

News Release

HAVEN CITY COUNCIL NEWS
July 21, 2008

Mayor Cody Littlestar called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the City Council Chambers. Council members present for the meeting were Amy Hirst, Jeff Stringer, Charles Arndt, Don Ford and Paula Scott.

Jan Nolde with Swindoll, Janzen, Hawk & Loyd presented a preliminary budget proposal for 2009 and members engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the 10.226 mill levy increase necessary to meet budgeted expenses. A gradual increase in expenses in all areas and a sharp increase, particularly in street resurfacing, in recent years, has made the tax increase necessary. This is the first proposed mill levy increase by the City in over 15 years. The total proposed City mill levy of 38.816 mills is lower than most surrounding cities and cities that offer similar services. The 10.226 mill tax increase, for a homeowner with a \$100,000 home in Haven, would be an increase of \$118 per year, \$59 per half-year, \$9.80 per month, 32 cents per day. The proposed budget still falls short by over \$65,000 of funding all improvements recommended for 2009 by the Capital Improvement Committee. At the end of the discussion, Charles Arndt moved to authorize the clerk to publish a notice of hearing for the 2009 budget to be held August 4th at 7:00 PM. Don Ford seconded and the motion carried five to zero. Don Ford moved to approve Ordinance #577 attesting to an increase in tax revenues for Budget Year 2009. Charles Arndt seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

EMS Director Tony Troyer reviewed price estimates he had received for an addition to the ambulance building at 102 S. Kansas. A full listing of expenses was unavailable and the Council suggested contacting an independent architect for plans and cost estimates. As a stop-gap measure, the north ambulance bay door can be raised to accommodate a new, taller, ambulance.

Maintenance Supervisor Allen Andresen discussed several matters with the Council. Westar experienced outages that affected the City and led to a blown fuse interrupting service to some residents. The packer for the new trash truck has arrived and is being installed on the chassis in Wichita. The check valve on Well #4 is scheduled to be replaced on July 24th, resulting in an interruption of water service between 11:00 PM and 1:00 AM. A restroom and some fencing was repaired at the pool. Sealed bids will be taken for surplus and damaged metal street light poles. The work that the Maintenance Dept. had to do to furnish utilities to the new fire station is complete. Electric meters at Haven Grade School will be upgraded to accommodate new air conditioner units. Bids will be taken to purchase transformers for an electrical expansion project.

City Administrator Allen Blake discussed with the Council progress on finalizing the Paul Moore estate. The property at 101 S. Kansas has been turned over to the City. After limited discussion, the Council agreed to turn the matter over to the City Attorney.

Judge McCarville ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and against the City regarding the setback variance granted by the City Board of Zoning Appeals. Blake recommended a complete review of the zoning code to avoid similar conflicts in the future.

The Council discussed citizens' concerns regarding the unattended admissions gate at the pool. Apparently some swimmers are entering without paying.

Minutes of the July 7, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved after a motion by Stringer and a second by Scott. Bills and transfers totaling \$63,030.90 were unanimously approved for payment after a motion by Scott and a second by Stringer.

Paula Scott moved to approve Resolution No. 209 regarding electric rates, proposed by Administrator Blake. Jeff Stringer seconded and the motion passed with five yes votes. This rate increase, the first since 1985, is needed due to increased costs from Federal deregulation, the conclusion of the City's 20 year contract with Westar, and increasing fuel costs in general. A residential customer with an average bill of 1200 kWh will see an increase of \$19.27 per month. Rates are still competitive with other providers and the electric utility supports the general operation of the City to help keep taxes lower than otherwise possible.

Paula Scott moved to accept the resignation of Amy Hirst from the Library Board. Charles Arndt seconded and the motion carried unanimously. At 9:45 PM, Charles Arndt moved for adjournment. Jeff Stringer seconded, and the motion carried five to zero.