

Council Minutes – July 31, 2012

COUNCIL CHAMBER, Topeka, Kansas, Tuesday, July 31, 2012. The Councilmembers of the City of Topeka met in regular session at 6:00 P.M., with the following Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Hiller, Alcalá, Ortiz, Wolgast, Manspeaker, Archer and Gray -7. Mayor William W. Bunten presided -1. Absent: Councilmembers Everhart and Harmon -2.

AFTER THE MEETING was called to order, Councilmember Ortiz gave the invocation.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by those present in the chamber.

THE CONSENT AGENDA was presented as follows:

BOARD APPOINTMENT recommending the appointment of Larry Robbins to the Topeka Public Building Commission for a term ending July 31, 2016 was presented.

RESOLUTION NO. 8450 introduced by Interim City Manager Pamela S. Simecka, granting various neighborhood organizations exceptions to the provisions of City of Topeka Code Section 9.45.150, et seq., concerning noise prohibitions was presented.

MINUTES of the regular meeting of July 24, 2012 were presented.

Councilmember Gray moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion seconded by Councilmember Wolgast carried unanimously. (7-0-0)

NO Retail Cereal Malt Beverage License applications were presented.

AN ORDINANCE introduced by Interim City Manager Pamela S. Simecka, attesting to budgeting property tax revenues for budget year 2013 was presented for first reading.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE CITY MANAGER, MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL;

Pamela S. Simecka, Interim City Manager asked Brendan Wiley, Zoo Director to comment on the condition of the elephants at the Topeka Zoo.

Brendan Wiley, Zoo Director distributed a summary of Asian Elephant Sunda's foot lesions in recent years including thermal images of the elephant's feet. He reported nothing significant surfaced as a result of a full physical of the zoo elephants conducted by outside parties including various experienced zoo veterinarians, elephant managers, senior elephant keepers, USDA inspectors and AZA accreditation inspectors, as well as, none were critical of her foot care and foot condition. He also reported approximately 50% of elephants in captivity develop cracks in the nails of their feet and wild elephants also develop this same type of foot condition.

Councilmember Alcalá questioned why the opening of the foot appears larger than it has in the past couple of years; what has been the trend of the deterioration of the foot cavity including depth and width; and is there documentation to support these findings.

Brendan Wiley reported part of the healing process is to expand the nail width; however, the depth would not change and remains the same. He noted he did not bring the requested documentation with him to the meeting; however, he would forward the information to Councilmember Alcalá for review.

Councilmember Wolgast asked what the typical age is for elephants that live in captivity.

Brendan Wiley reported Asian Elephants live to be approximately 50 to 55 years old and African Elephants live to be approximately 40 to 45 years old. He noted both elephants have reached their life expectancy.

Councilmember Hiller asked if the elephant's foot condition would be similar to a human toenail fungal infection.

Brendan Wiley stated the conditions are similar; however, he believes it is not painful for Sunda because she has shown no signs of pain. He invited the Governing Body to visit Sunda to witness the healing process and interact with the elephant.

Shirley Llizo, Zoo Veterinarian stated she understands the information is a lot to grasp; however, the condition would be comparable to a hoof problem with a horse. She reported the foot condition will look worse before it gets better because it is a long healing process that must be constantly managed and monitored.

Councilmember Alcalá asked if the nail opening was intentionally made larger for healing purposes.

Shirley Llizo reported the nail was opened to allow the nail to heal and the new nail growth shows no signs of deterioration. She commented on the swaying behavior of elephants and reported it helps elephants pump blood throughout their bodies and heart and is considered a physiological reaction to the needs of elephants.

Councilmember Hiller encouraged citizens to vote on August 7, 2012.

Councilmember Alcalá commended Topeka West High School for hosting Mighty Clouds of Joy gospel concert on July 28, 2012.

Councilmember Ortiz cautioned citizens to slow down and be aware of children returning to school. She asked when a pedestrian flasher would be installed near 33rd and Adams Street for the children that are required to cross Adams Street to get to school. She commented on the importance of keeping the Jackson Spray Park in working order and how much neighborhood residents enjoy the spray park.

Councilmember Wolgast commended City Water employees for their hard work and dedication in repairing multiple water main breaks throughout the city. He stated he has received

a number of compliments from constituents regarding the City's great response to water main breaks and noted City staff is responding as quickly as possible to all water main incidents.

Councilmember Archer encouraged citizens to vote on August 7, 2012.

Ted Mize, Marge Ahrens, Sandra Lassiter and Ronald Lassiter appeared to speak under public comment.

NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Brenda Younger
City Clerk