

Governing Body Minutes – February 4, 2020

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, Topeka, Kansas, Tuesday, February 4, 2020. The Governing Body members of the City of Topeka met in regular session at 6:00 P.M., with the following Councilmembers present: Hiller, Valdivia-Alcala, Ortiz, Padilla, Naeger, Dobler and Duncan -7. Deputy Mayor Emerson presided -1. Councilmember Lesser and Mayor De La Isla were absent -2.

AFTER THE MEETING was called to order, Councilmember Ortiz provided the invocation.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by those present in the chamber.

A PRESENTATION on the Shawnee County Parks & Recreation Department was presented by Tim Laurent, Shawnee County Parks & Recreation Director.

Councilmember Valdivia-Alcala requested the County continue to consider the revitalization of older neighborhood parks; keeping the Oakland-Billard Park swimming pool; and install horseshoe pits at Santa Fe Park. She asked if the restrooms will be reinstalled in McKinley Park.

Councilmember Ortiz spoke in support of creating a master plan for Gage Park.

Councilmember Padilla thanked Mr. Laurent for his presentation and willingness to work with the public and City. He stated he looks forward to hearing more about the Advisory Board and their role in the community throughout the year.

Councilmember Naeger inquired on the Gage Park project and the direction it will take.

Councilmember Dobler thanked Mr. Laurent for the presentation. He asked Mr. Laurent to comment on the City-County Parks & Recreation department consolidation.

Councilmember Hiller thanked Mr. Laurent for the presentation. She requested regular updates from Shawnee County and commended them for engaging in Riverfront, trails and bike route efforts.

Mr. Laurent reported there were no plans to reinstall bathrooms in McKinley Park and no plans to remove the pool from Billiard Park. He stated he has been receiving updates on the Gage Park Project and will keep the Governing Body informed as they move along. He stated he believes the consolidation has been successful and things are moving in the right direction.

Doug Gerber, Deputy City Manager, reported City staff has been fully engaged with Shawnee County staff during the Gage Park Project process. He stated Kay's Garden Project was implemented ahead of the County Gage Park Master Plan; however, they will continue to work together as they move forward with the project.

Councilmember Emerson spoke in support of creating a Gage Park Master Plan through a positive City/County partnership.

THE CONSENT AGENDA was presented as follows:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the regular meeting of January 21, 2020, was presented.

Councilmember Ortiz moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion seconded by Councilmember Dobler carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

RESOLUTION NO. 9160 introduced by City Manager Brent Trout, establishing the commencement date for terms of office for mayor and council members was presented.

Brent Trout, City Manager, stated as a result of discussion at the January 21, 2020, Governing Body meeting, language has been added to line 17 of the resolution addressing if the first Tuesday in January falls on a legal holiday, the commencement date will be the second Tuesday in January.

Councilmember Ortiz moved to approve the resolution. The motion seconded by Councilmember Naeger carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

ORDINANCE NO. 20237 introduced by City Manager Brent Trout, concerning meetings and term commencement of the governing body, amending City of Topeka Code Section 2.15.020 and creating new Section 2.15.120 was presented.

Brent Trout, City Manager, reported changing the location of the second Tuesday meeting to a location to be determined by the City Manager would better accommodate discussions with the majority of action items being reserved for first and third meetings. He stated the public would be notified at least five (5) business days before the meeting as well as the City Manager would have the authority to select a venue other than the Council Chambers for governing body meetings.

Councilmember Hiller asked what new equipment would be needed for location changes. She spoke in support of the proposal; however, she remains concerned with public notice of location changes. She encouraged staff to aggressively promote change in meeting locations to avoid confusion by the public. She asked if there would be a change to the executive session notice process.

Brent Trout reported staff would need approximately \$2,500 for additional equipment and internet access fees.

Councilmember Ortiz moved to adopt the ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Padilla.

Councilmember Ortiz expressed concern with different locations not having sufficient seating for the public as well as the additional costs associated with security. She stated her constituents support keeping Governing Body meetings located in the City Council Chambers.

Brent Trout reported there would be no additional cost for security and staff would work to set up the meeting room in a manner that would allow as many citizens as possible to attend. He

encouraged the Governing Body to support the proposal increasing accessibility of Governing Body meetings for the public.

Councilmember Dobler stated he believes there needs to be more discussion on the matter and would suggest referring the ordinance to the Policy and Finance Committee for further review.

Councilmember Ortiz made a substitute motion to refer the ordinance to the Policy and Finance Committee for further review. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Padilla.

Councilmember Valdivia-Alcala spoke in support of the committee referral and believes the ordinance needs more discussion.

Councilmember Duncan spoke in support of having flexibility to change locations of Governing Body meetings. He expressed the importance of giving public notice well in advance including notices posted at the Council Chambers to provide guidance to citizens as needed.

Councilmember Padilla spoke in support of the proposal to change locations as it would increase interaction with the community. He noted they must consider all the preparations involved with changing locations including security.

