

**CITY OF CATOOSA
CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2023
REGULAR MEETING**

I. Meeting convened:

A. Call to Order: A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Catoosa was held and called to order by Mayor Greg Williams at 6:06 p.m. on Monday, the 26th day of June 2023 at Catoosa City Hall, 214 S. Cherokee Street, Catoosa, Oklahoma 74015. The meeting was held in compliance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act and was posted in accordance therewith at least 24 hours in advance at City Hall for the purpose of discussion, consideration, and possible action on the following agenda items.

B. Invocation: Mayor Greg Williams

C. Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Greg Williams

D. Roll Call: The following council members were **present** for this meeting: Member at Large Councilor, and Vice-Mayor, Jonnie Mott; Ward #6, Councilor Teresa O'Donnell; Ward #5, Councilor Kyle Gibson; Ward #4, Councilor Fred Williams; Ward #3, Councilor and Mayor, Greg Williams; Ward #2, Councilor Thomas Sweet and Ward #1, Councilor Brenda Conley.

The following staff members were present for this meeting: John Blish, City Manager; Vicky Sutton, City Clerk; Jamie Scrivner, Finance Director; Ronnie Benight, Police Chief; Denus Benton, Fire Chief; Chris Cieslak, City Planner; City Engineer Brian Kellogg, of Kellogg Engineering; and City Attorney Eric Wade, of Rosenstein, Fist & Ringold.

E. Public Comments:

- Daniel Spitzer informed the council that the American Legion Post 1800 can acquire a free cannon to put at the gazebo area for a Veteran's Memorial.
- Connie Buhler, it's me standing at this podium for the first time. I stand here today because I have recently been educated on an issue that has brought me frustration. Let me start by asking a few questions. What is America to you? What is Patriotism? What are rights? What does illegal mean? What is your duty as a sworn trustee to the Constitution? Who are we the people? The Catoosa Comprehensive Plan may be in the long run a

dedicated plan for our city. Yes, I went to the meetings, I was excited to see what the possibilities of Catoosa could become. New parks, an actual downtown, things to do, new business, who on the surface would be against any of these? Deep down I felt something was off. The first thing about the plan that I did inwardly question was how is the city going to make these drawings a reality? I know the City doesn't own a lot of these properties down Cherokee. How are they going to change Helen Paul when the school owns it? All of these walking trails around the whale, who owns the property if the City doesn't? Do they want trails on their land? Will they be forced to sale or give up their land for them? Maybe this is just a long-term plan to wake people up? People started talking about the Rogers County Comp Plan and talking about things that are major red flags. Red flags that point to the fact that these plans make the UN Environmental and Sociological Plans to control society on the global level but before you stop listening to me and chock me up to conspiracy theorist let me ask you a few questions. Is the United Nations a real entity? What is its agenda? What is Agenda 21 and 2030? Is the Environmental Protection Agency a real entity and what is its agenda? Is Joe Biden a real person? Is he the President? Does he have an agenda? What is his agenda for acquiring land for the government and how does this play into the environmental sustainability? Is the congress for new urbanism a real entity? What is its agenda? Have you talked or taken time to understand how in 15 minutes they can encroach on your personal rights? Have we taken time to make sure we are not allowing our town to fall into a vocal less system? I know it sounds extreme, but if you research many of these comprehensive plans for various cities and counties all over the country you will find they all fall under the same parameters. Please don't let big dreams for the city be a foothold for a dark future. We are people, we want our vehicles, we the people do not want to be monitored. We the people want our property. We the people want our leaders to protect us. We the people shall not have our rights encroached on.

II. Consent Agenda:

Information: Consideration and appropriate action relating to a request for City Council approval of the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes of the **June 12, 2023**, Regular Meeting
- 2) Approval of Regular and Prepaid Claims
- 3) Pay Request-FINAL-Coates Field Service, Inc.-Right of Way Services-May 2023-in the amount of \$2,100.00

A motion was made by **Kyle Gibson** and seconded by **Teresa O'Donnell** to approve the consent agenda.

