

EL DORADO CITY COMMISSION MEETING

December 18, 2023

The El Dorado City Commission met in a regular session on December 18, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Commission Room with the following present: Mayor Bill Young, Commissioner Kelly Tetrick, Commissioner Syndee Scribner, Commissioner Leon Leachman, Commissioner Kendra Wilkinson, City Manager David Dillner, Assistant City Manager Tabitha Sharp, City Attorney Ashlyn Lindskog, and City Engineer Scott Rickard.

VISITORS

Mike Holton	220 E 1 st Ave	El Dorado, KS
Phil Benedict	Chamber of Commerce	El Dorado, KS
Bruce Jensen	213 N Taylor	El Dorado, KS
Debbie Hill	BHI	El Dorado, KS
Rev. Debbie McCluer	Church of the Nazarene	El Dorado, KS
Teresa Radebaugh		El Dorado, KS
Jordan Mathes		El Dorado, KS
Jennifer Mathes- Dicney		El Dorado, KS
Tracy Crisler	523 W Central	El Dorado, KS
Kim Crisler	523 W Central	El Dorado, KS
Derek Lytle	KSN News	
Dwight Downs		
Carel Turner	Trinity Episcopal Church	El Dorado, KS
Lynette Harrisson	501 Central	El Dorado, KS
Kye Lehn	511 W Central	El Dorado, KS
Cynthia Clegsten		El Dorado, KS
Nita Whitman	BHI	El Dorado, KS
Les Jackson	Trinity Episcopal Church	El Dorado, KS
Elizabeth Moore	BHI	El Dorado, KS
D LaForge		El Dorado, KS
Valinda Jackson	Trinita Episcopal Church	El Dorado, KS
Jurdon Counts	Park Ave Baptist Church	El Dorado, KS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bill Young called the December 18, 2023, meeting to order.

INVOCATION

Jurdan Counts, Park Avenue Baptist Church, opened the meeting with an invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The City Commission led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Bill Young opened the floor for public comments.

There were no comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of City Commission Meeting Minutes from November 20 and December 4, 2023 and City Commission Work Session Minutes from November 29, 2023.

Approval of Appropriation Ordinance No. 11-23 in the amount of \$2,447,620.99.

Commissioner Kendra Wilkinson moved to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Commissioner Leon Leachman seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5 – 0.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AT 424 W CENTRAL AVENUE

City Engineer Scott Rickard stated that Butler Homeless Initiative Incorporated has requested a Special Use Permit at 424 West Central Avenue. That property is currently in Zone C-1 Commercial District which allows for the request of a special use permit for a Transitional housing facility. The City of El Dorado zoning ordinance defines Transitional Housing as “a facility, occupied by not more than 30 residents, with staff members as needed, which provides transitional housing for the purpose of facilitating the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing, and which may also include providing ancillary services such as employment counseling, vocational training, dining and food preparation, and individual or group behavioral health interventions and to allow that use by Special Use Permit in the following Zoning Districts R-3, C-1, and O-I with Supplementary Regulations to the Special Use to include: allowing only one transitional home in each Zoning District, no transitional home in the El Dorado Business Park, and a Management Plan for operation must be provided.” The Planning Commission held a lengthy public hearing on November 16, 2023. The outcome of this hearing resulted in a vote of 7-1 by the commissioners to recommend the denial of the special

use permit. The agenda packets include copies of the meeting minutes and the Planning Commission staff report, which consists of the standards of voting criteria on the case. Within the packet, you will find the minutes of the Public Hearing.

Mayor Bill Young stated that the issue has been discussed at the Planning Commission meeting and the work session last week.

Commissioner Kendra Wilkinson moved to approve an Ordinance for Case No. 23-08 SUP, requesting a Special Use Permit for transitional housing to be located at 424 W Central Avenue.

Commissioner Syndee Scribner seconded the motion.

Commissioner Leon Leachman stated that he thought about this long and hard. He stated that he fully supports the efforts of the Butler Homeless Initiative and that he has been involved with raising funds for them through a grant from the Elk's Foundation. He stated that he participated in the play that they had to help provide money to have a home. He feels that the City should provide support for BHI by doing the following one, help look for grants, two provide insight on the zoning issues, three help provide financial assistance to BHI to allow them to buy a bigger property, and four consider having a city commissioner serve on the BHI. He stated that he feels that he also needs to support the recommendation of the Planning Commission for the following reasons; First, he doesn't think that the property fits the needs of the BHI Committee and with the growth rate they will be out of room in a year. Second, it is important to support the superintendent of our school district and the safety of our children. No matter how big or small, one bad incident could be devastating to our community and the homeless initiative. He stated he will be voting no on this issue.

Commissioner Kendra Wilkinson stated last week the Commission had a work session and the Special Use Permit was the topic of discussion. Near the end of the meeting, the City Engineer and City Attorney reviewed the six items that the Planning Commission was to consider before making their decision. There were additional questions and discussions on the six items by the Commissioner and she recommended that they all take the information in their packets and reread the information they received before tonight's meeting. The information included a memo from the City Engineer to the City Commission, his memo to the Planning Commission concerning BHI's request, Planning Commission minutes, a management plan from BHI, a letter from the First Presbyterian Church asking for approval for the SUP, a letter of support from the Substance abuse center of Kansas, and an email of support from South Central Mental Health. She said that she had already read all of the information before the meeting and had watched the Planning Commission Meeting Live. Over the weekend she read the information that was submitted and when she reached page three of the information from BHI she stopped reading. That page listed the number of people served since the end of the pandemic. In 2020 they served 100 people, in 2021 they served 195 people, in 2022 they served 228, and in 2023 they served 309 people. Of those 309 people served 56 children. She stated that seeing that number of children saddened and sickened her that children were suffering from homelessness at no fault of their own. She stated that most of the children were under the age of eight and all but

