

LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

**MEETING OF THE  
LAWTON ENHANCEMENT TRUST AUTHORITY  
3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
CITY HALL  
212 SW 9<sup>th</sup> STREET  
March 10, 2021**

Jay Burk called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room of City Hall. Notice of meeting and agenda was posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Burk, Jay; Hankins, Mary Ann; McConnell, Lou; Symuleski, Ted; Ezerski, Barry; Jackson-Seeley, Katy.

**ABSENT:** Smith, Addie; Sweeney, Kerry.

**OTHER PRESENT:** Richard Rogalski, City Manager's Office; Tiffany Vrska, City Manager's Office; Tammy Anderson, Planning Division; Charlotte Brown, Planning Division; Susan Schlecht, Finance; Corey Bowen, Neighborhood Services; Keith Neitzke, Parks and Recreation; Greg Gibson, City Attorney's Office; Mike Jones, ADA Coordinator; Joe Chesko, Children's United; Dennis Totte, Bedrock Nursery; Jeanette Klein, Children's United.

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

1. Reports

A. Receive report from Dennis Totte and take action if necessary.

Totte said over the next few weeks his staff will be working to put a fresh coat of mulch down on all the bedding sites. Bedrock staff has been turning sprinkler systems back on and fixing some breaks.

Ezerski asked how the recent freeze will affect trees and landscaping.

Totte said foliage from migrant trees and will lose all the damaged foliage before blooming again. However, he said there will be some shrubbery loss. Totte said tree and shrub food can be applied in April, but the best thing to do right now is to start watering the root zones to put moisture back in the ground. He said if you fertilize too early, there's a chance it may freeze again.

Ezerski asked when a decision should be made about replacing existing landscaping in medians.

Totte said any decisions made before the end of May could be premature.

Burk said Bedrock has also been doing a lot of work on 2<sup>nd</sup> street (e.g. trees and sprinkler maintenance). The Sheridan Road landscaping project has also been completed, to include sprinkler installation. Burk said the sponsorship incentive helps the Authority with landscaping maintenance while also helping local businesses through advertising.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Totte said Bedrock has replaced a total of five trees on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Burk said there's recently been an issue with tree grate openings becoming too small as the trees grow.

Burk said quite a few bollards are still broken off on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Rogalski said staff will address this issue.

Hankins said she has seen some of the tulips blooming.

### B. Receive report from Neighborhood Services.

Bowen said in December Neighborhood Services sent out 903 correspondences. He said 134 work orders were requested in the month of December, and a total of 1,885 work orders were requested for the entire year in 2020. Bowen said 10,994 correspondences were sent out in 2020, and 116 demolition homes were taken to Council in 2020.

Bowen said Neighborhood Services has a yearly goal of taking 120 demolition homes to Council each year. He said he expects to exceed this goal in 2021. Bowen said 27 demolition homes will be brought before Council next Tuesday, and 43 homes are slated for Council in May.

Bowen said 1,058 correspondences were sent out in January.

Bowen said 526 correspondences were sent out in February. He said this number is lower than usual due to staffing shortages in February.

Bowen said he has several boxes filled with old Trash Off t-shirts. He asked for ideas about what to do with them.

Burk suggested the shirts be donated.

Hankins suggested donating them to Teen Challenge.

Burk asked what the plan is for Trash Off this year.

Rogalski said it may not be necessary to have a bulk drop off location at Elmer Thomas Park because the City is now providing once a month bulk pickup for citizens. Rogalski suggested doing some sort of trash clean up day in the fall.

Burk said there are several areas around Lawton that could use trash cleanup. Burk said Trash Off was originally designed with idea of going throughout the town and picking up trash.

Rogalski said his concern with having the event in May is that people will still show up at Elmer Thomas to do bulk drop offs. He said the event may need to "rebranded" to mitigate people showing up at Elmer Thomas. He said having the bulk drop off at Elmer Thomas became such an involved activity that it began to encompass the entire focus of the event.

