

**MINUTES OF THE
City Council PUBLIC HEARING for the City of Menan held February 23, 2017**

Presiding: Mayor Chauncey T. Haight

Present: Chauncey T. Haight, Noel Raymond, Brian Storms, Ron Jones, Keith Nelson, Matt Walker, Kris Meek, Allyson Pettingill, Jolyn Haight, Gary Maples, Don Gunderson, Dennis Storms, Kathleen Storms, Roxie Ashbocker, Dennis Allen, Jennifer Allen, Kent Clark, Greg Nelson, Colby Christiansen, Rand Watson, Carolyn Watson, Jason Watson, Tim Hale, Lacey Hanson, Adam Clark, Victor Cammans, and Ben Mackowiak.

Public Hearing called to order at 7:02 pm

Mayor Haight starts the Hearing by discussing the reason for the Hearing, possibly raising some of the City Fee's, and how the Hearing will proceed. Mayor Haight then informs those present that statements made will be un-antagonistic and not argumentative. There will be time for those in favor of raising some fee's, then for those neutral in raising fees, and finally those against raising fees will speak. There is then a specified amount of time for rebuttal. The Council and the Mayor address those in attendance and explain the reasons for raising specifically the Sewer Hookup Fee. The proposal came about because of an aging sewer system and the high cost of replacing/repairing the current system when/if needed. Keith does explain that the Council wants input from the citizens as to what is reasonable given the issues on the City fee's with rising costs of most of the City's expenses. The Council discusses with those present what some of the fees are currently and which fees may need an increase. There is discussion of raising the sewer hookup fees and possible the monthly fee. Matt says that the system is wearing out, there is quite a bit of repairs, or patching. The Council would like to start accruing funds to have when the system does need more substantial work or even replacement. There is further discussion of the report by Keller and Assoc., and the legal method used to figure the number to raise the fee for the hookups. There is more discussion with the public. There is further discussion of raising the monthly sewer fee also. There is discussion of the effects raising the hookup fee to \$5000 would be on the growth in Menan. The Council then discusses the fee schedule line by line. When the line of Licensing of dogs, Kris suggested what the City of Lewisville had recently approved. Instead of a yearly license that must be updated every year, the license is a lifetime license, for the life of the dog. If the tag is lost, there is a \$5 fee for a new tag, but this alleviates the administrative headache of having to try to re-license every dog every year. He points out that doing so would require an Ordinance change. The Council moves on to the fee for consumption of beer & wine on premises. Kris explains that in order to charge a \$50 Beer & Wine license fee for the selling of packaged products, the license fee for consumption on premises must be raised to \$200. This moves the Council on to the sewer hookup fee. The proposed fee increase from the Council is \$5000.00. The monthly sewer fee is discussed next. The suggested increases were 1.5%.at \$36.54, 5% at \$37.80, and 10% at \$39.60. There is more discussion of what the funds raised by raising fees would be for. The proposed fee increase for the monthly sewer fee would be \$40.00. There is discussion of the garbage fees. This is under contract, no increase at present. City Park Shelter reservations, stay the same. The Council then discusses the fees for the reservation of the Town Hall. The Council then discusses the possibility of charging the multiple basketball leagues for using the building during the winter months. The Council discusses this subject and decides to not raise the rental fees for the Town Hall and not charge the basketball practices. The next item is the rental of the Council Chambers in the City building. The consensus is to leave the fee the same but specify that there is no charge for non profit entities or residents of Menan.

The Council opens up the Hearing to the public for their comments.

Those residents **for** the proposed fee increases.

Dennis Storms, 3557 E Menan Lorenzo Hwy, Menan: Dennis states he is in favor of increasing the sewer hookup fee, there will always be a need for the funds for the system. Those building in Menan need to pay to hook into the existing system. He is in favor of raising the hookup fee to \$5000.00. The funds are going to have to come from somewhere and those that are moving in should have to pay their fair share.

