

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING ON INTENTION TO EXCEED REVENUE NEUTRAL RATE

HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH REQUIRED BUDGET MEETING FOR 2025

SEPTEMBER 5, 2024

6:00 P.M. AT CITY HALL, SEVERY KS

Present: Mayor Donna Wiss, Council Members Marc Warren, Lyle Riggs, Ron Robert, Kevin Klepper, Clerk Tessa Riggs, Treasurer William McClendon and City Attorney Alleen VanBebber (via zoom)

Absent: Councilman Rodger Kraft

Guest: Jeanna Fout, Tamara Higbee, Roy Higbee and Tim Moore

Mayor Wiss called the Revenue Neutral Rate hearing to order at 6:09 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll was called.

Notices of both hearings were duly and timely published in the Eureka Herald, which is the City's official newspaper of record; and on the City's website; and were continuously displayed in the window near the entrance to City Hall, all from and after August 5, 2024.

Treasurer William McClendon explained why the City is increasing the Revenue Neutral Rate due to make up for lost income for the previous tax years and possible generate a little more income so the City can stay afloat. McClendon stated the City has a water project currently under construction and the City is trying to obtain a second water license, the City is losing ARPA money that was coming in from government subsidized funds that the City is no longer getting, and the City barely breaks even most years and the expenses exceeds approximately \$15,000 yearly increase and with the substantial amount of inflation, the City is trying to keep its head above water. Councilman Riggs stated there are a lot of homes that need knocked down, but if you do knock them down and the owners are paying \$500-\$600 in taxes verses a vacant lot that brings in about \$50 a year then it hurts everybody else and it is a double edge sword. Riggs noted no one is arguing the fact that this is not a painful subject but what is the solution. Robert noted that water, sewer and trash must be covered by the users because you cannot use tax money. Guest Tamara Higbee stated that since the new water lines were installed everyone is not out at midnight dealing with broken lines in the winter when they break. Robert reported that a portion of Greenwood County is on water boil issue due to a water line break and rural water is on a boil, but Severy is not. Councilman Riggs reported when covid hit, the City received the ARPA money and it hasn't been squandered. McClendon stated it has bailed the City out on water and sewer commodities.

Warren moved to adjourn the Revenue Neutral Rate hearing at 6:45 p.m. Riggs 2nd. Motion passed 4-0.

Mayor Wiss called the Budget Meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. Roll was called. Councilman Riggs doesn't think anything has changed, except for everything has went up in cost. Riggs stated he feels like Treasurer McClendon is doing a very good job and paying attention to the funds.

Guest Tim Moore questioned when the current city employee was hired as a general employee for all areas around town and now his title is Water Superintendent he asked why and how it changed. VanBebber noted that the water plant must be ran every single day. The state requires daily testing and water lines break and the second employee is there so Schmidt doesn't have to work seven days a week. Councilman Riggs stated that at one point, Mr. Moore made it known and had fair points that years ago when the community decided to make their own water, there were Class II water licenses everywhere. Riggs mentioned that is something would happen to Schmidt, the City at this point does not have another employee who holds a license. Riggs noted the City needs to plan ahead for a backup water license and in order to have someone on retainer, it requires an individual to be employed by the City for one year, take classes for credits and pass the state exam. Council members reported that part time Ty Ledford has been employed with the City almost one year and is working towards a water and sewer license.

Council members thanked the public for coming to voice their concerns and welcomed them to attend regular monthly meetings. Warren moved to adjourn the special meeting at 7:10 p.m. Klepper 2nd. Motion passed 4-0.

/s/ Donna Wiss, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Tessa C. Riggs, City Clerk