Vrska asked if anyone would be opposed to changing the name "Trash Off" to something different.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Burk said he's of the opinion that we should still have bulk drop off at Elmer Thomas in addition to picking up trash throughout the City. He said it shouldn't matter how the trash gets cleaned up, so long as it is cleaned up. He said he knows LETA can make both facets of the event happen.

Rogalski asked Burk if he'd want the event to be held in May.

Burk said yes.

Vrska said there are lots of people who are wanting to get out of the house and participate in activities now that the COVID vaccine has been available for some time. She doesn't foresee any issues finding volunteers to help with the event.

Burk suggested a Trash Off committee get together to work out the finer details of the event.

Rogalski asked who would serve on this committee. He suggested the Authority set a committee.

Burk said Neighborhood Services, Solid Waste, Parks & Recreation, and Tiffany Vrska would all serve on the committee as staff. Burk said he will also serve on the committee, and he asked Jaskson-Seeley if she'd like to serve as well.

Jackson-Seeley said yes.

Symuleski volunteered to serve on the committee.

Vrska said if the event is to be held in May there will have to be a discussion about which weekend would work best. She said there are several other events occurring in May (e.g. Mother's Day and high school graduations).

Brown said the Arts for All festival that is typically held in May will not be happening this year.

Burk said funding was allotted in the CIP specifically for demolition homes, and he commended Bowen and his staff for their hard work. Burk noted that many property owners have chosen to renovate their homes after receiving a demolition notice.

Bowen said other municipalities have contacted him inquiring about the City's demolition process because they've noticed how well it's been working in Lawton.

Symuleski said he saw a pile of junk and debris near the canal at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Gore Boulevard.

Bowen said this has been picked up.

Burk said he's been working with the City Manager in doing a sweep of the City to get some piles of junk and debris picked up.

- C. Consider approving invoices, requisitions, and all other submitted materials for payment.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Schlecht reviewed expenses (from the last LETA meeting date to today) with members of the Authority.

**Motion by Ezerski, Second by Symuleski**, to approve all invoices, requisitions, and all other submitted materials for payment. **Aye:** Ezerski; Symuleski; Hankins; McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Burk. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

D. Receive Treasurer Report and take action as necessary.

Schlecht reviewed the November financial statements that were provided to members of the Authority.

Ezerski asked if the \$46,964 owed to LETA by Children's United has been rectified.

Schlecht said not yet.

Burk asked why the profits from the landfill gate fee are showing zero.

Schlecht said they're not receiving checks every month for landfill gate fees, so at times the balance does read zero.

Schlecht said she needs permission from the Authority to move \$525 from allocated funds to beautification funds to pay for wildflowers.

**Motion by Hankins, Second by Ezerski**, to approve the Treasurer's report for November and to move \$525 from allocated funds to beautification funds to pay for wildflowers. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

Schlecht reviewed the December financial statements that were provided to members of the Authority.

Burk inquired about income from medical marijuana taxes. He said LETA should be getting approximately \$30,000 a month from medical marijuana taxes.

Symuleski asked why these checks are not being written and deposited monthly.

Schlecht said it's likely due to staffing shortages and Finance's workload.

Burk said LETA should be receiving anywhere from \$35,000-\$40,000 a month in medical marijuana taxes, and approximately \$600,000 per year. Burk said LETA will begin sidewalk construction as soon as more of the medical marijuana tax money is deposited.

Burk said it worries him that LETA is not receiving landfill gate fees because he knows people are utilizing the landfill.

Rogalski said he will meet with the new Finance Director to talk about the landfill gate fee process and any other issues that need to be addressed.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

**Motion** by Ezerski, **Second** by Hankins, to approve the Treasurer's report for December. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

Schlecht reviewed the January financial statements that were provided to members of the Authority.

Schlecht said the landfill gate fees actually are reflected in the financial statements. Schlecht said if she were to generate a more detailed financial statement it would be easier to recognize.