three were under the age of ten. These children were from intact or single-parent families. She said that these numbers should not be acceptable to any of us. Commissioner Wilkinson stated that BHI also supports veterans, and she remembers Main and Central being lined with Veteran's banners. She stated that she finds it funny that two weeks later during a fridged snowstorm there was no shelter for those veterans that we were just celebrating. She stated that BHI stays in contact with those veterans and gets them in contact with the VA in Wichita to get them the help they need. She stated that during the pandemic there was Covid money to house the homeless in hotels and that money ran out in July of this year. She stated that BHI is not asking for money from the city and that they are just asking for a permit to serve the most vulnerable people. She stated that this issue has been overlooked for years and we have complained when we see them around town, sleeping on steps or benches downtown, and begging for money at the corner by the Walmart. She asked when we are going to realize we can help those who want and need help. She stated that this is more than a zoning issue, this is also a humanitarian issue. She stated that she is going to ask her fellow commissioners to overturn the decision of the Planning Commission and grant BHI a Special Use Permit. She stated that if we are not willing to address it now then the question becomes when will we. If the location is not acceptable then what location is, and we cannot continue to ignore this issue in our community. She stated that if this request is turned down then it falls on the commission to act and work with BHI and other state holders to figure out how we can help. She stated that if this request is denied then it becomes the Commission's responsibility to start the necessary discussions.

Commissioner Syndee Scribner stated that this is no doubt an emotional issue. She stated that our job is to weed through the information for the facts. She stated that the things she has heard the most is that they need to be helped, but at the end of the day, there is no place that the shelter can go where it will not be near residents, businesses, or development. She stated that she has looked at all of the facts and that she does not believe there is sufficient reason to deny the application as it fits the zoning in that area.

Commissioner Kelly Tetrick stated that he agrees that the city needs to be involved in finding a space for the homeless shelter. He stated that it is also important to continue to support the advisory boards. He stated that he didn't feel that this was the correct location due to size and what they're trying to do. He stated that he thinks we need to find a larger location and he understands that a larger location costs more money. He stated that he thinks the Commission needs to help remove any of the roadblocks they must find a place. He stated that he is in favor of upholding the decision of the Planning Commission.

Mayor Young stated that he recognizes there is a homeless issue in our community and supports BHI in their mission to address that issue. He stated that the compatibility with the adjacent properties causes concerns for him as well as concerns of the overall safety and health of that neighborhood. He stated that as they look at the six issues provided, there are some that are easy to say yes to. He stated that when they look at size, location, and compatibility with the area around it, there are questions. He stated that the city needs to assist in considering a different, collaborative approach to solving this problem. He stated that from his perspective, it is critical that the Commission and the city engage in a dialogue with the interested parties to find a location that works for everyone.

Motion failed 2 – 3 (Mayor Young and Commissioners Tetrick and Leachman voted against the motion).

Mayor Young stated that he is committed to working with BHI and other parties to find a good solution.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

There were no discussion items.

REPORTS

CITY COMMISSION AND ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

Commissioner Kelly Tetrick stated that Friends of the Library is having a Give Back Night at Spangles.

Mayor Young stated that there was an EFABC meeting last week, they recognized Norm Wilks' service on the committee as it was his last meeting. He stated that they discussed the replacement of turf and track because it is past its useful life. He stated that they will replace the turf first due to safety concerns and then the track the following year. He stated that the hope is that the turf can be built in a manner that will allow other activities to be hosted for the community.

Commissioner Tetrick asked what the injuries were related to.

Mayor Young stated that much like the carpet in your house, the padding wears out and causes spots that are slicker or more uneven than others, this leads to more injuries for the players.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager David Dillner stated that the city received notice that we were not awarded the SAFER grant for 3 additional firefighters.

City Manager Dillner stated that in the new year, we will begin hosting joint meetings with the advisory boards and the Commission. He stated that the first one will be on January 31st with the Experience El Dorado committee.

City Manager Dillner stated that at the first work session in January, they will discuss advisory board appointments.

Mayor Young asked if they could get a list of the advisory boards and appointments.

Commissioner Syndee Scribner asked if they could also get the commitment level required for each board.

City Manager Dillner stated that one of our new tools is called Balancing Act. He stated that we have published the sales tax requests and citizens can vote on which ones they would like to see. He stated that it is also an interactive budget tool, so we will be using it again during the budget process.

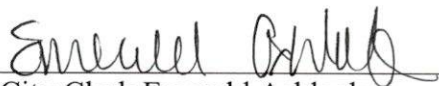
City Manager Dillner stated that City Hall will be closed this Friday and the next two Mondays in observance of the holidays.

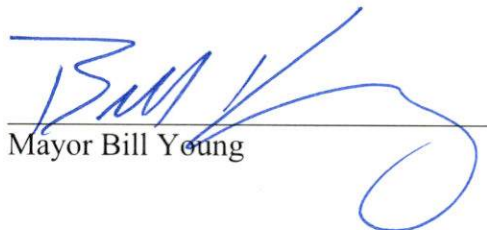
ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Leon Leachman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

Commissioner Kelly Tetrick seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5 – 0.


City Clerk Emerald Ashlock


Mayor Bill Young