

Council Meeting
November 1, 2021

Members Present: Mayor Buddy Duke, members Terry McClain, Greg Paige, Walter Cowart, Vivian Sharpe and Jody Greene.

Others Present: John Flythe, Rhonda Rowe, Tim Tanner, Chad Castleberry and Randy Lane.

Invocation was given by Councilman McClain

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: Councilman Paige made a motion to adopt the minutes of October 18, 2021 as presented. Councilman McClain seconded with all in favor.

Ord. #21-06: This ordinance, amending electrical rates for residential, general service non-demand, small power and medium power electrical customers, was read for the second time. Councilman Greene made a motion to adopt the ordinance. Councilwoman Sharpe seconded. All were in favor. City Manager John Flythe noted it has been 12 years since we've had an electrical rate change. This decrease is only possible due to the new electric load in the community.

Ord. #21-07: This ordinance, adopting an extra large power high load factor no distribution infrastructure electrical rate (XLPHLF-1 NDI), was read for the second time. Councilman Greene made a motion to adopt the ordinance. Councilwoman Sharpe seconded. The decision was unanimous. Mr. Flythe added this rate is for 30MW or larger customers. He also stated that prior to electrical growth in our community, city wide we were 21MW. He further stated that the 6 other cities we will be sharing this load with also have to approve this rate.

Ord. #21-08: This ordinance, adopting an intergovernmental contract between Cook County and the City of Adel to create the Adel Land Bank, was read for the 2nd time. John Flythe advised the council to be considering potential board members. He added that this can be a great asset to go along with the housing rehab grants we have going. Councilman McClain made a motion to approve adoption of the ordinance. Councilman Paige seconded. The decision was unanimous. Councilman McClain asked the scope of the board members. Mr. Flythe advised the board would have to approve the charging off of taxes, etc. However, the point is to charge off, build something back, and put back on the active tax rolls. City attorney Tim Tanner noted we have 8-10 dilapidated properties coming before the court in December. The land bank would work in conjunction with this action.

DOT Agreement (Hwy 37 Resurfacing): City manager John Flythe advised the council that with the resurfacing of Hwy. 37 being performed by the state, their contractor has the means to raise the manhole, gas and water valves. Our cost will be \$36,900 for rehabbing/raising valves through the city limits of Adel. This is for informational purposes only.

Police Vehicle Quotes & Discussion: City Manager John Flythe advised the council that the police chief has concerns with timing and availability of police units. Chief Chad Castleberry addressed the council and advised that as the council is aware, most car lots are empty. He has been concerned there might be a problem getting bids this year. He cannot get state contract prices from vendors that he normally calls upon. He has contacted other dealers that usually has fleet sales. Brannen Chevrolet does carry the tahoes. They have ordered 600 units but are getting only 400, with most of those being already sold. Cass Burch has dodge chargers on the lot now; however, we have tried to move away from those due to the problems with the front ends that have to be replaced at less than 50,000 miles. The only solution offered by Cass Burch to this issue is purchasing an extended warranty. There is also a problem with the fan system coming apart, destroying the cooling system after periods of idling. Current pricing he has received is as follows:

Brannen Chevrolet (Tahoe)	-	\$38,000 (Delivery in approx. 30 days)
Cass Burch (Charger)	-	\$29,424
Aikens Dodge (Charger)	-	\$25,604

Chief Castleberry recommended the tahoes since there has been no maintenance issues the last 2 years for the ones we purchased. It was noted that Ford came out with a pursuit rated truck in 2020, which is actually more of a utility type vehicle; but it is not police rated. The pricing for those is \$43,500. Civilian models from Ford had also been discussed, but he has concerns with those not holding up. It's not that a police rated vehicle is necessarily faster, but it has a heavier duty suspension and auxiliary power to run equipment, along with a heavier duty cooling system.

He added that there is one spare car available for the one available position. Also, if we move the current officer serving in CID back to patrol, which is the plan, we won't have a vehicle. He is recommending purchasing three tahoes. Councilman Greene made a motion to proceed with purchasing 3 tahoes. Councilman Cowart seconded. The decision was unanimous.

Gas Price Discussion: City Manager John Flythe advised the council there is not good news concerning natural gas pricing as it has more than doubled. NYMEX is showing that it will be August or so of next year before it begins trickling down. It has gone from \$3.00 to \$6.00 per unit. We will be going to see the largest 6 customers to make them aware and to discuss their thoughts on locking in pricing if we see a dip. They would have a financial obligation if they lock in. It was also noted that a lot of electrical energy uses natural gas. Crypto customers were quoted on NYMEX and their pricing moves up as the NYMEX moves up. They're not happy about this as well. Mr. Flythe noted that when the U.S. began shipping gas offshore it made our prices go up. Councilman Cowart inquired about the length of lock-in to which he was advised the customer can lock in for as long as they want. Mayor Duke, who is a board member for the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia, further stated that when Hurricane Katrina hit many years ago, natural gas went to \$25 per unit before the invention of fracking. He noted that fracking is drilling horizontally from an oil well, not just vertically. With this, an abundance of gas became available and it drove prices down very low. Also, where there used to be about 4000 oil rigs, there are less than 1000 drilling today. He also stated that several years ago they would load a tanker at an L & G point, such as Savannah, and it would sit in the ocean until whatever country bid the highest price. Storage is down and we are selling offshore. Locking in prices could be a favorable thing to do.

Utility Billing Discussion: City Manager John Flythe provided an update from the provider on the utility billing software. He noted that several components were at 90-100% completion and there were only a couple items on the punch list before being ready to produce an edit for verification before processing bills. We are much closer than we've been. Again, there have been a lot of comments and people are allowed to pay on their account if they desire. He noted he is still terribly upset about this happening and why it happened. It should have never happened. He noted that we are able to bill our larger accounts so that will help with cash flow. Councilman McClain noted that he has discussed with some customers concerning the waiving of penalties for these bills that have not been processed.

Emma Abernathy: Ms. Abernathy, who lives on Lavind Way, addressed the council with her concerns about the paving of Lavind Way. She stated it is a city street and she has assumed it would be paved but it has been unpaved for 27 years. She noted that people attend church on this street, which is unbearable at times. How could the city forget this street? It is a city street, she pays taxes and she votes; she feels the city has failed her. Mayor Duke advised Ms. Abernathy that the council has heard other concerns about the street and a remedy is actively being pursued. He noted this will be a street construction, not just a resurfacing. The many roads that have been worked on recently have been resurfacing projects; this will be a new construction. We will have to get agreements with landowners for easements and the road will have to be built up, etc. He advised Ms. Abernathy we would be working on this; it might not be in this budget year but it will be addressed.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Rhonda P. Rowe, City Clerk

Luther L. Duke III, Mayor
