

The Council of the City of Wellington, Kansas, met in a Work Session on October 30, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the City Council Room, City Administration Center, with Mayor Shelley Hansel presiding.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hansel.

Council members Bill Butts, Kip Etter, Jan Korte, Jim Valentine and Vince Wetta were present at roll call. Council member Hawley was absent at roll call.

Members of the Staff present were City Manager Shane Shields, Finance Director/ City Clerk Carol Mericle, City Attorney Shawn DeJarnett, Public Utilities Director Jason Newberry, Public Works Director Jeremy Jones, Chief of Police Tracy Heath, and Airport Manager Matt Wiebe.

Elkhorn Valley Odor Issues. City Manager Shields introduced Mike Grant, Owner, and Jeff Venn, Plant Manager, of Elkhorn Valley Packing Plant. Mr. Grant purchased the meat plant in March 2002. Mr. Grant told the plant had 45 employees at that time, and now they have 90 employees. The hours of the plant are M-F from 6:30 am to 4:30 pm. He added the Wellington facility is a harvest facility for beef. After the beef is slaughtered and chilled, within 24 hours it is transferred to the Harper KS facility. Council member Valentine asked several questions about the plant operation. Mr. Grant answered only 1st shift is ran daily. He stated 315 head of cattle are slaughtered on a daily basis. He told his payroll is approximately \$3 million yearly. He also stated that the utilities ran 570-600K yearly. Verna Ast, 1622 N. Day, asked how many employees are Wellington residents. Mr. Grant responded he wasn't sure. Mayor Hansel asked why the plant has an odor. Mr. Grant stated if it was a bakery it would smell like bread. He told it was probably a lack of aeration in the plant and a wastewater issue. . In 2016 they purchased a diffused aeration floatation device. They are pretreating the water before it gets discharged to the City. It runs 24 hours a day. Mr. Grant stated that the plant used to put manure and the paunch in a single dump truck, now they use a pickup and 4 trailers to haul out 4 times a day. Council member Valentine asked about the evening clean up. Mr. Grant stated that the building had to be cleaned every night. Council member Wetta said he heard the smell has gotten much worse lately and especially on Sunday mornings. Mr. Grant stated he was not sure about the Sunday morning smell. He told that certainly they can give it more attention then and try to make it better. They are currently installing an air scrubber on the facility and it should be running full speed by Thursday. He told filter systems have also been added to the tankers, with a use of an enzyme being added. These two things have dramatically reduced the smell. Mayor Hansel asked about the inspections Elkhorn Valley has done. Mr. Grant stated there is a Veterinarian on hand to check animals upon delivery. There are line inspections for handlers, and the odor is being monitored by inspectors. He stated they are really trying to be proactive at the facility. Mr. Grant stated the EPA has been called, KDHE has been called, and the food safety agency has been called. Council member Etter asked with all of those agencies being called in to check on the plant, has Elkhorn ever been found guilty of any faults. Mike Grant told of the KDHE wanting him to install curbs to be put into place for drainage. Council member Etter asked if the plant is notified before inspections. Mike Grant stated no, they are unannounced inspections. The normal inspections seem to be semiannually, but more current they have seen them quarterly. Council member Etter asked how much had been spent on improving the process. Mr. Grant said he would estimate it to be \$300,000 - \$450,000. Mayor Hansel asked where the excess parts go and Mr. Grant said the parts go south of Oklahoma City to a rendering plant. Council member Wetta asked if the trucks hauling these parts are owned by Elkhorn. Mr. Grant stated that no, they are owned by Valley Protein. He added the trucks are no longer going through town, they are going east from the plant. Council member Etter asked what they pay in County taxes at Elkhorn. Mr. Grant answered about \$36,000 in total. Council member Butts asked for more information on the Scrubber. Mr. Grant stated it was an upright device that is being borrowed at this time to see if it

will work. It evacuates the air in the room 4 times a minute. This is in the blood processing system that is processed on site. This is where the air scrubber is. Mike Grant told they are very hopeful that once it is running to full capacity it will vacuum the air out of the room into the scrubber and a chlorine water showers and pulls the air through the media and out the stack. He stated he has not had a complaint since the last council meeting. The cost will be \$60,000-\$65,000 for the scrubber, if it is purchased. Mr. Grant also told of the other cattle trucks that are at Casey's across from his business. There has been a Waste Management Truck and several cattle trucks there and feels that all of the smell isn't necessarily a result of the Elkhorn Valley Plant. City Manager Shields asked for the comparison between this plant and the plant in Ark City. Mr. Grant stated that there are many differences in the plants, they have Ag land to the north, a lagoon system, and they are on the north side of town. An industrial site is close to the plant and the actual plant itself is much newer than Elkhorn Valley. He stated that it is five times larger than the operation in Wellington. Director Jones mentioned that KDHE requires the plant to treat the blood on site. Mike Grant told that the change was made in 2008 and it has to be handled differently since that change was made. Verna Ast asked if that was the reason the smell gets stronger in the night. An audience member asked if Mr. Grant could explain what is hauled to 60th street north. Mike Grant explained that he is hauling paunch and manure there. The area is 18 miles from town. It is all for compost on the land. Mayor Hansel thanked Elkhorn Valley for all of the information and attending the meeting tonight. Council member Wetta stated that he has heard the pros and cons of both sides, the community appreciates the business but has to do something about the smell. City Manager Shields asked what the consensus was from the council and the staff would proceed. Council member Valentine stated that consensus is to move forward and see what happens with the new changes.