Councilmember Hiller clarified the Committee would consider (1) the City Manager's proposal for a less formal setting to allow staff and Governing Body members to discuss items more openly; and (2) the Governing Body supports the change in location for the purpose of increasing public engagement.

Brent Trout stated the ordinance addresses two different subject matters (1) changing meeting locations and (2) term commencement of the governing body.

Councilmember Ortiz withdrew the substitute motion to refer the ordinance to the Policy and Finance Committee for further review. The second concurred.

Councilmember Ortiz moved to refer lines 14 through 29 (relating to changing meeting locations) to the Policy and Finance Committee for further review; and codify the ordinance language starting on line 38 and ending on line 42 (relating to term commencement of the governing body). The motion seconded by Councilmember Naeger carried unanimously.
(8-0-0)

The ordinance (lines 38-42) was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Hiller, Valdivia-Alcala, Ortiz, Emerson, Padilla, Naeger, Dobler and Duncan – 8.

AMENDING Governing Body Rule 3.1 concerning Regular Governing Body Meetings was presented.

Brent Trout, City Manager, reported because the previous ordinance (lines 14-29) was the companion piece to amending Governing Body Rule 3.1 he would suggest the item be referred to the Policy and Finance Committee for further review.

Councilmember Hiller moved to refer Governing Body Rule 3.1 concerning Regular Governing Body Meetings to the Policy and Finance Committee for further review. The motion seconded by Councilmember Dobler carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

CHARTER ORDINANCE NO. 119 introduced by City Manager Brent Trout, amending City of Topeka Charter Ordinance No. 117, Section 6, as codified at Section A2-29 of the Topeka Municipal Code was presented.

Brent Trout, City Manager, reported vacancies for the office of mayor and council member are filled by a person appointed by the remaining governing body members and if the vacancy occurs before June 1 in an election year (odd-numbered years), the appointee serves only until the election. He noted currently, the charter ordinance provides that the appointee's term ends on

the second Monday in January and staff recommends removing this reference to be consistent with Resolution No. 9149 changing the commencement date for office terms.

Councilmember Ortiz moved to adopt the charter ordinance. The motion seconded by Councilmember Padilla carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

The charter ordinance was adopted on roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Hiller, Valdivia-Alcala, Ortiz, Emerson, Padilla, Naeger, Dobler and Duncan – 8.

UPDATE on staff action regarding the Governing Body Goals and Priorities was presented.

Brent Trout, City Manager, stated the Governing Body met on April 28, 2018, to review the goals and priorities for the growth and development of the city of Topeka and from that meeting, the Governing Body developed the framework for strategic goals and priorities for 2018 and 2019. He provided the 4th Quarter update on the goals and priorities developed to help guide the Council's policy and decision making towards accomplishment of the City's Mission. He referenced the January 18, 2020, Governing Body Strategic Planning Session and stated when staff receives the final report back from the consultant they will create an action plan to be approved by the Governing Body.

Councilmember Hiller requested the action plan be discussed before considered for action by the Governing Body.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CITY MANAGER, MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL;

Brenda Younger, City Clerk, provided an overview of the February 10, 2020, Governing Body meeting agenda.

Brent Trout, City Manager, announced the Finance Department will begin hosting 2021 City of Topeka Budget Community Engagement Sessions allowing citizens the opportunity to voice

their opinion on the budget. He stated the first session will be held February 5, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. in the Holliday Conference Room, during the Citizens Advisory Council meeting located at 620 SE Madison Street, Topeka, Kansas.

Deputy Mayor Emerson referenced the City's See Click Fix application where he reported a traffic light outage. He commended the Traffic Operations Division for their swift action in replacing the street light.

Councilmember Ortiz asked if the four organizations (three senior centers and Community Action) would be funded in 2020. She also encouraged Governing Body members and citizens to take advantage of the free fire alarms being offered through the Topeka Fire Department.

Brent Trout confirmed the four organizations would receive funding in the amount of \$10,000 each in 2020.

Councilmember Padilla thanked City Manager Trout for working with the Governing Body and funding the three senior citizens centers and the Community Action organization.

Councilmember Dobler stated he appreciates the discussion regarding the Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Department and looks forward to updates throughout the year.

Councilmember Duncan thanked Mayor De La Isla for reappointing him to the Stormont Vail Event Center Board; the Topeka Fire Department, specifically fire fighters serving in Council District No. 8 for providing him a tour and answering his questions; and the Topeka Police Department for allowing him to view the homeless encampments around the city.

Councilmember Valdivia-Alcala thanked the Topeka Police Department for hosting the first of several quadrant meetings in District No. 2. She expressed her appreciation for the allocation of funds to the senior centers and Community Action and noted discussions will continue throughout the year regarding the possibility of additional funding.

Deputy Mayor Emerson, on behalf of the City of Topeka, congratulated the Kansas City Chiefs for winning the Super Bowl.

NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

(SEAL)

Brenda Younger
City Clerk