

Keo City council meeting

January 18,2021

Mayor Stephanie White called the January 18, 2021 meeting of the Keo City council to order at 7:00 PM. Those present were Mayor Stephanie White, Recorder/Treasure Clara Hughes council members Jerry Morton, Adam Cloninger, Ty Johnson and Chris Collins. There were 7 guests present at this meeting.

Mayor White started the meeting by welcoming everyone and stated we were going to do a couple things differently at this meeting. She first read a rule out of the Arkansas Municipal league handbook concerning voting for a new council member. She then asked the ones who would like to be considered to stand up and state their interest and a little bit about themselves. There were 3 that were interested and those 3 were Lynda Staton, Carla Robinson, & David Lanehart. After each gave a brief detail about themselves and the reasoning for their desire to be considered as the new council member, the mayor & the council members then went into executive session @ 7:05 PM to discuss voting on the new council member.

At 7:13 PM the council & mayor came back into the meeting from their executive session Mayor Stephanie stated that the vote was unanimously for David Lanehart and asked him to step up to the table to join the others for them all to be sworn in as council members for the new year 2021.

The Mayor then read to the council the National Day of Racial Healing Proclamation for the city of Keo to proclaim January 18,2021 for National Day of healing for the City of Keo.

After the council was sworn in the Mayor gave a detail of a blessing to the council and she then asked Diane Hughes from First United Methodist to come and bless the council. Diane Hughes then read to the council Romans 13:1-2 and then gave a blessing for the council to come into the new year with an open mind & willing heart to make the right decisions in the coming months for the community.

Mayor Stephanie thanked Diane from coming & blessing the council and then opened the floor for Anthony (Andy) L. Franks, P.E. from A.L. Franks Engineering to stand up and speak to the council and give some information about himself and his company and what he would like to do to help the city of Keo. Mr. Franks stated he believes he can help the city on applying for grants to help with our water & sewer problems that needs to be addressed & repaired. He stated he believed the city of Keo's (LMI) Low Moderate Income for the community is at the rate that would possible allow Keo to receive funding for these improvements that needs to be done for the city, and he also stated that deadline for one of the grants is March 30th and that he would need to get started on the steps to get everything rolling as soon as possible. After a discussion Lanehart made a motion allow A.L. Franks engineering to start the process with a 2nd by Johnson and the

motion passed with all in agreement to get this started. Mr. Franks also a list of items that he sees on the water side that needs to be addressed, tank needs to be recoated, valve at tank needs to be replace, old lines through out the city needs repaired or replace, old meters, pressure filters, unaccountable water loss. The waste water side needs new pumps, control panels, possible road repairs etc. Mr. Franks advised the council that there are many programs offered out there to apply for. He stated there are possible loan programs, even possible loan forgiveness offers, or low interest rate loans available. No guarantees on any but it's worth checking into with the hopes of getting accepted for one to help improve the city of Keo's water & sewer system. After a few questions Lanehart made a motion for Mr. Frank's to go forward to work up the loan grant with a 2nd by Cloninger with all in agreement.

Mayor White thanked Mr. Anthony Franks for coming and talking to the council & its people concerning all of the information to help possibly help & improve the city's water & sewer system for the future.

Mayor White then asked recorder/treasure to read the minutes from last month's meeting.

Recorder/Treasure Clara Hughes read the minutes from the December 2020 meeting after reading these minutes Morton made a motion to accept the minutes with a 2nd by Lanehart with all in agreement and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Statement for the City of Keo December 2020 was reviewed by the city council. Johnson made a motion to accept these financials with a 2nd by Lanehart and the motion passed with all in agreement.

The Proposed 2021 Budget for the City of Keo was presented to the council after looking over the proposed budget and a brief discussion on the budget Lanehart made a motion to accept the 2021 Proposed City of Keo Budget with a 2nd by Johnson and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Statement for the City of Keo December 2020 Water & Sewer was reviewed by the council after looking these over Johnson made a motion to accept these financials as presented with a 2nd by Cloninger with all in favor with one abstention. The discussion to raise the mosquito spraying rates was tabled for next month's meeting.

The council looked over the 2021 Proposed water & sewer budget done for the city of Keo, while looking over the budget the Mayor informed the council that she will no longer be using the auditing company that Keo water & sewer had used for years, due to a charge the company billed the city for during a phone call conversation she had with the company. She informed the council she had found another company to do the audits in the future. After a few questions concerning the proposed budget Lanehart

made the motion to accept the budget as presented with a 2nd by Cloninger and the motion passed with all in agreement with one abstention.

