

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
LAWTON WATER AUTHORITY
FEBRUARY 24, 2004 - 6:00 P.M.
WAYNE GILLEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Cecil E. Powell. Invocation was given by Mayor Powell. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Randy Bass, James Hanna, Amy Ewing-Holmstrom, Robert Shanklin, Jeffrey Patton, Stanley Haywood, Randy Warren.

ABSENT: Glenn Devine.

ALSO PRESENT: Larry Mitchell, City Manager; John Vincent, City Attorney; Kathy Fanning, City Clerk; Col. Gregory K. Herring, Fort Sill Liaison.

PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD TO SABINE MOWRY, HEAD CASHIER, REVENUE SERVICES DIVISION OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Rick Endicott, Finance Director, introduced the Employee of the Month, Sabine Mowry. He said Mowry is the Head Cashier in the Revenue Services Division and has worked for the City 16 years. Her husband Jeff works in the Equipment Maintenance Division of the City. Endicott said Mowry is the backbone of Revenue Services. When asked what she likes most about her job, she said it was working with customers. He said she is an excellent worker and proud to be associated with her.

Powell congratulated Mowry and presented her with the Employee of the Month Award, a Certificate of Honor from the Mayor's office, a Certificate of Recognition from the Employee Advisory Committee, \$50 in script money, and two days, non-chargeable days off.

Mowry thanked everyone for her award and she really does enjoy working for the City. Everyday is an adventure. Working with the public, you can learn something new everyday.

PRESENTATION FROM JOHN HERNANDEZ ON THE MUSEUM OF THE GREAT PLAINS

John Hernandez, Director of the Museum of the Great Plains, reported in the past 6 months their visitation has doubled from the previous year, for a total of 19,554 visitors. They have equaled their 2002-2003 fiscal year. On paid admissions, they have had visitors from all but 2 states, Vermont and Wyoming. Of the paid admissions, 77% were from outside Oklahoma, with Texas being the largest, followed by California. They have had visitors from Denmark, Germany, England, Canada, Australia, Japan, and Puerto Rico. The Oklahoma Children's Discovery Network is focusing on comprehensive planning and capacity building exercises. The museum has already completed two of three workshops on Organizational Profile and future workshops including Board Development, Fund-Raising, and Inquiry Based Educational Programs. The first joint effort for the Network was a huge success, bringing over 5,000 visitors in only five days. More exhibits such as the International Space Station are being discussed to bring to our community.

The museum is going to venture onto new grounds starting in April. They are planning their very first Market Fest 2004. He said this will be a celebration of Native American culture. It will be held on the museum grounds and consist of the following activities: Native American Arts and Craft Market, Native American Arts and Craft Exhibition, Teepee Competition, Native American Storytelling, Flute Concert, Dance Exhibitions and Competitions, Tiny Tots Dance Competition, and a Children's Activity Tent. This event is open to the public with free admission. He feels introducing another festival to our community will bring more visitors from out of town, will help the community, and will be able to support the community and their finances. This festival is sponsored by the City of Lawton, Comanche Nations, Lawton Arts and Humanities Council, National Endowment for the Arts, and the Oklahoma Arts Council. This is something new they hope to have every year. Their plans are to make a big production the first year, a professional one, and the next year will be that much easier to bring in more people. They are hoping this festival will one day be as large as the International and Arts For All Festivals.

Powell asked what the dates for this was. Hernandez said it's April 16, 17, and 18, 2004. He said Council will be receiving a flyer on this and hopes all will be able to attend and support Native Americans in our community as they try to sell their artistic works.

Hernandez said things have been going well at the museum. He knows Council is very supportive of the museum and feels very responsible as far as being sure to keep that respect, friendship, and the lines of communication open. He said if you need anything please give them a call.

Patton said he went through the museum last week for the presentation of Black History Month and it was excellent. They did a wonderful job of having it documented. He said we always read and hear about segregation but we never really realize, especially people his age, that this occurred in this very town. He said to see the pictures and hear the stories of what went on here was pretty eye-opening and also very fascinating. It's an excellent display and recommends everybody get out there and see it.

Powell said they are doing an extremely good job. He has been fortunate enough to go there within the last two weeks. He said Success By Six through the United Way met there last Friday for a couple hours and the Friendly Riders had a ceremony there a week ago during their rodeo week and a lot of people attended. A lot of people from out of state was there. He thanked Hernandez and his staff for the good job they are doing.