The motion **passed** with the following votes:

Brenda Conley-aye
Thomas Sweet-aye
Mayor Greg Williams-aye
Fred Williams-aye

Kyle Gibson-aye
Teresa O'Donnell-aye
Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye

III. Items Removed from Consent Agenda: There were no items removed from the consent agenda.

IV. Agenda Items:

Item #1: Catoosa Comprehensive Plan-Unified Development Code Presentation

A presentation was made to the council by Brad Lonberger of Place Strategies, regarding the Catoosa Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Code; discussions followed. No votes were taken.

Item #2: Amended Notice to Proceed-Catoosa Comprehensive Plan-Unified Development Code

A motion was made by **Kyle Gibson** and seconded by **Brenda Conley** to approve an extension of the deadline for completion of work by Place Strategies, Inc. on the City's Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Code from May 1, 2023, to November 1, 2023, and authorize the mayor to execute necessary documentation for the extension. The motion **passed** with the following votes:

Brenda Conley-aye
Thomas Sweet-aye
Mayor Greg Williams-aye
Fred Williams-aye

Kyle Gibson-aye
Teresa O'Donnell-aye
Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye

Item #3: Authorize City Staff to Explore Options and Bring Recommendations and Cost Estimates to the Council for an Administrator and Expenditure Monitor for Storm Disaster Emergency Relief

A motion was made by **Kyle Gibson** and seconded by **Teresa O'Donnell** to authorize City Staff to explore options and bring recommendations and cost estimates to the City Council for the City to (1) engage an outside consultant to serve as an administrator to assist the City in obtaining disaster emergency relief for losses suffered and recovery efforts by the City as a result of severe storms, straight-line winds, tornados and hail, beginning on June 17, 2023, which caused extensive damage to public and private properties in the City, including but not limited to extensive damage to power lines and other infrastructure; and (2) engage another outside consultant to monitor the City's expenditures related to disaster recovery efforts and provide advice to the City on such expenditures.

The motion **passed** with the following votes:

Brenda Conley-aye	Kyle Gibson-aye
Thomas Sweet-aye	Teresa O'Donnell-aye
Mayor Greg Williams-aye	Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye
Fred Williams-aye	

Item #4: Blue Whale Development and Marketing Proposal

A motion was made by **Greg Williams** and seconded by **Kyle Gibson** to table this item. The motion **passed** with the following votes:

Brenda Conley-aye	Kyle Gibson-aye
Thomas Sweet-aye	Teresa O'Donnell-aye
Mayor Greg Williams-aye	Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye
Fred Williams-aye	

Item #5: Ordinance No. 2023-440-C

A motion was made by **Jonnie Mott** and seconded by **Teresa O'Donnell** to adopt Ordinance No. 2023-440-C amending Title 6, Chapter 9, Section 6-9-2 of the City of Catoosa Code of Ordinances governing restrictions and exceptions on the discharging of fireworks in the city limits of the City of Catoosa by empowering the Chief of Police to authorize additional dates on which fireworks may be lawfully discharged, subject to approval by the City Manager and compliance with all requirements in the Catoosa City Code; providing a partial invalidity savings clause; repealing conflicting ordinances; and containing other provisions related thereto. The motion **passed** with the following votes:

Brenda Conley-aye	Kyle Gibson-aye
Thomas Sweet-aye	Teresa O'Donnell-aye
Mayor Greg Williams-aye	Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye
Fred Williams-aye	

Item #6: Emergency Clause-Ordinance No. 2023-440-C

A motion was made by **Jonnie Mott** and seconded by **Kyle Gibson** to approve the emergency clause contained in Ordinance No. 2023-440-C. The motion **passed** with the following votes:

Brenda Conley-aye	Kyle Gibson-aye
Thomas Sweet-aye	Teresa O'Donnell-aye
Mayor Greg Williams-aye	Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye
Fred Williams-aye	

