Rebates for City Property Taxes, Stormwater Assessment and Solid Waste Assessment

Most Prairie Village homeowners will pay \$227 for solid waste services in 2022 (some HOAs provide their own solid waste services, and as such, residents in these areas would not be eligible for a rebate of this assessment).

While it is difficult to determine the precise average amount homeowners pay for the stormwater assessment, staff research suggests it is approximately \$125 per year. Thus, if both the stormwater and solid waste assessments were included along with the average property tax payment, roughly 16 homeowners could be assisted ( $\$20,000 / (\$845 + \$227 + \$125)$ ).

Mr. Geffert said that the City Clerk's Office would be responsible for receiving applications and verifying eligibility, and would in turn work with the Finance Department to reimburse homeowners. Information provided by Mission and Roeland Park indicates that in those



cities, 15 - 30 applications are received annually. Further, applicants that continue to meet income guidelines are eligible to reapply each year. The application period is expected to open in January 2022, and will be advertised in the Village Voice and on social media platforms.

Mayor Mikkelson suggested placing a cap on the assessed value of homes to ensure that funds went to those most in need. **Ms. Reimer agreed, and made a motion to recommend approval of a property tax rebate program based on option #1 (property taxes only) limited to homeowners whose assessed property value is at or below the previous year's median home value in the City. Ms. Nelson seconded the motion.**

Ms. Selders expressed concern that the assessed value of many homes in the City had increased dramatically over the past 10 years, and that houses which were previously affordable were now valued at a level higher than the median amount.

**After further discussion, Mr. Herring made a motion to amend the motion to increase the maximum assessed property value to 1.5 times the median home value in the City. Ms. Selders seconded the motion to amend, which failed 5-4, with Ms. Nelson, Mr. Poling, Ms. Limbird, Ms. Reimer and Mrs. McFadden in opposition.**

**The original motion passed 8-1, with Mrs. McFadden in opposition.**

**Mr. Herring moved that the City Council end the Council Committee of the Whole portion of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Graves and passed 9-0.**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Announcements were included in the Council meeting packet.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mayor Mikkelson declared the meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.**

Adam Geffert  
City Clerk