Burk said he would like more detailed financial statements in the future.

Burk noted that hotel/motel taxes went up from 5% to 7% in January.

Schlecht said these taxes actually went up at the beginning of the fiscal year, not in January.

**Motion** by Symuleski, **Second** by Hankins, to approve the Treasurer's report for January. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

Schlecht reviewed the February financial statements that were provided to members of the Authority.

Burk said staff will need to make an amendment to the hotel motel tax budget.

**Motion** by Ezerski, **Second** by Symuleski, to approve the Treasurer's report for February. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

E. Receive report from Cultural Preservation Committee and take action if necessary. – **NO REPORT AND NO ACTION TAKEN**

F. Receive report from Children's United and take action if necessary.

Chesko said the dancing event at Apache Casino has been postponed to September 18<sup>th</sup>. Chesko said there are still ten couples committed to dancing at this event.

Chesko said he would like to have a Walk for Children's United at Elmer Thomas Park on June 6<sup>th</sup>. He said in the past he's been the logistics coordinator for the Moonlight Walk Against Drugs, and he was very successful. Chesko said he brought in a revenue of approximately \$20,000. Chesko said they'd like to do t-shirts for the Walk for Children's United. He said he can fit up to 22 sponsors on the back of the shirt, and he's already received interest from five businesses that would be willing to sponsor the event. Chesko said each sponsor would donate \$500. He said Children's United would set up sanitizing stations throughout the track while the Walk is occurring. He said there would be no admission charge – profits would be generated solely from t-shirt sales.

Chesko said the Lawton Lion's Club would like to host a virtual 5K race as a fundraiser for Children's United. He said there are other local clubs that are interested in helping with this event.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Chesko said he'd like to place a goal-setting sign in the park, advertising their goal of raising \$236,000 for funding a handicapped-accessible park. He said if they reach this goal, the McMahon Foundation has promised to match their funding with another \$236,000.

Klein said she recently took over the accounting department for Children's United. Klein said she's been tracking all income and expenses, and Children's United has been able to raise \$164,000 thus far. She said her numbers do not correspond with the numbers figured by the City of Lawton Finance Department. Klein said she will get with Schlecht to determine why the numbers aren't matching up.

Chesko said Children's United will also be working with the Chamber of Commerce as they move forward with fundraising for the handicapped-accessible park. Chesko said the cost of this type of playground equipment has increased dramatically over the last few years.

Symuleski asked if there is a timeline for when the park will be constructed.

Chesko said it could be approximately two years. However, the sooner they reach their funding goal, the sooner park construction can begin. Chesko said they've already obtained a mainframe for the park.

**Motion** by Symuleski, **Second** by Ezerski, to approve a Walk for Children's United event to be held on June 6<sup>th</sup> at Elmer Thomas Park, and to allow a goal-setting sign to be placed in the park to advertising funding goals for Children's United. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

G. Receive report from Parks and Recreation and take action if necessary.

Neitzke said \$2,000 worth of sprinkler repairs are underway. Sprinkler repairs will be made at 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Bishop Road, and repairs will also be made at Ft Sill Boulevard and Cache Road.

Neitzke said he put two sets of planters in his budget this year, and he wants to make sure they've been approved. He said there are planters that need to be replaced on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Burk asked Neitzke to get a quote for two sets of planters and bollards for 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

H. Receive report from Public Relations, Website and Facebook Committees, and take action if necessary.

Vrska said Yard of the Month will start up in April. Vrska said she will be reaching out to Lowe's and Home Depot about posting information in their stores regarding Yard of the Month.

Vrska said staff recently went out to take photographs of medians, but many of the medians had trash.

Burk said COVID has delayed some of the normally scheduled trash pickup.

Neitzke said some of this trash will be cleaned up once the City begins mowing again.

I. Receive Monthly Ward Update and take action if necessary.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

None.

- J. Receive a report from the Planning Division regarding ongoing LETA projects and take action if necessary.

Rogalski asked Burk to give an update on the C Avenue project.