Memorial Auditorium Management Contract. Manager Shields explained the agenda includes a memo from Director Jones. He described the joint contract with the Auditorium. Director Jones shared that the contract was from 2015. The Auditorium committee's goal is to take steps to improve the facility and accommodate a wider array of events and activities and begin competing with others in the area. We would like to step up those efforts with something on weekends and during the week as well. Currently the facility has weddings, reunions, craft shows, and music shows. The options are to continue with the same contracts with WRC and the Chamber of Commerce and the City, or possibly have one of those entities or a separate entity take care of the cleaning and renting, or even have one individual through employment or by contract take care of those responsibilities. The committee wants someone who would be solely dedicated to that entity, to enlist and recruit activities for the facility. Mayor Hansel stated that the maintenance isn't being kept up, and the scheduling has had some conflicts. Kelly Ford will be meeting with the WRC and cleaning crew this week. Stacy Davis shared that she feels like Kelly Ford, Chamber Director, should have the opportunity to take care of the challenges listed and move forward. Director Jones told who had scheduled and recruited the two events that we were recently held at the Auditorium. He stated that Facebook and radio have both been used. Council member Etter shared he has friends in the business and could give names of promoter people to help make this successful. He has nothing against the Chamber, and would suggest giving them more time with the new management and see what happens. Audience member Jane Cole stated that there was advertisement on Channel 55 and even an interview was done with Across the Pond to try and get people interested in the show. She shared her frustration with the poor turnout. Director Jones would like to see a contract that covered all of that.

Council member Valentine left the meeting at 7 pm.

Audit Services. City Manager Shields said this has been a 3 year contract. The history tells you that 8 auditing firms were sent bid letters and 4 proposals were returned. In 2011 Mr. Lonnie Cooper, the

local CPA firm, is who the Council recommended to remain with even though he was not the lowest bid. In 2014, this contract was again brought to the Council and we were asked to contact all of the local firms, and only Mr. Cooper responded. Mr. Cooper certainly has a desire to continue with auditing the City records. Council member Etter suggested using an outside firm for this process. Council members Butts, Korte, and Wetta stated their consensus is to go with Mr. Cooper. City Clerk Mericle stated she appreciates that Mr. Cooper takes the time to answer questions throughout the year, not just at Auditing time.

Automated Curbside Recycling Program. Director Jones said the proposed budget and options are in the agenda. He pointed out that going to an automated system would speed up the routes. It would take one person to do the work of seven people now on a residential day. He told he spent some time in El Dorado last week and they have the split body truck that would pick up trash and recycling at the same time. El Dorado has 5000 accounts and we have 3000. Director Jones told they have one person who does this entire route in four days each week. It would take our full time staff of seven to four and the savings would be \$100,000 per year. The reduction in staff would be from an attrition standpoint. He continued the Collection department has the highest turnover of any other department in the City for several different reasons and we would not have to lay anybody off or fire them. The benefit of only having four employees would take care of that turnover. We will have experienced staff that we can trust and it will extend their careers. One of the charts shows that we are doubling the speed of pickup by going automated, and we want to increase the number of recycling materials that we currently handle. Director Jones told the City pays \$22 at the landfill to have the trash hauled to Harper County and we are paid \$39 a ton from Waste Management to haul recycling materials to them. The cost of the split body truck will be \$300,000, which it is about double what we would spend on a regular truck. He added that carts would be given to each homeowner. This process would also require a new solid waste trash building for the household trash. The easier you make recycling the more people will participate. Customers would no longer have an excuse not to recycle. Council member Korte stated she is in favor of recycling if we can figure out the finances. Council member Etter asked if we would be willing to look at extending the routes. Director Jones said if we got outside of the city limits that might affect our tax exempt status. Director Jones stated the new MSW transfer station would have to be bid out and constructed first. It would be approximately twelve months in the making. The 2018 budget was prepared with a 5% increase in fees to trash collection, which is a necessity. City Manager Shields stated this project would be funded by a revenue bond and it would be paid back with Sanitation revenue. Council members Etter, Korte, and Butts are in favor of going forward with this. Council member Wetta wants to wait for the new council to vote on this project. City Manager Shields will confirm with Financial Advisor John Haas and bring to a regular meeting.

Compost site hours of operation. Director Jones researched six other communities. He gave details of the spreadsheet included in the agenda. Illegal dumping at the sites include 2x4's, pallets, and trash from households. Director Jones stated that even with staff members out there at our compost site citizens try to unload illegal materials. Currently we have to burn twice a year at our facility. The attendant still monitors the burning. Currently we are looking at cameras, and we will have to have cases go to our prosecutors who take it to City Court. It is about a 33% success rate to do this. Council member Etter asked about having keys given to professionals that were rented or sold. Director Jones told that property access might be an issue, and the KOA, school, railroad, etc. would have to be secured. Director Jones told that one solution would be to move the compost site out to the landfill. It would be open the

same hours as the landfill. We would be increasing the distance that people have to travel. Ideally it is not favorable to burn at the landfill. Director Jones will explore the key issue.

Cowley College, Sumner Campus, Letter of Support, Drone program. City Manager Shields shared that they have discussed the Drone program with several staff members and need a letter of support for a grant opportunity. This needs to show a partnership with local entities involved. This grant would be provided through the Perkins Education Grant. It will involve a drone field on the Cowley College Sumner Campus. They would partner with our Airport to test the drones. All testing would be done in a netted area. He continued that the cost would be approximately \$2,000 to erect the poles on the field. Right now they are needing a letter of support by Tuesday Oct. 31st. The consensus is to provide the letter.

City Manager Evaluation- Mayor Hansel handed out the form to evaluate City Manager Shields. They are due back by November 13.

OTHER

Mayor Hansel told the Wichita Chamber and REAP will be hosting a reception that will be held on Monday, November 20th from 5:30-7:30 pm to honor elected officials. It is a great networking opportunity. Please RSVP by November 13th.

A motion to adjourn was seconded and carried.

Approved and filed this 7th Day of November, 2017.

Mayor

City Clerk