

TO: City Commission
CC: Department Directors
FROM: David Dillner, City Manager
SUBJ: Weekly Report
DATE: September 24, 2021



Items of Note:

- Staff met with representatives from PEC to discuss a scope of services for the Lake Recreation Master Plan. PEC will prepare a draft agreement for review based on the discussion with City staff and representatives from the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism.
- The Parks and Recreation Department continues to make progress on the installation of the Riverview Park playground. The new playground includes a 24-foot slide, which required a lift to install safely. The department expects to work on the playground next week with the goal of getting it finished in the next week or so. The City plans to install a rubberized mulch for the base surrounding the playground as added protection given the height of the slide.
- Citizens may vote on a playground setup for Graham Park. The Park Advisory Board narrowed the options down to three before giving the public an opportunity to vote. Citizens have until September 30 to vote, and may do so on the City's Facebook page or on the website.
- The Public Utilities Department completed its annual lead and copper sampling. No issues came up as expected.
- The City anticipates receiving deliverables for both the Water Treatment and Capacity Study and the Sanitary Sewer Study the first part of next year. Both studies have progressed as planned. The rain events occurring over the last few months aided the Sanitary Sewer Study by providing flow analysis opportunities. The initial take on the Water Treatment and Capacity Study suggests the City may be able to squeeze an additional 1.5 MGD of treatment capacity out of the existing plant with minimal investment.
- Vapor rooting continues for the Public Utilities Department. This year, the department has run approximately 10,000 feet of sewer mains.
- White Eagle Credit Union, located north of BG Stadium, has had issues with its plumbing since the building was constructed a few years ago. The Public Utilities Department installed a two-inch meter to increase flow rates into the building. This did not help the issues as only one of the toilets in the building functions. The City does not believe there is anything else that we can do to address the problem. It seems that it is an internal plumbing issue.
- The Public Utilities Department obtained a quote to replace the ultraviolet treatment system at the Water Reclamation Facility. The system provides disinfection of *E. coli* prior to releasing treated wastewater to the ecosystem. The UV system has not been replaced since the Water Reclamation Facility was constructed in 2008 and needs replaced before it fails and prevents the City from maintaining regulatory compliance. The replacement of the system will cost \$189,643 and will take at least 12-16 weeks for delivery. The department scheduled replacement of the system for next year, although with uncertain supply chains, staff prefers to expedite the order to minimize the amount of time needed to receive the materials. The requested expenditure will be scheduled for the October 4 regular meeting for consideration, although the actual payment will not occur until the equipment has been delivered.

- The Board of Zoning Appeals will conduct a variance hearing on October 21 concerning a height variance for a wireless communication tower proposed for construction east of the intersection of Haverhill and Towanda. The applicant requests a tower height of 200 feet. Current regulations allow a tower of up to 65 feet. The site of the proposed tower is directly adjacent to an existing communications tower and is also located on 6.9 acres with the potential for residential development. The property, owned by Doug Adlesperger, has been marketed for residential development for a while without success. Even so, the development of a communications tower at this location may detrimentally affect the potential for residential development on that property.
- The City received a notice from the Kansas Attorney General’s Office concerning proposed national settlement agreements with respect to opioid claims. After years of negotiations, two proposed nationwide settlement agreements have been reached that would resolve all opioid litigation brought by states and local political subdivisions against the three largest pharmaceutical distributors, McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen, and one manufacturer, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and its parent company Johnson & Johnson. Ashlyn is currently reviewing the information so we can discuss internally before bringing the matter to the City Commission.
 - The proposed settlements require the distributors and Janssen to pay up to \$21 billion over eighteen years and Janssen to pay up to \$5 billion over no more than nine years, for a total of \$26 billion.
 - Of the settlement amount, approximately \$22.7 billion is earmarked for use by participating states and subdivisions to remediate and abate the impacts of the opioid crisis.
 - The settlements also contain injunctive relief provisions governing the opioid marketing, sale and distribution practices at the heart of the states’ and subdivisions’ lawsuits and further require the distributors to implement additional safeguards to prevent diversion of prescription opioids.

Things to Think About:

- According to Route Fifty, a local government blog, inflation has been taking a toll on local government spending over the last several months.
 - State and local agencies that build and maintain the nation’s streets, bridges and waterworks are being squeezed by rising costs for materials and equipment, supply chain disruptions and workforce shortages—combined pressures that are threatening to take some punch out of pending infrastructure legislation in Congress and other boosted spending on public works.
 - Price increases and supply shortages are playing out across the economy and are in many cases linked to the turmoil the coronavirus outbreak caused. It is likely these issues could fade as more industries recover and stabilize. Finding workers, like truck drivers and laborers, is a problem that agencies faced before COVID-19. Officials say the pandemic has made it worse, especially as private sector employers compete more aggressively in a tight labor market.
 - These factors are in some cases driving up overall construction and maintenance costs and causing places to question if they should scale back, or hold off on projects—at least for now.
 - Costs for materials like concrete and steel are up and there are delays procuring items ranging from streetlight parts to recycling facility equipment, according to local public works departments.
- Local governments, like the private sector, are finding it difficult to recruit workers to fill vacant positions. Departments throughout the nation are increasing starting pay and offering signing bonus pay to attract workers. The City of El Dorado had to increase starting pay for several positions recently in an

effort to attract people to apply for open positions. Signing bonus pay has also been a topic of discussion, especially since other local governments in the region pay signing bonuses to new hires.

Personnel Update:

- The following positions are vacant and currently advertised: Police Officer, Public Works Maintenance Worker (2), Distribution/Collection Maintenance Worker, and Sanitation Lead.
- The Public Utilities Department extended a conditional offer of employment to a candidate for the Distribution/Collection Maintenance Worker position pending post-offer screening.

Commission Calendar:

- *Upcoming City Commission Items (subject to change):*
 - **September 29 Work Session** – Code of Procedure; BCC Fire Lease Agreement Addendum (Fire Training Facility); 2022 Pay Plan
 - **October 4 Regular Meeting** – UV Disinfection System; Condemnation Hearings (320 W. Towanda, 513 W 5th, 624 N. Atchison, 626 W. Carr, and 814 Railroad)
 - **October 13 Work Session** – Pit Bull Ordinance Discussion; Hazardous Materials Agreement with Butler County
 - **October 18 – Regular Meeting** – 1425 E. 6th Avenue SUP (accessory apartment); 323 S. Main Street SUP (public assembly venue)
- *Pending Items (Items to be scheduled for upcoming meeting once completed):* Augusta Wholesale Water Agreement; Professional Services Agreement with PEC (Lake Recreation Master Plan)
- *Upcoming Planning Commission Items (subject to change):*
 - **October 28** – No items scheduled at this time.