V. New Business: There was no new business.

VI. City Manager Report: John Blish, City Manager informed the City Council of the following:

- Storm update-after the storm occurred last Saturday night, immediately myself, Fire Chief Benton, and our City maintenance crews reported to work without having to be called. We started by first making sure that we could clear any roadways that we could get to that did not have any electrical line in them. We were out until 10:00 a.m. the following morning, basically making sure all the roadways were clear for emergency services. At that point and time, we opened the maintenance yard to start taking debris. I became aware in a very short period of time that that yard was not going to be able to contain the volume and the number of people that were coming in. Knowing that we were going to have to apply for secondary relief for another location we started making preparations for the location we have now. We had to make applications so that if FEMA does come in and everything is approved then we already have our stuff done for that location to get assistance for the removal of the debris that is there.
- We knew that we had widespread power outages. We did not receive reports from PSO for two days, even though we have representatives that we can call on. They did not have any idea at that time when electricity would be restored or when those efforts would start.
- We drove to each of the neighborhoods every day to make sure that something else hadn't occurred. We had a few places where trees were downed with power lines; but we do not allow our crews to go in and start cutting trees in those cases. We had to shut down both splash pads due to downed power lines and debris. City crews have continued clearing trees and debris the best that we can.
- We approved hiring an administrator and monitor; there are tree services that have come in wanting to try and help us remove things. We have had a lot of inquiries regarding citizens putting debris curbside and having the city come by and remove that. We only have seven maintenance workers at this time, we should have twelve, but we are having difficulties getting people to come to work for us. The maintenance workers have been stressed all week but have not given up. They were out along with myself for about forty hours that first weekend. We will continue to move forward with the tree removal. If it works out that we can move forward with the tree removal, it will need to be contracted out with someone else, it will be brought back to council along with the other two items. Most of the power has been restored within the city. Throughout the week I kept in daily contact with Mayor Williams and Vice-Mayor Mott. If there is any additional information regarding the storm, we will sit down to have a post meeting. We had to buy some additional equipment; we didn't have equipment large enough to cut the massive trees that we needed to cut down. We had to rent several pieces of equipment, especially for the cemetery. We rented some smaller equipment because we didn't want to do any damage to anything while we were there working on the

tree and limb removal. These are some of the expenditures that we hope we will receive funding back from FEMA once the county is approved.

- LibertyFest was a success this weekend. It started off real slow, we received word today that because of our contract anything above \$50,000.00 starts reimbursing the city at a 20% rate. They contacted us and notified us that we would be receiving a check, so it went better than expected after we spoke to them Friday night. Saturday and Sunday went quite well.
- We have our election coming up August 8th. We have two different items: PSO and Hotel/Motel tax. I know several of you had to stay in a hotel due to the storms. If you are a citizen of the City of Catoosa and you have to stay in the City of Catoosa, you do not have to pay the hotel/motel tax. Crossroads has created a flyer; we have some on hand in City Hall and we had them available at LibertyFest. We will continue with our campaign to help get the word out through our social media groups.

VII: Council Comments:

- Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott thanked John and the City maintenance department for the amazing job that they did clearing the roads. I was out driving the next day; I could tell where the trees had fallen across the road, and they had been taken care of. I know that they worked all through the night and into the next afternoon. It looked like a war zone, and I appreciate that the roads were drivable.
- Councilor Teresa O'Donnell invited the council to the Catoosa Historical Society's "Remembering the Tornado" event that we are hosting at the community center. Denus, Donnie Lynch, and Bob Pile who was a dispatcher during that time. It will be interesting to hear their stories and let the community share their stories about what happened that night. The Catoosa Historical Society is also hosting an exhibit that we have on loan from Oklahoma City called, Dust, Drought, and Dreams Gone Dry, it's all about the dust bowl. It's a neat exhibit, probably one of the neatest ones we've had in Catoosa recently. It has big panels and if you have an iPhone it will connect to a QR code and it speaks to you. If you have time, please try to get over and enjoy it. The museum will be open Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays during the months of June and July.

VIII: Adjourn:

A motion was made by **Brenda Conley** and seconded by **Jonnie Mott** to adjourn.

The motion passed with the following votes: **(7:03 PM)**

Brenda Conley-aye

Kyle Gibson-aye

Thomas Sweet-aye

Teresa O'Donnell-aye

Mayor Greg Williams-aye

Vice-Mayor Jonnie Mott-aye

Fred Williams-aye

Approved on this _____ day of _____, 2023

Vicky Sutton, City Clerk

Greg Williams, Mayor