

Water restrictions remain, code enforcement emphasized

Altus City Council members weighed several options to update the City of Altus' Emergency Ordinance for Stage 3 Water Restrictions during their regular meeting of the City Council, Tuesday, May 6. Conservation measures remain unchanged, however Mayor David Webb stated that there will be more attention given to ensure compliance with measures currently in place.

Councilman Michael Beason suggested to prohibit all outside watering and move to Stage 4, with the exception of industrial use.

Councilman Rick Steen stated that residents of the City are concerned about damage to their home's foundation, losing trees and shrubbery, as well as affecting the soil content. Steen stated that foundations and trees need to be watered, but would allow restrictions for watering grass. "It's a tight rope we're going to have to walk here," Steen said.

Rick Henry stated, "It's going to cause a lot of misery to do this." Henry calculated one year's worth of no outside watering equates to 7 days of water lost due to evaporation. "I think we need to put our heads together and utilize better what sources of water we do have rather than always bringing this back up." By utilizing Lugert-Altus, Lake Tom Steed, ground water, and discharge water, Henry said, "It's pretty easy for me to see that we are a long way from panicking 'the sky is falling.'"

No action was taken.

During the AMA meeting, Bid #15100 for \$175,726 was awarded to H.D. Supply of Oklahoma City, for materials needed to upgrade the power distribution system to the Tamarack Substation.

Also, a second amendment was made to the Water Tower Attachment Communication Site Agreement between Verizon Wireless and Altus Municipal Authority, increasing their monthly rent to \$2,050 from \$1,100. Verizon wireless requested the amendment to their original agreement, entered into in 2008, to make modifications to their equipment. This was also approved during the City Council meeting.

The Electric Department will re-advertise for bids for laborers to work on the Tamarack Substation Duplex project, rejecting the only bid of \$1,491,000. Meanwhile the City Attorney Catherine Coke will research the legality of hiring and paying new linemen out of the OMPA Loan for the project on a temporary hire. Council approved to purchase/lease a pole trailer not to exceed \$30,000 (from FY 2013-14 budget) to transport and set electrical pole "in-house." Of the \$1.8 million loan for the project, all is encumbered for materials, a new transformer, and borrowed transformer at Nona Substation. \$636,397 remains for labor expenses.

During the City Council meeting, Council approved for Jackson County Community Health Action team to apply before Nov. 1, for the Oklahoma Certified Healthy Community on behalf of the City of Altus, and to established an Ordinance Review Committee to recommend any necessary changes to become a healthier City. Altus is eligible to receive up to \$100,000 to fund healthy community projects if certified.

Council approved the FY 2014-15 Community Work Center Contract renewal between Oklahoma Dept. of Corrections and the City Of Altus. The City will continue to provide a site, located at 308 W. Broadway and provide a maximum of 110 inmates to work in certain departments for the City, and provide offender work opportunities in local public works projects.

The Round Timbers Negotiating Team will now extend its scope to include all possible water sources for the City of Altus, originally formed to negotiate terms of the Round Timber Water Well Field. That team will now consist of Councilman Beason, Dwayne Martin, Mayor David Webb, City Attorney Coke, City Manager Elizabeth Gray, and Councilman Perry Shelton.

Council also approved a new Merit System, Resolution No. 2014-22, per Altus City Charter to pattern the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Personnel Policies.

The Final Plat for Hunter Pointe Addition Part XI, was denied as recommended by the Altus City Planning Commission (ACPC). The ACPC reviewed the plans and denied the plat application based on not having a second means of egress. The Hunter Pointe Addition XI was approved for rezoning, Ordinance No. 2014-5, from Agriculture to Auto-Urban Residential classification as recommended by the ACPC. Shurway, Inc. requested to rezone the 8.31 acre tract to subdivide into twenty-one lots to develop single family residences with detached housing units.

The Laurel Homes 14th Addition Final Plat was approved, Resolution 2014-23, as recommended by the ACPC. The Laurel Homes 14th Addition was also approved for rezoning, Ordinance No. 2014- 6, from Agriculture to Auto-Urban Residential classification as recommended by the ACPC. Will Properties requested to rezone the 12.12 acre tract to subdivide into thirty-three lots to develop single family residences with detached housing units.

Council then entered into executive session regarding confidential matters and in open session voted to deny a tort claim as recommended by the Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group. The OMAG Claims Examiner finds the City of Altus not liable for \$1,800 worth of damages to a sprinkler system due to a water main break repair as filed by Emmanuel Baptist Church, 800 N. Forrest Street.

Other executive session items, negotiation between the City of Altus and the IAFF, Lodge #2749, and negotiation between the City of Altus and the FOP #120, were updates only.

Council also voted to deny the proposal regarding a mandatory mediation conference for the pending action of "The City of Altus, Oklahoma v. Leonard Keith Spears and Sherry K. Spears."

During City Manager Comments, Elizabeth Grey informed that Tom Steed Lake is at 25.9 percent, and the City of Altus Reservoir will begin filling up next week.