

# MANAGERS REPORT

**DATE:** July 6, 2023  
**TO:** Mayor Benage and City Council  
**FROM:** Ty Lasher, City Manager  
**RE:** July 11, 2023 Agenda



---

## **Consent Agenda (Item VI)**

The Consent Agenda contains only the minutes of the June 20<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting.

## **AP Ordinance (Item VII)**

This reporting period includes one payroll period. The City purchased a new Spartan mower from Kansas Golf and Turf for \$14,100. UMC was paid \$238,315.00 for full payment of the Hanover line replacement project, plus 26 new water service installs and sewer point repairs.

## **Scope of Services, Integra Site Access Transportation Plan (Item A)**

With the potential of Integra locating at K-254 & Rock, new businesses building in the Sunflower Commerce Park and new residential developments occurring along 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, the city needs to be proactive in determining needed street improvements along Rock, Webb and 53<sup>rd</sup> Street. KDOT is currently working on a K-254 Corridor Management Plan which will not be completed until later this fall or early in 2024. Secretary Reed understands improvements at K-254 & Rock, Webb and Greenwich need to be studied now and cannot wait for the Corridor Management Plan to be completed. KDOT, Mayor Benage and I felt a combined study of the interchanges and arterial streets is a very efficient and effective way to work together in identifying needed upgrades. It is much easier for Bel Aire to engage consultants for projects than KDOT. Therefore, Secretary Reed stated if Bel Aire created a scope that included the KDOT interchanges, pay for the study and selected the firm, they would use that cost towards Bel Aire's local match for future improvements. This creates a win-win for KDOT and Bel Aire.

TranSystems was selected for several reasons. First, they were recommended by KDOT. Second, they completed a study for Integra so have a keen understanding of the needs of Integra and already have some data accumulated. Lastly, they competed intersection studies for Bel Aire at 53<sup>rd</sup> & Rock as well as 53<sup>rd</sup> & Webb. Therefore, they have the most information of any other firm and will have the lowest fee while completing the study in the fastest time.

**Agreement with Foulston Siefkin for Representation In Energy Rate Case (Item B)**

As you are keenly aware, the City of Bel pays close to \$100,000 annually for street lighting. