

**City of Edgerton, Kansas**  
**Minutes of City Council Regular Session**  
**January 11, 2024**

A Regular Session of the City Council (the Council) was held in the Edgerton City Hall, 404 E. Nelson, Edgerton, Kansas January 11, 2024. The meeting convened at 7:00PM with Mayor Roberts presiding.

**1. ROLL CALL**

Clay Longanecker	present
Josh Lewis	present
Deb Lebakken	absent
Bill Malloy	present
Ron Conus	present

With a quorum present, the meeting commenced.

Staff in attendance:

- City Administrator, Beth Linn
- City Attorney, Lee Hendricks
- City Clerk, Alex Clower
- Finance Director, Karen Kindle
- Accountant, Justin Vermillion
- Public Works Director, Dan Merkh
- Public Works Superintendent, Trey Whitaker
- Marketing & Communications Manager, Kara Banks
- Development Services Director, Zach Moore
- Recreation Coordinator, Brittany Paddock

**2. WELCOME.** Mayor Roberts welcomed all in attendance.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** All present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consent Agenda** (*Consent Agenda items will be acted upon by one motion unless a Council member requests an item be removed for discussion and separate action*)

- 4. Approve Minutes from December 14, 2023 Regular City Council Meeting
- 5. Approve Permanent Utility Easements And Road Right Of Way Easements For Dwyer Farms
- 6. Approve Application FP2023-0016, Final Plat For JCCC CDL Training Facility, Located Northeast Of The Intersection Of W. 191<sup>st</sup> Street And Montrose Street, Edgerton, Kansas

Councilmember Longanecker moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion. The consent agenda was approved, 4-0.

**Regular Agenda**

**7. Declaration.** There were no declarations made.

**8. Public Comments.**

Mayor Roberts invited Charlie Troutner to speak.

Mr. Troutner requested Councilmember Conus come up to the podium and presented him with a recognition thank you coin for his service in the military.

**9. Recognition of 2023 Holiday Home Decorating Contest Winners.**

Ms. Banks introduced the third place winners of the Holiday Home Decorating Contest, the Williams Family, and presented them with a certificate.

Mayor Roberts thanked them for their participation in this contest.

They thanked the council for their award and said they are excited to participate next year. Ms. Williams stated they just moved to Edgerton.

**Business Requiring Action**

There were no business items on the agenda.

**10. Report by the City Administrator**

- 2023 Recreation in Review

Ms. Brittany Paddock addressed the Council. She stated this year exceeded even more growth than last year. Some of the most popular events were the Sweetheart Boogie, Spring Break Activities and the Glow Foam Party that followed The Greenspace groundbreaking. She stated her goal for this coming year is to provide even more activities for kids of all ages and branch out a little more on the adult programs. She stated she hopes this will continue to grow attendance at events even more.

Councilmember Conus asked if the programs are open to just Edgerton residents or the surrounding area as well?

Ms. Paddock stated yes, they are open to surrounding area. She stated if the event is very popular, she typically allows residents to sign up first on those and then open it up to surrounding area if there is room.

Councilmember Conus stated he has heard nothing but good things.

Councilmember Longanecker agreed and stated Brittany is doing a fantastic job.

Mayor Roberts stated he is impressed with the number of events and participation numbers.

Councilmember Lewis expressed his appreciation for Brittany's work to increase the number of events.

- Legal Publications Research Results

Ms. Kara Banks reviewed the attached memo to Council regarding Legal Publications options and costs for each.

Mayor Roberts invited Jennifer McDaniels, Editor of the Gardner News, to introduce herself to the Council. He stated he appreciates the Gardner News because it is a true local paper and he believes it is important for transparency to stay local. He stated some other publications may be cheaper from the City's perspective but far more expensive for the public to subscribe to.

Councilmember Longanecker stated he spoke with Jennifer and he would be happy to stay with them moving forward.

Ms. McDaniel addressed the Council. She stated she is the current editor of the Gardner News as well as the Ottawa paper. She stated the new owner of the paper is Cherry Road Media, which is based out of New Jersey. She said the company feels that community journalism is very important as it is the only place where you will get news that is specific to your community. She stated she would like to go back legal and negotiate a better price for the City on their legal costs.

Mayor Roberts stated he appreciates the want to negotiate a better price on our behalf, he stated he does appreciate having a local paper that is truly local. He stated he thinks news today has turned into a mess of trying to make headlines with no substance of fact. He stated he wants facts out there for the community to understand and thinks that with Gardner News, we'll get that.

Councilmember Conus stated he'd like to keep it local. He asked why the legal publications are more expensive compared to other papers.

Jennifer stated she would look into it. She stated a change made in the last few months is that legals on the website will now be viewable without having a subscription. She stated this will allow for greater transparency.

Councilmember Lewis asked if they know the number of residents subscribed to receiving the paper.

Jennifer stated the subscriber number dipped significantly when the switch happened, but the numbers are growing. She stated there are far more people looking at the website which is great.

Ms. Linn stated the problem with the other two outlets is that although they may be cheaper, the City then would not have someone come out and run articles on things happening like The Greenspace groundbreaking, Mayors Christmas Tree, etc. that happen here and are specific to Edgerton.

Councilmember Longanecker stated his goal is unbiased truth, and he would rather keep it local.

Charlie Troutner asked if he could address the council. Mayor Roberts granted.

Mr. Troutner stated he is bothered that this was a personal issue made a council matter. He stated Councilmember Longanecker had a problem with coverage the reporter, Lynn Hermansen, provided.

Councilmember Longanecker disagreed that it was made a personal issue.

Mr. Troutner stated to Councilmember Longanecker that he did not like something that should have been a personal issue and brought it to council.

Councilmember Longanecker stated he gave the reporter a statement as a Councilmember, but it was distorted. He asked for the City Attorney's input.

Mr. Lee Hendricks stated he does not think this situation needs further argument. He stated in this instance, the City researched how much they currently pay and Council could see objectively if there was a benefit in staying with the City's current paper of record or changing to a new paper.

Mr. Troutner stated he would ask that in the future that if there are personal feelings involved to speak to the person.

Mayor Roberts stated it was not just one instance. He stated publications have been printed incorrectly and a few other things. He stated this is a desire to make sure truth is shared and not driven to any direction, just facts.

#### **11. Report by the Mayor**

Mayor Roberts stated he has no report.

#### **12. Future Meeting Reminders**

Mayor Roberts reminded the Council of the future meetings for Council and Planning Commission.

#### **13. Adjourn**

Councilmember Lewis moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Malloy. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37PM.

Submitted by Alexandria Clower, City Clerk