



ROCKY FORD CITY COUNCIL

June 25, 2019

Rocky Ford City Council met with City Manager Shannon Wallace for brief discussion on proposal from J.C. Carrica for leasing of IDEA Place at 408 North Main, and a longer discussion on Municipal Code overlook regarding dangerous building code, what actions the City might take for abatement of dangerous buildings, and fence regulation code. Steven Cordova, CEO of Total Concept, formerly Tri-County Housing and Urban Development, offered his insight and suggestions for consideration on the dangerous building abatement. Others present were Public Works Director Rick Long, City Clerk Cheryl Grasmick, Jacki Clark, Peggy Sue Romero, Daryl Grasmick, and newspaper reporters Laura J. Thompson and James Conlan.

Following the work session, Council met in regular session. Mayor Thompson called meeting to order. Those present at roll call were:

Mayor: J. R. Thompson

Councilmembers: Susan Jung, Cuco Ruiz, Dexter Buck, Rich Geist, Barbara Hunter

Staff: City Manager Shannon Wallace, City Attorney Bart Mendenhall, City Clerk Cheryl Grasmick

Others present: Jacki Clark, Deanna Hostetler, Steven Cordova, Peggy Sue Romero, Daryl Grasmick, Laura J. Thompson, James Conlan.

Mayor Thompson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Jung moved to approve the minutes from the regular **June 11, 2019** council meeting as presented. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Buck. Voting results were:

YES	Jung, Ruiz, Buck, Geist, Hunter, Thompson
NO	None
ABSENT	Lee

Motion carried 6-0.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Jacki Clark, Rocky Ford resident, shared her harrowing experience when she was attacked by two vicious dogs on September 23, 2018, while she was out walking near 500 block of N 13th Street. She presented Council with pictures of her severe injuries suffered in the attack. Ms. Clark suffered severe bites, permanent nerve damage, gangrene, loss of employment, PTSD and required two surgeries for her injuries. She commended Rocky Ford Police Officer Brian Valencia for his actions to assist her, but felt that otherwise the police response was found lacking. Ms. Clark was rushed to La Junta ER, but was then transferred to Parkview Medical Center in Pueblo when La Junta declined to treat her because her wounds were so severe. She wants to know where was code enforcement, what was done to animals who attacked her and why incident was not reported to the paper until much later in October. Ms. Clark encouraged Council to review RF Municipal Code Section 7-8-410- through 7-8-520 to compare what happened with what should have happened. She wants to see something done because she felt that her attack was

minimalized to seem insignificant. City Manager Wallace responded that she will look into the official response to determine what course of action was taken and what should be done.

Peggy Sue Romero, Rocky Ford resident, told Council that she has reported kids playing in dangerous buildings but does not think the police responded or issued summons. Mrs. Romero stated dangerous building abatements and dog enforcement are both big issues and something needs to be done.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Councilmember Ruiz and seconded by Councilmember Hunter to approve the agenda and consent agenda as presented. Voting results were:

YES	Jung, Ruiz, Buck, Geist, Hunter, Thompson
NO	None
ABSENT	Lee

Motion carried 6-0.

Consent item approved was a special event permit for the City to serve beer and wine for the CML Fall District 6 Meeting and Dinner on September 19, 2019 at the Fairgrounds Event Center.

CLEAN VALLEY RECYCLING – DEANNA HOSTETLER

Deanna Hostetler, general manager for Clean Valley Recycling, gave Council an update on what their organization has accomplished and advised Council of the need for an increase in monthly fee charged for curbside recycling. The current fee of \$6.50 appears on the monthly utility bill of the 90 household customers voluntarily opting for the curbside service. Of the \$6.50 fee collected from each customer, the City remits \$6.00 to Clean Valley Recycling and keeps 50 cents for handling/billing fee. It was the general consensus of Council to approve this 50 cent per month/per customer increase, raising the curbside recycling fee from \$6.50 to \$7.00, beginning with the August 1 bill.

ORDINANCE CONSIDERATION

Ordinance #944:

Councilmember Jung moved to approve **Ordinance #944: An Ordinance Vacating Portions of Streets Generally Known As Chestnut Avenue, 14th Street and Catalpa Avenue, And The Alley Bordering Block “U” Herdman’s Addition To The City Of Rocky Ford, As Shown By The Recorded Plat Thereof, County Of Otero, State Of Colorado** on final reading. Councilmember Geist seconded motion.

Voting results were:

YES	Jung, Ruiz, Buck, Geist, Hunter, Thompson
NO	None
ABSENT	Lee

Motion carried 6-0.

Ordinance #945:

It was moved by Councilmember Jung and seconded by Councilmember Hunter to approve **Ordinance #945: An Ordinance To Submit To A Vote Of The Registered Electors Of The City Of Rocky Ford, Colorado At A Municipal Election On November 5, 2019, A Question Of Whether To Increase The City Sales Tax By One Percent (1%) Per Year For Three Years By Increasing The City Sales Tax Rate From Three Percent (3%) To Four Percent (4%), Which Is One Quarter Of The Annual Sales Tax Collected, To Be Effective January 1, 2021 Through December 31, 2023, And Restricting The Use Of**

Revenues From The Additional One Percent Sales Tax As Follows: The Increase Shall Be Used to Continue To Repair Streets, Sidewalks And Other Physical Improvements In The City According To A Council Approved Repair Schedule, with noted change of effective ending date to December 31, 2023, on final reading. Voting results were:

YES	Jung, Ruiz, Buck, Geist, Hunter, Thompson
NO	None
ABSENT	Lee

Motion carried 6-0.

