

KETTLE FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 21, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dorothy Slagle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Bonnie Bradley, Jesse Garrett, Dale Drake and Debbie Gaskin.

STAFF

Staff - Joel Gassaway, Dave Keeley, John Ridlington, Chris Courchene, Raena Hallam and Charlie Schuerman.

GUESTS

Guests - Wayne Wardlow, Martha Phipps, Gloria Squires, John Squires, Andrea Matthews, Philly Avery and Krist Matthews.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MAIL RECEIVED

COUNCIL POSITION NO. 1 - JEANNIE THOMPSON

Mayor Slagle brought City Council attention to a letter of resignation submitted by Council Member Jeanie Thompson after the July 7, 2015 City Council meeting. Mayor Slagle stated the City would advertise for letters of interest.

PUBLIC COMMENT

BEE KEEPING IN THE CITY LIMITS

City Planner Dave Keeley stated he received a complaint from a citizen about the neighbors keeping bees in their yard. Dave explained keeping of bees in the city limits is a code violation. Dave stated bee keeping was allowed 10 years ago, but was changed when a complaint was received.

July 14, 2015

Members of the Kettle Falls City Council
Bee Keeping Within the City Limits

Dear Council Members,

While every person has a responsibility in ensuring the ongoing health of the world's busiest pollinators, no person should be placed at risk of bee stings when bees invade living zones, especially where allergic people are at risk.

This is one of the many reasons bee keeping is not allowed within the City Limits.

For us personally, our living zone, personal space, has been invaded by our neighbors bees. Our humming bird feeders are so full of honeybees the humming birds only come to feed when the bees are gone and we used to have them all day long. The bees chase them off. Our bird bath is lined with them as is our other water features.

During the Fourth of July Holiday week three of our grandchildren were stung. (not by wasps) Thank goodness none of them were allergic. However, I am. I was stung while filling our hummingbird feeders and bird feeders in our living, personal space. Consequently I missed two days of work because I could not wear shoes.

For these reasons I would ask council to carefully consider any changes in the current, common sense zoning law regarding bee keeping within the City Limits.

There are plenty of farmers and ranchers that would welcome bee hives on their property.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Sincerely,
Krist and Philly Matthews**

Signature

Mr. Wayne Wardlow stated there are several people in the City that keep bees in their back yard. Mr. Wardlow explained he keeps bees on his property located at 9th and Oak Street. Mr. Wardlow stated bees are disappearing due to pesticides, mites and disease. Bees are important especially to the agricultural industry by pollinating approximately 75% of the crops for food we eat.

Mr. Wardlow stated several cities allow bee keeping in the City limits. Los Angeles, New York City and Colville allows up to 6 hives. Mr. Wardlow stated bees fly up to 7 miles foraging for food, making it impossible to tell if certain bees came from certain hives.

Mr. John Squires stated he has done bee keeping for over 40 years. He has taught bee keeping at local colleges and has written two books on bee keeping.

Mr. Squires stated he used to live in Los Angeles across from an elementary school. There were no complaints about his bees or bee keeping from his neighbors or the school. Mr. Squires stated most bee stings come from yellow jackets, wasps and hornets. Honey bees will protect their hive, but are not aggressive in nature.

Mr. Squires showed City Council a map of local bee keepers surrounding the City of Kettle Falls. There are approximately 150 hives within two miles of the City limits.

Mrs. Gloria Squires stated a lot of people don't know the difference between honey bees, yellow jackets, etc. Which makes it difficult to determine if honey bees are really to blame for bee stings.

Mr. Squires stated there are defective hummingbird feeders that will attract bees.

Mayor Dorothy Slagle stated the real issue is there is a City Ordinance that was not followed.

Council Member Bonnie Bradley stated there is a City Code prohibiting bee keeping in the City limits. Bonnie stated there are numerous people that get stung at the grocery store where she works. She would like to see the ordinance stay as it is.

Council Member Debbie Gaskin stated she would like to review the City Ordinance again.

Mr. Krist Matthews stated he is not anti-bees and he knows the difference between types of bees. Mr. Matthews stated since his neighbor started bee keeping next door the honey bees swarm all of his hummingbird feeders. He can't go outside in his yard without being buzzed by bees.

Council Member Dale Drake stated the real problem is education but he wouldn't want his neighbors keeping bees next door. He doesn't believe bees belong in town.

Council Member Jesse Garret stated he also understands why the City Code is the way it is.

City Planner Dave Keeley stated according to the City Code, Mr. Wardlow has until August 20, 2015 to remove his bee hives.

Council Member Debbie Gaskin moved to put the bee keeping issue on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting. Council Member Jesse Garret seconded the motion. Motion carried. Council Member Bonnie Bradley - no, Council Member Jesse Garrett - yes, Council Member Dale Drake - yes and Council Member Debbie Gaskin - yes.

Council Member Jesse Garret moved to extend the deadline for Mr. Wardlow until the review is completed by the Kettle Falls Planning Commission. Council Member Debbie Gaskin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Council Member Bonnie Bradley - abstain, Council

Member Jesse Garrett - yes, Council Member Dale Drake - abstain and Council Member Debbie Gaskin - yes.