Kathleen Storms, 3557 E Menan Lorenzo Hwy, Menan: Kathleen is for the increases. She states that those moving in are lucky to be able to hookup to the sewer system. She then says that \$5000.00 is not unreasonable considering that it would cost upwards of \$10,000 to put in a septic system. The City needs the funds for the upkeep of the current system. She would also raise the monthly fee \$5.00 per month.

Jason Watson, 625 N 3510 E, Menan: Jason is for increases, but \$5000.00 is too high. He suggests a 10% raise in the monthly sewer fee and raise the hookup fee to \$3000-\$3500.

The time is then turned over for the testimony of those **Neutral** of proposed fee increases.

Jolyn Haight, 3560 E Menan Lorenzo Hwy, Menan: Jolyn agrees to some increases, not just the sewer hookup fee. She thinks that by raising the sewer hookup fee to \$5000 that will be exclusionary to many who may want to move to Menan when they can move to another city for less. She is for raising the hookup fee to \$3500 and the monthly fee by 5% and then address the monthly fee yearly.

Gary Maples, 627 N 3510 E, Menan: Gary states he didn't have all the facts before the Hearing. He thinks raising the connection fee to \$2500, not \$5000 is fair. He would like to keep the small town feel of Menan with some growth, and if the hookup fee is too high it will send builders elsewhere. He would support a \$2500 hookup fee increase and no monthly fee increase, maybe \$1.00.

Don Gunderson, 628 N 3565 E, Menan: Don states that Menan is a great city with very low crime rate. He also mentions how great the people are. He is concerned with how the increasing the costs will affect the growth of the city. The decisions the Council makes will affect the future. He would raise the sewer hookup fee to \$3000-\$3500 and the monthly sewer fee \$5.00 per month.

The floor is then opened for those **Against** proposed fee increases.

Roxie Ashbocker, 474 N 3421 E, Lewisville: Roxie states she is against the sewer hookup fee increase to \$5000. She feels this will limit those who would like to build and live in Menan. She would raise the monthly fee a couple of dollars.

Dennis Allen, 672 N 3565 E, Menan: Dennis stated his opinion that if the hookup fee is raised to \$5000 like Victor, Id it would drive people away. He states that those wishing to build in Victor have more money than those who may wish to build in Menan. He further states he is not against an increase, just not that much. He suggests \$3500 and possibly raising the monthly fee by \$5.00.

Kent Clark, 3592 E 630 N, Menan: Kent states he would be in favor of a hookup fee increase to \$3000, not \$5000. He would also support a monthly fee increase of \$5.00. He further states the fees can't make it too expensive to build in Menan.

Greg Nelson, 629 N 3510 E, Menan: Greg agrees with what has been said so far. People are looking to buy or build in Menan, it would be a mistake to price them out. He would support a 5% monthly increase.

Colby Christenson, 635 N 3550 E, Menan: Colby agrees with a 10% increase on the monthly sewer fee, and no raising of the sewer hookup fee.

Rand Watson, 3552 E Menan Lorenzo Hwy, Menan: Rand states he is against the \$5000 hookup fee increase. He then states that Menan is apples and oranges compared to Victor, Id. He would leave the hookup fee the same with no increase. He also says he is not a fan of building a reserve, when the bond is paid off then use the extra money for the fixes needed. He would support a 10% increase in the monthly sewer fee.

Carolyn Watson, 3552 E Menan Lorenzo Hwy, Menan: Carolyn is against raising the hookup to \$5000. She states she believes it would stifle those who would like to move to Menan, it can make it harder for those to build in the City. She would be ok with a 10% increase to the monthly sewer fee.

Tim Hale, 682 N 3600 E, Menan: Tim is against raising the hookup fee to \$5000. He would be supportive of a \$3-\$4 a month increase in the monthly fee, and the hookup fee to \$2500-\$3000.

Lacey Hanson, 3518 E Menan Lorenzo Hwy, Menan: Lacey states she is against raising the sewer hookup fee. She felt it would stop growth to Menan, it would also set the price too high for growth. She would support raising the monthly sewer fee by \$5.00 a month, but no raise in the hookup fee.

