

# City Council Meeting 1/22/24, 7PM

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## Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Mayor Brady Gragg, Grant Bowlin, Trent Clark, Ken Stringer, Dan Ravenscraft, Kathryn Coleman

Others In Attendance: Officer Tom Moore, Tim Stanghor, Todd Wedel, Darryl Claassen, Darryl Hill, Terry Ullum, Don Berg, Brandon Maus, and Anne Morrow

**7:00pm:** Mayor Brady Gragg calls the meeting to order. Ken Stringer adds getting sidewalk bids to the agenda. Approved. Approval of both the agenda and last months minutes. Motion by Bowlin, Stringer seconds, – all in favor. Approved. 7:01pm

### Open to Public -

Darryl Claassen would like to host a small garden tractor show in October. He would like to use the property behind his building, turns out that land is not city property but belongs to the COOP. Claassen is encouraged to talk with the COOP to use that land and possibly see if he can do this at the same time as the Fall Festival. Insurance for event? Should bring in around 60 or so people which could increase the turn out for the Festival as well. The City encourages Claassen to pursue this event because it will bring people to town. 7:10pm

**Unfinished Business 7:10pm:** – Community Bulletin Board, Darryl Claassen would like to be kept in the loop if it gets placed near his building. The Post Office is leased but we need to talk to them about placing a bulletin board near their building. We are looking to build a frame to hold it which would be anchored into the sidewalk. It should be weatherproof and if we could we would like to do it near the location it was before, in front of the post office door. Must get a new board because the old one was thrown out and was in bad shape anyway.

### Order of Business 7:18pm:

- **Mayors Appointment to the open seat left by Jeff Artman: Kathryn Coleman, short bio:** “I am Kathryn (Fee) Coleman. I have lived in the Whitewater area almost my whole life. I grew up in the Remington school district and spent time at Wheat State Manor helping my mom after school. I am married to Jacob Coleman, who also attended Remington, and have two daughters (8 and 1). I am a member of the Iowa Tribe of KS and NE and serve as the treasurer on our tribal Powwow Committee. I attend Centerpoint church on Main street and graduated from Southwestern College with a degree in accounting. I am now the Business Office Manager at Wheat State Manor. I

have a busy schedule but I love our town and would love to serve our community however I can!"

**No Questions were asked from the City Council. Bowlin motions to approve Kathryn Coleman to the open city council seat. Clark seconds. All approve. 7:22pm**

**Coleman swears-in and takes her seat on the city council. All welcome her to the council. - 7:24pm**

- **Law Enforcement Contract – our attorney, Greg Nye sent a few questions to be asked for clarity to Mayor Gragg. Who pays for overtime? Officer Tom Moore said they were told there will be no more overtime. In the contract it does state Additional costs for Municipal Court, but anything that requires his presence usually is County Court and not Municipal. Stringer asked if we get charged extra/or if our allotted time we pay for police presence in town is counted when there is a call at midnight and investigations that occur on the off hours when our assigned officer is not present. Moore said no.**

**Nye said there is no real major cost increase in this contract and has signed it.**

**Bowlin is strongly opposed; feels that our money could be used in better ways and it is like we are paying twice for services we already receive. He would rather use the money to hire an Ordinance Officer & Animal Control Officer.**

**Ravenscraft asked if other cities have entered into these types of agreements.**

**Officer Moore stated that yes some have, some haven't. We are basically paying for when/if something big should happen and that an officer could possibly already be in town and be present that much quicker. Others will be coming from places like Towanda or El Dorado to assist and he said he understands Bowlins concerns.**

**Legitimate points were raised for both sides.**

**Clarks biggest things is having that police presence at/near the schools and having an officer in town and known by the students.**

**Stringer, Agrees with Bowlin. We pay in our taxes and now with this contract we are paying again; states he will vote no.**

**Officer Moore reports that he has had no emergency calls to respond to and only minor calls or complaints to deal with.**

**It was asked if Wheat State has needed a police presence, Kathryn Coleman responded that they have had to call the police at times but are locked down fairly good at their facility.**

**Our first responders in Whitewater is our Volunteer Fire Department and our people show up quickly when calls come in.**

**The D.A.R.E. is indepently done through the schools.**

**The question of what would we loose if we don't have this Law Enforcement Contract? speeding tickets, a regular police presence**

**Clark, is not ready to cut the chord and if we did would Potwin be forced to be without as well? His primary concern is the young kids and schools in our community. Officer Moore makes an effort to go to the schools, and gets to know the students there.**

**Ravenscraft understands Bowlins point but feels people will know if we don't have a police presence and take advantage of that.**

**Bowlin recommends if things happen we deal with it by talking with the people involved and/or parents of minors if they are in the wrong.**

**Clark motions to accept the 2024 Law Enforcement Contract provided by Butler County for the City of Whitewater as it is written for another year. Ravenscraft seconds, Coleman agrees. Stringer & Bowlin oppose. Motion passed 3-2, 7:57pm**

**Ravenscraft expresses his appreciation to Bowlin for talking to the kids and their parents when he sees something going on and would like to get the public more involved in this decision in the future.**

**Bowlin reiterates that we need to have an Ordinance Officer & Animal Control Officer in our town.**

- **Changes & Updates to the Employee handbook. With much discussion and a few edits, Bowlin motions to approve the updates to the Hanbook minus the Clothing Allowance (to be dealt with at a later date), Stringer seconds. Passed, 8:30pm**

## **Financial Report - Terry Ullum, 8:30pm**

**ARPA funds have been expanded to provide/develop housing. Developers, etc.**

**Mayor has reported good feed back on the radar signs, asks if we should look into adding more or look into other items like flock cameras. How to use some of our funds needs to be put into New Business.**

**Ullum reports that our CD's are making money. We also received money from the County Treasurer, enough that we could put it into a new CD to gain interest and supply to our reserve.**

**Stringer is very happy with how things are looking and appreciates the work that has been done after the stressful year prior.**

### **Police Report – Tom Moore, 8:40pm**

- Basically his update came during the Contract discussion, Officer Moore had to leave before his report. No emergency calls, no school emergencies. Only dealt with complaints.