CONSENT AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 16TH AND JULY 7TH CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Council Member Bonnie Bradley moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Dale Drake seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member Bonnie Bradley - yes, Council Member Jesse Garrett - yes, Council Member Dale Drake - yes and Council Member Debbie Gaskin - yes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Council Member Debbie Gaskin stated the Fire Department has been very busy with multiple fires and the dry weather.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Mayor Slagle explained to Council Member Dale Drake she would like to appoint him to the same Council Committees as Cris Haynes served on through the remainder of the year. Mayor Slagle stated Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam would provide him with the information.

NUISANCE ORDINANCE

Council Member Dale Drake stated the property located at 5th and Kalmia is a safety and fire hazard. Dale asked why the property was allowed to get in that kind of condition with a nuisance ordinance in place.

Mayor Slagle explained the City has worked with the property owner on several occasions. Dorothy explained the property owner was given a notice and the property has improved since the notice was issued. The Public Right of Way is cleaned up now.

Council Member Dale Drake stated the property is a maze and expressed concern about fire fighters not being able to even get to the front door. Dale asked what the city's liability would be since it has now been brought to the City Council's attention.

Mayor Slagle stated Council Member Bonnie Bradley has the same concern about a property located on 6th Avenue.

Mayor Slagle stated the biggest issue is the cost of enforcing the nuisance ordinance. The cost of a tow truck, storage, attorney fees, court fees etc.

Council Member Bonnie Bradley stated the City Council should consider the entire neighborhood and how nuisance properties effect the neighborhood.

City Planner Dave Keeley explained each spring he sends letters to nuisance properties. If the City isn't satisfied with the property owner cleaning up the property then it goes to court and then the abatement process. Two years ago 20 letters were mailed and 19 property owners responded.

Council Member Dale Drake stated it doesn't make sense to not enforce an ordinance after all the work was done to revise it.

City Attorney Charlie Schuerman stated every City struggles with nuisance properties. Nuisance ordinances involve private property rights which requires due process. If the issue goes to court there will be court fees, removal of the property and ownership of the property that was removed. Cities have to make the decision all the time of whether to prosecute or not prosecute.

Council member Bonnie Bradley stated doing nothing is not acceptable and there are really only two properties in particular that are extreme nuisances.

Council Member Dale Drake moved to proceed with the current nuisance ordinance for properties located on 6th and Kalmia and 5th and Kalmia. Council Member Bonnie Bradley seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member Bonnie Bradley - yes, Council Member Jesse Garrett - yes, Council Member Dale Drake - yes and Council Member Debbie Gaskin - yes.

STAFF REPORTS

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief John Ridlington stated with the really dry season, the thunder and lightning storms have started several small fires. The July 4th holiday was uneventful. John stated the fire department had several patrols out that night and it paid off by having no fires.

Fire Chief John Ridlington stated so far this year they have responded to over 60 fires which is more than an average entire year.

Mayor Slagle asked why WA ST Department of Fish and Wildlife would enter private property to respond to a fire when the fire was miles away on another property.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

City Superintendent Joel Gassaway stated the Well No. 6 project will probably be completed mid August, 2015.

City Superintendent Joel Gassaway stated City Crewman Rob Rennich has submitted his resignation effective July 31, 2015.

City Superintendent Joel Gassaway stated the motor quit in the yellow lawnmower and will need to be replaced. Joel stated he did not hire a Summer Helper this year and the savings should cover the cost of \$2,700.

City Superintendent Joel Gassaway stated the 8" water line under the railroad tracks is leaking. The line has been shut off until it can be repaired. The City will be advertising for RFQ's for a consultant to review and guide the City in the best way to fix the problem.

NEW BUSINESS

POLICE DEPARTMENT INSURANCE

Mayor Slagle stated Kettle Falls Police Officers are the lowest paid officers in the area making it difficult for the City to hire and retain police officers. Dorothy explained she has been working with Chief Courchene and staff to come up with ways to retain police officers.

Police Chief Chris Courchene explained the City had to advertise twice to receive enough applicants to create a Civil Service list to hire from. The City doesn't offer differential pay for night shifts nor can the City compete with other area salaries.

Police Chief Courchene explained the Teamsters offers medical insurance at a cheaper rate than the City. The Teamsters plans offer coverage for an entire family rather than broken down by dependents. Chris stated if the City would consider paying additional money for insurance maybe it would help retain police officers in Kettle Falls.

Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam stated the union has always wanted to participate in the Teamsters insurance programs, but it was not an option until this year. Raena stated the savings of not hiring a Summer Helper would cover this year's costs.

Council Member Dale Drake moved to pay an additional \$200 for insurance coverage with the Teamsters Union for the Police Chief and Police Officer positions. Council Member Jesse Garrett seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member Bonnie Bradley - yes, Council Member Jesse Garrett - yes, Council Member Dale Drake - yes and Council Member Debbie Gaskin - yes.

OLD BUSINESS

As there was no Old Business, City Council moved on to Public Comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

As there was no Public Comment, City Council moved on to Adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Dorothy Slagle adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Approved:

Dorothy Slagle, Mayor

Attest:

Raena Hallam, Clerk/Treasurer