**CITY OF** **SPENCER**

**Special Joint City Council & Utility Authority Meeting**

**Monday, August 16, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

Pursuant to legal notice required by the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, including posting of an agenda as required by the terms, thereof, the Spencer City Council & Utility Authority met in special session on August 16, 2021, in the Municipal Building (City Hall), 8200 N.E. 36th Street, Spencer, Oklahoma 73084.

**Minutes**

**Item No.**

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call and declaration that a quorum is present.

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|  | **Present** | **Absent** |
| Chairman/Mayor Calvin | X |  |
| Vice Chairman/Mayor |  |  |
| Trustee/Council Member Williams | X |  |
| Trustee/Council Member Fair | X |  |
| Trustee/Council Member Canaday | X |  |

**A quorum was declared, and the meeting went forward.**

1. The Flag Salute and Invocation by Mayor Calvin
2. **BUSINESS AGENDA:**

**Discussion held before the agenda item were presented.**

* 1. Discussion of Water Bills.

Discussion: Mayor Calvin explained the problem with the citizens of Spencer receiving high water bills. He stated that we knew that that there would be some issues once the new meter system was installed. Once installed we did a test billing cycle on it and the bills came out high. After this test billing cycle, we knew that there would need to be some adjustments on the city and citizens end based on the new meter system. What has been done at this point everyone who has received a high bill City Manager Jackson and the staff will be working with the citizens to try and help what and where problem occurred and who will be responsible for the problem either the city or the citizen. The new system can break down and trouble shoot down to the minute of usage. The citizens are our number priority and the staff from Public Works are working hard to take of the problem.

Trustee/Council Member Canaday discussed the fact that the problem is not the new meter system that it could be the software. She received several calls regarding high bills and wanted to know how the city plans to take of this for the citizens. If this isn’t resolved, we need to investigate and have the system recalibrated. She also wanted to make it clear that this is not the citizens fault, and we really need to get this taken care as soon as possible.

Trustee/Council Member Williams discussed that fact that some of the bills had an additional zero at the end of the due amount. She found this out while having her bill look at and adjusted. She talked with the City Manager and asked if the citizens could leave a copy their bill with them to night would give them to the City Manager to work on and do a test run without the additional zero and make the necessary adjustments to the bills. She reiterated that we need a plan of action, and this would the start of this plan. The second thing is if you have paid the high bill and you did not receive an adjustment, possible we could place the contact information on the website with who to contact and the hour of business to take care of this.

Trustee/Council Member Fair as the question regarding a solution on the billing as to if there is room in the budget to has someone just dedicated to answer the phone calls dealing with the increased water bills. Also, asked if there could be a glitch in the software for the smart meters. Lastly, ask would it be possible to hold the current billing for a while until the council can get this situation worked out.

City Manager Jackson stated that she is trying to return calls as quickly as possible. She stated that if you prefer email, she could answer your questions through email.

**Open to the floor for comments and remarks:**

Charvella Rushing 4601 Ann Felton Way, Spencer, OK 73084, Stated that the city staff wasn’t as accommodating as described. As well as she wasn’t aware that City Hall closes for lunch.

She realizes that the city is not trying to purposely hurt anyone and that you are doing your best, but your best is not good enough. We the citizens are tired, and we do not want to be the barometer and should have to take care of things that the city should do. Her issue is that there is a water leak on her street that has not been fixed in a year and she stated that she lives at the bottom of the cul-de-sac with a gravel driveway that has washed out from the water leak.

Shirley Northington 8710 Silvercreek Drive, Spencer, OK 73084, stated that the City of Spencer is so divided as well as the City Council needs to work on working together. Expressed her concerns of the water billing and leak problems and asked that get this fixed for the citizens.

Charmin Williams, 4809 Sunset Terrace, Spencer, OK 73084, asked the questions if doing the installation process was there a dual test done, was there a bill analysis done. She proposed that the council and staff go back and do an analysis on the previous 3 – 6 months, look it over and average the billing formula during that time and bring back to the council a proposal that will be fitting of the citizens to ratify the current bill.

Christina Mahoney, 4805 Able Street, Spencer, OK 73084, asked the question why they are not answering our questions and shared that her mother received a high bill and is on a fixed income and can’t pay this bill.

Gloria Love, Area Director of Community Action program office location is inside the Minnis Lakeview Center, 12520 NE 35th Street, Spencer, OK 73084, announced that the agency is here to serve the community anyone needing assistance with large utility bills should contact their office.

Shawntay Alexander, 8226 NE 26th, Spencer, OK 73084, asking the council to come some resolution. She suggested of creating a tangible solutions possibly developing and advisory council to strategize about prospective business for the city, investigate possibly getting a third-party agency that can capability handle case management.

Hattie Stevens, 8722 Silvercreek, Spencer, OK 73084, concerned about her water bill and wanting to know how the smart meters operate. If it’s by electric what prevention to we have in the event of power failure.

LaDonna Ditzen, 4114 Spencer Road, Spencer, OK 73084, contact the city to check water line, nothing still has been done. Was told that it will get some over to look it over. Wanted to know how long the billing has guessing game going to last, because she can’t afford it and wish that the city would support the citizens in this.

Anthony Crosby, 4120 Shadynook Way, Spencer, OK 73084, stated that it seems like the other surrounding cities are not experiencing this billing problem. Why not go and research what they are doing recalculate, write-off the high bills for the people on fixed income.

Lastly, not happy about his trash bill continuing to go up at least 5%. Stated that this is not the time for this and asked the council to get it together.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Trustee/Council Member Canaday motioned to approve the staff to review through the entire billing and average every bill from January – March. Any resident that has already paid over will be issued a refund check. Others that have not paid will receive the new average billing. The motion was then amended to extend this for (3) three months starting with August through October. Trustee/Council Member Williams seconded the motion. The vote was as follows. Yeas: Trustee/Council Member Canaday, Trustee/Council Member Williams, Trustee/Council Member Fair and Chairman/Mayor Calvin Abstain: Nays:**

1. Remarks and Comments.

**No Comments**: Trustee/Council Member Fair and Mayor Calvin

**Trustee/Council Member Canaday**: Appreciate the citizens attending to the meeting tonight. These meetings are for the citizens, and we can’t lobby for your problems without your participation. Encourage the citizens to continue to come and be heard.

**Trustee/Council Member Williams**: resighted a quote from the late Clara Luper clothes don’t get clean if there is not an adjudicator. She continued to state that adjudication was needed and you coming tonight was stemmed from something you felt was unjust and inequitable, that adjudication moved you to attend tonight and listen to other dialogue that you may not agree with. She concluded by saying the adjudication was a necessity because we needed to be willing to sit through this adjudication to get your answer and help wash Spencer clean.

6. Adjournment

**The City Council & Utility Authority meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.**

**Trustee/Council Member Williams motioned to Adjourn. Trustee/Council Member Canaday seconded the motion. The vote was as follows. Yeas: Trustee/Council Member Canaday, Trustee/Council Member Williams, Trustee/Council Member Fair and Chairman/Mayor Calvin Abstain: Nays:**

Respectfully Submitted,

Tanya Mustin

Tanya Mustin, Minute Taker