Mayor White then asked Chris Collins the city of Keo's new water operator in training to give a report for the water & sewer department. He stated he was starting his first training class January 19, 2021 stating it was a two-day class with test on Thursday. He informed the council he was learning a lot and stated Arkansas Rural water resources had been a tremendous help to him on repairing water leaks around town. He stated that meters were being read and that he was keeping busy and that he was checking the water & sewer system daily.

Fire Chief Martin was not available for this meeting but volunteer Carla Robinson gave a report stating there had been 2-3 calls within the last month. Mayor White wanted to thank all the volunteers for volunteering to help the community of Keo.

Mayor White asked Constable/reserve Lonoke county deputy- Tim Collins to speak to the council. He stated there had been a couple complaints concerning a large white dog running loose around town and he had spoken with pet owner and they stated they will keep dog from running around town bothering the community. He also stated that we had one rental house that had caused some problems but the home owner of the house had helped with law enforcement to get this situation corrected. He also just wanted to remind people that he is around and if they have any problems to please feel free to call him (501)786-2140 or Lonoke County Sheriff's office and they would possibly dispatch him out. Mayor thanked Tim for all that he does to help the City of Keo.

Old Business-

Mayor White just wanted to give an update concerning Aristotle Broadband and the work they are doing to update their system on the water tower and she will update more at next month's meeting concerning the contract details between Aristotle & the City of Keo. She also wanted to let the council know that the water department did get approved for a credit card to purchase chemicals and materials needed. She also informed them that the water & sewer department had to purchase a new pump for Oak Street due to the emergency situation of sewer not pumping and that the city would be making payments for said pump.

Mayor White gave an update on the generator by water tower she had a company come look at the generator & they informed her it would be better to consider to purchase a new one than repairing it. Council member Lanehart asked the mayor if she would mind if someone who could look at the generator & possibly repair it and wouldn't charge the city to do so, could look at it before we decide on anything. Mayor said she did not mind at all.

charge on the water bills to help with the expense of spraying through the warm season for mosquitos, after a brief discussion they tabled this until next month's meeting. She gave a brief report on the balances of all the water accounts to the council. She also informed them that Chris Collins was in training to take over as the new water works person and that the water department was starting fresh due to lack of tools and such to work or do repairs. She then asked Chris Collins to give a report on what was taking place with the city's water system.

Chris Collins gave information on what he has learned so far in the training to become water operator. He said it's pretty much a 7 day a week job and that he was enjoying learning and helping the community. He also thanked Arkansas Rural water for helping him the last few days. He stated that the new DR900 water tester will help tremendously in the days ahead. He said he had been checking the sewer ponds as well.

Fire Chief was absent for this meeting. Patrick McClain gave the monthly report to the council reporting 6 runs total for the month.

Mayor White then asked Dennis Sternberg & Terry Fortenberry to speak to the council concerning the city's water & sewer system on the short term plan or long term plan to give some details on the options of the city switching to Grand Prairie water and if that is actually possible for the city to do and if it would truly benefit the city. After a discussion on all this, the council decided to discuss this more at next month's meeting and actually revisit the rates for the water & sewer system. She thanked Arkansas Rural water for coming to speak to the council and the people at this meeting.

Mayor White then asked the council to consider allowing the sewer & water department to apply for a credit card to purchase chemicals & necessary supplies. Jerry Morton made a motion to allow Mayor White to apply for a credit card with a 2nd by Adam Cloninger with all in agreement.

Mayor White stated to the council the need for the city to create a plan of action & have in place for the street fund on what streets or roads needed to be fixed first. This was tabled for next month to discuss. She also informed the council of some drainage issues around town that needed to be looked at & possibly addressed.

Mayor White then welcomed Constable/Reserve Sheriff deputy Tim Collins to speak to the council and he just wanted to speak and let the council know that he is in town majority of the time and is willing to help when needed when a problem occurs.

Mayor White wanted everyone to know January 18, 2020 will be when next month's meeting would be. At this meeting budgets would be discussed and voted on, as well as voting on a new council member to fill the vacant seat that was once Mayor White's.

Cloninger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 PM with a 2nd by Collins with all in agreement.

Mayor Stephanie White

Recorder/Treasure Clara Hughes