



MINUTES

Joint City Council/School Board Special Meeting

6:30 PM – Wednesday, September 9, 2020

GoToMeetings

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Logan called the meeting of the Othello City Council and School Board to order at 6:30 p.m. and led a silent invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present:

Angel Garza

Jonathan Erickson

Corey Everett

Maria Quezada

Genna Dorow

Councilmembers Absent:

John Lallas

Mark Snyder

School Board Members Present:

Jennifer Stevenson

Lindsy Prows

Sharon Schutte

Kenneth Johnson

School Board Members Absent:

Mike Garza

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT

Shawn Logan, Mayor

Tania Morelos, City Clerk

Anne Henning, Community Development Director

Phil Schenck, Chief of Police

Dr. Chris Hurst, Superintendent

Thalia Lemus, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council carried a motion to APPROVE THE AGENDA. M/S Garza/Erickson

CURRENT BUSINESS

BRIEF INTRODUCTIONS

Director Lindsay Prows began by sharing that she would like to speak to City Council regarding Scootney's PTA request to revisit having a stop sign in front of Scootney. Director Lindsay Prows shared that she would like to work together with City Council in putting together a plan for future facilities and shared that she desires that the facilities in Othello match or exceed facilities in our neighboring cities.

Councilman Jon Erickson shared that this is a great opportunity to work together and discussing un-pressing issues by looking at the long-term. Councilman Jon Erickson shared that this gives a sense of unity and a chance to grab information from each other on how we are overcoming hurdles and restrictions.

Director Jenn Stevenson shared that she would like to learn more about housing issues and the housing shortages in Othello. Director Jenn Stevenson shared that she recently proposed a policy that did not pass, which would require all Directors and superiors at the school district to live within Othello city limits. Director Jenn Stevenson shared that the housing shortage in Othello was a factor in the disapproval of this policy.

Councilman Corey Everett shared that he was very skeptical about the meeting, but he is willing to sit through the meeting with an open mind and see what happens. Councilman Corey Everett shared that the school and city are two completely different entities and different objectives, but he is more than willing to listen.

Director Sharon Schutte shared she is interested in learning more about the fiber optics in Othello.

Councilman Genna Dorrow shared that what she hopes to get out of these meetings is a better and more open line of communication between the City and the School District and to be able to help each other where issues coincide such as in housing and growth going forward.

Director Ken Johnson shared that he has previously served as a councilman and now as a school board member and feels as though both entities share the same citizens and should work together on projects in an effort to do things in a cost-effective way to avoid placing the burden on the taxpayers. Director Ken Johnson shared that at the school district plans for the future growth of facilities, he would like to see both entities work together in identifying the best locations for new developments.

Councilman Maria Quezada shared that what she looks forward to is open communication and a forward-thinking mentality as the citizens would benefit from having both entities shooting for the same goal, which is the citizens benefit at the end.

Mayor Shawn Logan concluded the introductions by sharing that it's important to have differing opinions and is very hopeful in continuing to engage in conversation with the school district. Mayor Shawn Logan shared that in this meeting, the City will be sharing a lot about the projects within their entity and he hopes that in the next meeting, the school district would do the same.

HOUSING AND GROWTH OF CITY

Anne Henning, Community Development Director, shared that in the last 10 years, Othello has been growing faster than the country or the state (16% growth). Anna Henning shared that since 2010, the City's population has increased by 1,151 residents and approximately 400 new dwelling units have been added since 2012. Anne Henning shared that resales are currently higher than new construction and that the cost of square footage has gone up 27% in the last 5 years. Anne Henning shared that the consequence of the housing shortage is overcrowding, which currently there is an additional 3.49 person(s) per household in all of Othello. Additionally, she shared that the current rental vacancy rate is less than 1%, there are few homes for sale, there are substandard housing and illegal conversions currently taking place, and workers are commuting from other cities to work within the City of Othello. Anne Henning shared that the City is well aware of this issue and has been working on it for a while by updating the zoning code, which was recently adopted by City Council in 2020, the planning commission has also been working on an ordinance for accessory dwelling units, which is an ongoing discussion, and lastly the planning commission is continuing to work on the subdivision ordinance. Anne Henning shared that recently, the City of Othello was awarded a grant from the Department of Commerce to hire a consultant to provide the City with a housing action plan that will identify strategies, actions, and policy tools to increase the housing supply to include housing affordability. Anne Henning shared a schedule of events leading up to the closeout of the action plan.

Mayor Shawn Logan shared that what the school district does in regard to locating their schools is going to have a tremendous impact on where the direction of this community grows. Mayor Shawn Logan shared that working together in this aspect is very exciting.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Chief Schenck shared that the City has had a contract with the school to provide one (1) school resource officer (SRO) with shared costs since 2013. Chief Schenck shared that this has been a great benefit and has increased school safety. Chief Schenck shared that when Dr. Hurst came, the district put a lot of effort and attention in school safety by hiring a new school safety director, school security guards, have continued with an SRO and have conducted vulnerability assessments. Chief Schenck shared that both entities have desired to include an additional SRO, but have not had the capacity or resources to do so. Chief Schenck shared that the City has been looking for grant opportunities since 2013 that will help fund another SRO and has finally been successful in being awarded a grant for this purpose. Chief Schenck shared that the grant is for three (3) years with the fourth year being a full retention. Chief Schenck shared that the 50/50

cost that the City and School District has committed to during the last 6 years has only included salary and has not included vehicle costs, technology, training, and overtime costs. Chief Schenck shared that what the City will be proposing to City Council during the following council meeting is for the City to split the 50/50 cost to include all costs (salary, vehicle, technology etc.) during the fourth year of this grant with the school district. Chief Schenck shared that the cost would be approximately \$63,000 per year for the school district for all four years and \$63,000 on the fourth year for the City. Chief Schenck shared that this cost will pay for an entry level position, but his intent is not to assign an entry level officer as an SRO. Chief Schenck shared that the goal is to assign one SRO to MMS and another at OHS, but both officers will respond and assist all schools as necessary. Chief Schenck shared that the new D.A.R.E. program is outstanding and this would allow the opportunity to bring D.A.R.E. back into our schools.

FIBER OPTICS

Mayor Shawn Logan explained how the City is currently in the process of contracting a company to provide fiber optics services to both the public works building and city hall. Mayor Shawn Logan shared that the City utilizes iFiber, which currently they operate wireless services on Othello's water towers. Mayor Shawn Logan shared that the City is looking at terminating the contract and advertising for bids to get an excellent first-class wireless service on the City towers and offset that cost for the new service lines that the City would like to put in.

WRAP UP – SET NEXT MEETING

The School Board of Directors and the City Council scheduled their next meeting for December 9, 2020 at 6:30 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to discuss, Mayor Logan adjourned the Council meeting at 8:12 p.m.

By: _____

SHAWN R. LOGAN, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: _____

TANIA MORELOS, CITY CLERK