UPDATE ON BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Councilmember Ruiz reported not much progress was made on the beautification committee, but he plans to meet with City Manager Wallace to look at goals, a mission statement and plan of action before he starts recruiting committee members from the community. Mayor Thompson suggested that number of committee members be kept to a minimum for convenience and for making it easier to have a quorum. He then added that the public is welcome to attend committee meetings and to provide their ideas and input.

DISCUSSION REGARDING MUSEUM MOVING ARTIFACTS FOR MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

Council discussed the museum request for a building space to relocate display cases and artifacts for cleaning, restoration and repairs. Mayor Thompson advised Daryl Grasmick, Museum Board president, that the museum's request to use the City building at 801 Chestnut would not work because the property was still listed for sale, the Museum Board would need to move everything quickly if the building was sold, there was no security system and utilities had been discontinued in the building. Council countered with an offer to let the Museum Board use the rear portion of the IDEA Place at 408 North Main. Mr. Grasmick said that he would discuss this with the Museum Board at their next meeting. He also asked Council to consider finding a helper for City carpenter/handy man Bob Basye to help him get necessary work for Museum done. City Manager Wallace will contact Rocky Mount SER and Colorado Workforce to determine if help might be available through them.

STAFF REPORTS

City Manager Wallace discussed the following items:

- She will be on vacation from Friday, June 28 through Friday, July 15, and will be available by phone.
- Update on Public Safety Building
 - Public Safety Building is no longer ahead of schedule due to HVAC problems. Whittaker Construction is now anticipating end of July for their completion date.
 - SECOM cannot come until September to install wiring and 911 system components.
 - Exterior concrete work and landscaping is 95% complete.
 - Rocky Ford High School Class of 69 will hold a 50th reunion during homecoming weekend in October. They will dedicate a memorial bench at Public Safety Building in honor of their late classmate Frank Gallegos, former Rocky Ford Police Chief.
- Rocky Ford Chamber agreed to meet with Council for a work session on July 9 to discuss lease agreement for Gobin Building Complex. Chamber will either accept proposed agreement or present another one, which Council can either reject or accept. Neither City Manager Wallace nor Mayor Thompson will be present for meeting, so Mayor Pro Tem Susan Jung will be in charge of the work session and the regular meeting.

City Manager Wallace and Councilmember Jung both attended CML Annual Conference in Breckenridge the previous week. Both ladies gave reports on the conference. City Manager Wallace reported that First Amendment rights was one of the most stressed issues. Members of the public are exercising their rights in some of the larger jurisdictions. CIRSA offered some guidelines for employees and municipalities to lessen the risk of confrontation. Other sessions she attended were long term growth, municipal water issues, rural resources round table, homeless issues, capitalizing on benefits of parks and recreation, and a Women in Government (WIG) breakfast

City Clerk Grasmick gave Council a memo stating that all seven Council positions will be up for election in November 2019. The seats up for election are Mayor, one 2-year term; Ward I Councilmember, one 4-year term; Ward I Councilmember, one 2-year term; Ward II Councilmember, one 4-year term; Ward II Councilmember, one 2-year term; Ward III Councilmember, one 4-year term; and Ward III Councilmember, one 2-year term. The first day nomination petitions may picked up and circulated is Tuesday, August 6, 2019. Twenty-five registered elector signatures are required for each position petition, but it is always a good idea to get more in case any signatures are disqualified. The last day to circulate nomination petitions is Monday, August 26, 2019. The petitions must be submitted by the end of the business day, which is 4:30 p.m.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Jung reported that new CML Executive Director Kevin Bommer was focused on the future of the organization, sharing many positive ideas and a new look for CML logo. The next CML annual conference will be held June 2020 in Westminster. CIRSA will publish a new ethics book. Other sessions attended were ideas for merging youth & engaging them with city government, court reform, marijuana and climate change.

Councilmember Ruiz reported summer reading program is underway at the Library, with end of program party on June 28 at Library Park. He also shared plans for an inspirational program for the community, which include motivational speaker and showing an inspirational movie at the Grand Theater.

Councilmember Buck reported he was concentrating on reading the municipal code. He suggested that reviewing animal code be added to the priority list along with the planning and zoning codes. Councilmember Buck expressed that it is very important that Council and City Manager Wallace find funding for animal control in the new budget. Council discussed problems with idea of placing code enforcement in the police department, previous animal control positions and efforts to make the city pound a safe place for animals and volunteers.

Mayor Thompson reported that the Daily Gazette is co-hosting a Fourth of July Kids & Pet Parade with Rocky Ford Public Library on the Fourth of July at 10:00 a.m. around Library Park. The hosts will award prizes and give away books to the participants.

Councilmember Hunter missed the last Tree Board meeting. She suggested that the tree board budget be moved from the trash fund to the general fund or a more appropriate place.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Peggy Sue Romero strongly suggested that Council should consider using one of the 3 police openings for a code enforcement officer. She then asked if the City had started spraying for mosquitoes. Mayor Thompson told her they had, but that the City was very limited in what chemicals could be used for the

spraying. The ones they can use are not strong or long-lasting. Her next request was for something to be done about the dangerous situation of people riding bicycles with no lights after dark, ignoring traffic rules and often darting right in front of a vehicle.

Daryl Grasmick approached Council regarding what could be done to make Crystal Lake accessible for public use again. Council discussed situation but did not have a plan of action at this time.


AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

- Department Reports
- Chamber of Commerce Lease Agreement for Gobin Building Complex
- Joint work session with R2 School Board
- Review City Codes and suggestions for where to start
- City property sale
- Employee health & retirement benefits

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Geist moved to adjourn. There being no further business, Mayor Thompson adjourned meeting at 8:35 p.m.





J. R. Thompson, Mayor



Cheryl Grasmick, City Clerk