### **Parks & Rec Report – Darryl Hill, 8:40pm**

- Have two openings to fill. Position 4, recommend Dana Gehrler (city resident), experienced treasurer & Position 6, recommend Chris Vanderford (outside the city), willing to work. Ravenscraft motions to accept both as recommended, Clark seconds. Passed – 8:43pm
- P&R had their meeting Jan. 2nd and voted to office:  
Andy Floyd, President; Eric Jones, VP; Dana Gehrler, Treasurer; Darryl Hill, Recording Secretary.

Members & ending terms:

Andy Floyd – 12/31/26

Darryl Hill – 12/31/25

Brady Mertes – 12/31/24

Dana Gehrler – 12/31/24

Eric Jones – 12/31/26

Chris Vanderford – 12/31/27

Ex Officio: Tyler Whiteside, Aaron Corby, Caleigh Martin, Jason Chapple

- Sign-ups for baseball & softball are out/up on FB, website.  
Ullum asked about what, when and to who the previous allocations have been done.  
The city will get the allocation to them this month.

### **Fire Department Report – Dan Ravenscraft, 8:50pm**

- Provided the council with WW River Fire District Annual Report. Responded to 144 calls in the 2023 year.
- His term as the Whitewater Rep. is up, He is the Chairman, council will need to affirm they want him to continue as such.
- They are looking into possibly getting a new Fire Truck in the future.

Bowlin motions to continue to have Dan Ravenscraft be the Whitewater Representative in the Fire Dept. Board. Coleman seconds. Stringer opposes. Passed - 8:58pm

## **New Item – Ken Stringer, 9:00pm**

- The mayor, when campaigning, talked about fixing the sidewalks. Much of the reason that hasn't been pursued is due to the unknown financial state of the city. Now that our finances are clear and looking up Stringer suggests we start looking at gathering some bids on what it would take to get ADA correct sidewalks from Wheat State down to Central. Mayor also brought up the loading area at the middle school, the curbs are falling apart. Council requests that Don Berg get at least 3 bids on what needs to be done and how much it will cost.

## **Mayors Report – Brady Gragg, 9:15pm**

- Don Berg is wanting to retire April 1, 2024. Therefore we have started to put job postings out for City Superintendent. We are also accepting applications for the City Maintenance position. The council is provided with job descriptions for both positions to be approved and placed in the handbook and city code updates. Ravencraft motions to approve both the City Superintendent and City Maintenance job descriptions as provided, Bowlin seconds. Approved – 9:18pm
- Salary for City Super: According to the mayor, depending on experience level, etc. starting at \$60,000 up to \$65,000 a year.
- Salary for City Maintenance: depending on experience level, etc. starting at \$17-\$19 an hour.
- Whitewater Lakes Edition Update: Nothing new from the Mayor, but Berg informed the council that we received locates from Mr. Wiebes engineers at KE Miller to find all the utilities so they can come out and start building their plans. Once done they have to go through our engineer for approval as well as KDHE. The city has been helping in every way possible to move this project along but also making sure it is done correctly. Berg noted that Ron Harder has helped in explaining to Mr. Wiebe what needs to be done and the proper procedures for developing.

## **Maintenance Report – Don Berg, 9:30pm**

- Jan. 3 – Lock on the front door of the city building broke. Howard's Lock & Key repaired it and will replace the tumbler.
- Jan. 16 – Replaced the battery at the Lift Station.
- Jan. 17 – Brandon & Don attended the KS 811 Utility Locate Class. It was very informative and beneficial to both.
- Jan. 17 – Water Meter at 121 E. Central was cracked due to improper lid placement and weather, including a frozen pipe. Had to replace the meter.
- Jan. 18 – Replace the Water Meter at 202 N Locust. Pipes had frozen on the 13th. After resident had called Don Berg who informed him it was not the water meter, the resident decided to listen to the advice of a plumber and placed a heat lamp in

the meter can, which slipped and melted the meter components. He will be charged for a new meter and labor costs to replace the meter.

- Due to the cold and frozen ground the water meter readings were estimated this month.
- Brandon is going to take his Class 1 Wastewater Certification Exam Thursday, Jan. 25th – We wish him the best of luck!

### **City Clerk Report – Anne Morrow**

- Whitewater Municipal Court for Jan. was moved to Feb. due to illness.
- Utilities Aging Report from 2023: write-offs were completed Jan. 17, 2024. Total of \$13,845.93, this was not a lose of money just never received. We need to remain strict on our procedures and comply with our codes and applications.
- Planning & Zoning met and discussed the need to update our Zoning Regulations as well as mapping. Everything is outdated. A copy of an estimated fee schedule was provided from Foster Design & Associates. Morrow will develop a more precise cost projection for services provided. We are accountable to our community and county for this information.
- City Wide Clean-Up will be March 23 & the Garage Sale Dates are June 7 & 8.

### **Next Months Meeting – Feb. 26, 2024**

- Clothing Allowance for Maintenance Employees
- Special Projects List with Estimated Costs

### **New/Unfinished Business**

- Need to develop a projects list, to help prioritize and develop what our cities real needs are.
- Sidewalks, Zoning Funding, Lift Station, Concession Stand, Digital Sign at City Building, ...

Mayor Gragg motions for a 15min Executive Session at 10:00pm

Bowlin motions for the meeting to end, Ravenscraft seconds. Passed – 10:15pm