Burk said he recently met with Phil Kennedy regarding three medians on the eastside of the mall at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street curve. Mr. Kennedy wants help with funding for beautification of these medians. Mr. Kennedy said if LETA will help cover some of the initial cost of this project, he will keep up with all the maintenance. Mr. Kennedy is asking for half the cost of the sprinkler system, which would be roughly \$2,700.

**Motion** by Ezerski, **Second** by Hankins, to approve funding for sprinkler equipment and installation at three medians on the east side of Central Mall in the amount of \$2,700. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

- K. Receive a report on sidewalk and accessibility projects and take action as necessary.

Burk said there was a glitch in communication regarding sidewalks. Burk said no contact was made with an engineering firm regarding sidewalk design.

Burk said he'd like to discuss tackling some of the easier sidewalks before constructing the Sheridan Road sidewalk. He said the sidewalk alongside Sheridan Road will be difficult to build. Burk said he and Rogalski have discussed starting sidewalk construction on Gore Boulevard from Cameron University to 52<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Rogalski said we can still move forward with the sidewalk design for Sheridan Road while simultaneously working on the Gore Boulevard sidewalk.

Rogalski said there will be a partnership with an on-call sidewalk contractor. He said up to three contractors may be hired.

Ezerski asked if the sidewalk would be on the south side of Gore.

Rogalski said the sidewalk will be on the south side of Gore from Cameron University going west to 52<sup>nd</sup> Street. The sidewalk will be on the north side of the road between 52<sup>nd</sup> Street and 67<sup>th</sup> Street so it will be on the same side as the neighborhood.

Burk said ADA money should be used for accessibility. Burk mentioned the E Gore Boulevard pedestrian bridge, and he said there needs to be a sidewalk connected to the bridge. He said Comanche Nation has made a commitment to help with sidewalk funding alongside their property.

Jones noted that there are patches of existing sidewalk that contractors can continue to build on.

Rogalski said the sidewalk contract with whichever company is chosen can be utilized by both the City of Lawton and LETA.

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Burk noted that there are also plans to tear down the wall on the north side of Central Mall.

Brown said the sewer line on Rogers Lane is completed, and staff will now complete the fencing along Rogers Lane around Fort Sill Boulevard.

Burk said he'd like for the fence to be stained.

Burk said there's also been discussion about utilizing beautification funds for landscaping along Rogers Lane. He proposed planting trees because they'd live longer and require less maintenance. Burk said there are existing sprinklers in the area that can be utilized.

### 2. New Business

- A. Approve the minutes from October 14, 2020 and November 11, 2020.

**Motion by Hankins, Second by Ezerski**, to approve the minutes from October 14, 2020 and November 11, 2020. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

- B. Ratify the actions of the chairman to install landscaping and irrigation in an additional median on NW Sheridan Road.

Burk said Totte has already completed work on this median, and the charges are \$6,000.

Burk said he made a \$10,000 donation to LETA to complete landscaping for a third median on Sheridan Road.

**Motion by Hankins, Second by Ezerski**, to ratify the actions of the chairman spending \$6,000 to install landscaping and irrigation in an additional median on NW Sheridan Road. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

- C. Review and discuss the changes to the Landscaping Code and take action as necessary.

Burk said the landscaping code is for new places that are being built. It holds them to a certain standard regarding beautification and landscaping.

Rogalski said the new code sets a higher landscaping standard than what is currently in existence.

Brown said the new code covers rules and regulations for remodeling as well. She said a maintenance and replacement guarantee has also been added to this code.

**Motion by Ezerski, Second by Symuleski**, to approve the changes to the Landscaping Code. **Aye:** McConnell; Jackson-Seeley; Symuleski; Burk; Hankins; Ezerski. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

### 3. Announcements

## LETA DRAFT MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Rogalski said changes can be made to the landscaping code up until it goes to Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. He asked that the Authority continue to review the code and submit any ideas and changes that they may have.

### 4. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.