Haywood said a couple weeks ago, somebody from Greater Galilee Church presented a couple awards to the museum about Douglas School.

HIGHLAND CEMEMTERY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT BY ROY PENEPACKER, HIGHLAND CEMETERY BOARD CHAIRMAN.

Roy Penepacker said he is one of the members of the Board of Trustees for the Highland Cemetery and another member, Larry Campbell is with him tonight and the third member is Chris Elleridge. He provided his report to Council for their review and is available for any questions they might have. He echoed the museum's comment that they had a good year because we have had a significant increase in spaces sold from 2003, as well as internments and openings and closings. He said that is reflected in the

fees charged and the amount of money that comes into the City and to the Cemetery Care Fund. The fees are split 75% to the City and 25% to the Cemetery Care Fund. Their responsibilities include setting the rules and regulations, setting the fees, managing the Cemetery Care Fund, and coordinating with the Parks and Recreation Department on a new Sexton, when one is hired. The Cemetery Care Fund is important because that's how they fund Capital Improvements. It's not money out of the City budget, it's money out of the Cemetery Care Fund.

A list of Capital Improvements completed in 2003 was provided to Council. The Information Center completed in January is a special interest to him because they started about 10 years ago on a project to improve the ability of the public to find information about loved ones interred in the cemetery when the office was closed, such as weekends and holidays. It started with the computerization of the records, moved on to naming streets, block and lot signs, and also the Information Center. Now when someone wants to find out where a loved one is interred, can go to the information center where they will find a printout and can look up a name, location, and can consult a map, see the streets close to it and easily find the location. He said they have had a lot of emphasis on landscaping for the last two years and will continue. It lists landscaping around the Bell Tower, the front entrance, the information center, and replacement of 75 trees in 2003. Most of the trees in the cemetery have been there since the cemetery was established and everytime we have a storm, we lose trees. We are in a constant process of replacing trees. The project for the new concrete slab and sidewalk at the Veteran's Memorial was assisted by VFW Post 1193 who funded the cost of the concrete. In December the City Street Department started construction of 2900 feet of new streets in the rear of the cemetery. For many years the rear of the cemetery was not used. We started using it about a year ago, but we required access to the back and that meant we had to construct streets. The City Street Department has done an excellent job for them and they appreciate it.

Penepacker said the funds for the operation of the cemetery actually come out of the General Fund of the City's budget. Staff consists of a Sexton and four laborers, which is reimbursed, in part, by 75% of the fees. The Cemetery Care Fund is important to us because that is how we fund these Capital Improvement projects. He referred to his report and the cash balance showing as of December 31, 2003 is \$97,488.50. We hold Certificates of Deposits with a maturity value of \$190,000. He said that sounds like a lot of money but when you pay \$50,000 for a backhoe and \$16,000 or more for a truck, you have to be careful on how the money is spent because it will not last. We have some additional monies coming to the cemetery for the care of 58 perpetual care lots sold many years ago and a separate fund is managed by a trustee established by the District Court. We can request money from them for special care of those perpetual care lots and we do so on a periodic basis.

He said it looks like the future of the cemetery is pretty good. There are 4,441 unsold spaces as of December 31st and if you look at that on the basis of the average number of spaces sold, it appears we can continue selling lots for 49 years. He said that's a long time, but lots of things can change during that time, so we have to keep an eye on it.

He said this May will complete his second term on the Board of Trustees and is very proud of what they have accomplished over the last 10-12 years. We have improved the beautification of the cemetery, made information available to people, and provided the equipment the people out there needed to make it work. He thanked Council and the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department because they are the ones who make it go on a daily basis and thanked them for the opportunity to serve.

Powell said Penepacker has served two terms and we are indebted to him for the leadership he has provided, the many hours volunteered, and his loyalty and dedication. Penepacker has asked not to be reappointed but has made a recommendation for his replacement and that has been honored.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAWTON WATER AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 10, 2004.

MOTION by Hanna, SECOND by Bass, to approve the minutes of the Lawton Water Authority Special Meeting of February 10, 2004. AYE: Hanna, Devine, Ewing-Holmstrom, Shanklin, Patton, Haywood, Warren, Bass. NAY: None. MOTION CARRIED.

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m. upon motion, second and roll call vote.

CECIL E. POWELL, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

KATHY FANNING, ASSISTANT SECRETARY