Adam Clark, 646 N 3508 E, Menan: Adam is against raising the hookup fee to \$5000. He states he believes it's too high, it would send a message that Menan doesn't want to see any growth. He would like to see growth in the City. He would suggest raising the monthly fee by 10%, or \$5.00. He would support raising the hookup fee to no more than \$3000.00.

Victor Cammans, 3610 E 660 N, Menan: Victor is opposed to raising the hookup fee to \$5000, he wouldn't be opposed to a raise to \$3000. He is supportive of raising the monthly sewer fee \$5.00, but he would like to find out about some kind of hardship clause for those on a fixed income that may have trouble paying more per month.

Ben Mackowiak, 647 N 3500 E, Menan: Ben recognizes the hard decision before the Council. He states that everybody uses and everybody will have to pay. He further states he would be willing to raise the hookup fee, just not to \$5000. He

then says that Menan could be looking at good growth, but if there isn't good growth then the same people will end up paying for the system over and over again. It is not in the City's best interest to rive growth elsewhere. He would support an increase in the hookup fee of \$3000 and a slight increase to the monthly sewer fee.

Mayor Haight expresses his appreciation to those in attendance for their input. The Council discusses what the public had to say and averaged out what those who spoke suggested. Keith takes a minute to average all of the numbers that were proposed. Keith states the average for the hookup fee would average out at \$2800.00. There is discussion of this proposed number. Noel states he is still looking at raising the hookup fee to \$5000.

Ron Jones made a motion to raise the Consumption on Premises License fee from \$125.00 to \$200.00. Keith Nelson seconded the motion. Motion passes.

Ron Jones made a motion to raise the monthly Sewer fee from \$36.00 to \$40.00 per month. Not seconded, motion dies.

Brian addresses the Council. He starts by saying that Menan is a small town, and that small town has built and put in a sewer system and increased its capacity. This has been paid for largely by the 740ish people that reside in Menan. He further states that as of next year the City will no longer owe any more money on that bond. He further states that due to the water table in Menan, a drain field is not an option. He then discusses the growth around the County and what those who build or develop in Menan would be paying for. He then asked the Council to think about all of these things as they decide which direction to go regarding the sewer hookup fee. Brian states he is comfortable with raising the fee to \$5000. Keith states he can see both sides of the issue. He suggests the Council look at those who attended the Hearing and take into consideration what was said in the public comments. He further states that the best way to grow the funds needed for the system over time is to raise the monthly fee slightly. He suggests averaging out all of the numbers given by those in attendance for both the hookup fee and the monthly sewer fee. It is discussed that the average rounded out number for the sewer hookup fee would be \$2800.00. It is also mentioned to raise the monthly fee every couple of years by a smaller percentage so as to make the upped charge more manageable. It is also suggested looking into a fund that residents who may struggle making the utility payments as they are raised could find relief by other residents willing to donate into said fund. This is something the Council is willing to look into. Noel states that he heard those in attendance and would be comfortable with raising the hookup fee to \$3000.00. Ron states that the averaged fee would still be \$2800.00. Ron suggests raising both fees, the sewer hookup to \$2800 and the monthly fee by \$5.00. The Mayor states he is torn, says he can see both sides like Keith. The Council discusses the issue further.

Keith Nelson made a motion to increase the Sewer hookup fee to \$2800.00 and the monthly sewer fee to \$40.00. Ron Jones seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ron Jones-aye, Keith Nelson-aye, Noel Raymond-aye, Brian Storms-aye. Motion carries.

Increased fees will be in effect starting in March.

Keith Nelson made a motion to adjourn. Kris states that before the meeting can adjourn the Council must make a motion to accept the Resolution that adopts the Fee Schedule as amended.

Ron Jones made a motion to accept the Resolution that adopts the City Fee Schedule as amended. Noel Raymond seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Keith Nelson made a motion to adjourn. Ron Jones seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Meeting ends at 10:00 pm.

Allyson Pettingill, City Clerk/Treasurer