

**Keo City Council Minutes  
October 18th, 2021 at 7pm**

Mayor White called the regular Keo City Council meeting to order October 18, 2021 at 7:03pm. Those present were Mayor Stephanie White, Council Members: Jerry Morton, David Lanehart, Ty Johnson and Chris Collins. Mayor White substituted for the recorder/treasurer, recording and transcribing the meeting minutes.

Copies of the previous month's minutes were distributed to the members. Morton moved that the minutes of the September 20, 2021 be approved as presented, Johnson seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Statement for the City of Keo, September 2021 was reviewed by the council. Lanehart moved to accept the financial statement, Collins seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Statement for the City of Keo Water and Sewer Department, September 2021 was reviewed by the council. Lanehart moved to accept the financial statement, Morton seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Water & Sewer Department Report: Chris Collins, September 2021: Treated water after backwash/flush= 1,132,135 gal; Billed Customers for 793,400 gal= 30% water loss this month. Upcoming maintenance work at the water plant to start Wednesday, October 20, 2021. Keo will switch over to Grand Prairie Water during this time. The cost to purchase water from Grand Prairie Water is \$300-\$400 day for typical Keo water consumption. The project is estimated at two weeks for work and water sampling to ensure for proper disinfection prior to putting the system back online. Public notices will be given to contact us if water quality issues arise during this time. The project will be funded by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds that were appropriated by the council for water and sewer infrastructure projects.

Fire Department Report: Keo Fire Chief Charles Martin, reported 6 calls for the month consisting of accidents, structure and grass/brush fires. The Keo FD recently spent 8 hours fighting a large brush fire with assistance for the US Forestry Service and adjacent departments. November 29-30 the firefighters will attend Wildland Firefighter Training in Humnoke.

No Constable Report given this month.

Old Business:

Generator for water plant: Lanehart gave report, still working on it.

Tornado storm siren (\$26,400) 50/50 matching grant, Mayor White is expecting an update soon from CAPDD.

Mayor White gave update on ANRC Water Project for new meters/service lines. The grant decision has been pushed to January 2022. The 2020 water and sewer audit was submitted to ANRC.

Mayor White reported no update from Aristotle Broadband and further investigation is warranted. Communicated with Connect2First to extend fiber network around town of Keo to provide internet to customers that do not receive power from First Electric.

Mayor White reported she will attend a Fun Park Grant hearing in Jacksonville on 10/29/21. to present the case for Keo to receive a \$75,000 grant for a play park and basketball court renovation.

Mayor White updated the council on the ongoing EASI ambulance funding plan to keep an ambulance stationed in England. Area leaders have met with an individual who specializes in creating special purposed

districts. Speculation that dues will be assessed per household, rather than a millage on property, and collected annually with property tax.

Drainage Issues: Council discussed the need to identify specific nuisance drainage issues that need to be addressed and then will work with the city attorney to resolve any easement and right-of-way issues.

New Business:

Mayor White brought two cost estimates to purchase shirts for the Keo Fire Department members to wear while representing the City of Keo. Lanehart moved that the city purchase shirts for the Fire Department for \$250, Morton seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor White updated the Council on the Oak Street Sewer Project repair will be going out for bid soon. This project is funded with a \$300,000 Community Development Block Grant.

Mayor White brought discussion to the council to adjust the bill on Account 15, due to a water leak. The homeowner presented a bill for proof of repair. Morton moved that the account will be adjusted to bill for 14,550 gallons and allow the homeowner to pay back over three months without late fees, Collins seconded, the motion passed unanimously. The Council discussed Acct 102 concern with the water meter over-reading. The meter was changed and old one bench tested at Arkansas Rural Water and found to be within AWWA new meter standards for accuracy. Copies of the bench test results were distributed to the council. No further actions warranted at this time.

Mayor White discussed administrative changes for Water & Sewer Department, effective 1/1/22. The department is looking to move to the Keo City Hall and open 3 days per week, approximately 4 hours, to provide in person services and bill pay options. The new person will assist with filing monthly and quarterly reports to the ADH and ADEQ for wastewater.

Mayor White notified the Council that the trash company has informed the City that rates are increasing effective October 1, 2021. The council discussed the rate increase and need to adjust the rate collected on the water bills. Even with the rate increase, Keo will still be paying less than other local communities. Morton moved to raise the monthly trash collection fee to \$10 because of the rate increase and Collins seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor White reminded the council that the Lonoke County sales tax increased by 0.5%, effective 10/1/21 based on the recent election results. Keo sales tax is 1% and the county tax has increased to 9% bringing total to 10%.

Mayor White brought discussion to the council concerning the benches at the Keo Veteran's Park are dangerous to sit on and have jagged edges. Lanehart moved to approve spending up to \$2500 to purchase new seating using the Veteran's Park fund, Collins seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Next regular meeting is scheduled November 15th, @ 7pm

Ladies of Keo fundraiser at the Keo Fire Department, Beans & Cornbread Dinner, Sunday 11/7/21 (1-4pm), Donations will also be accepted.

Lanehart motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:17pm, Johnson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.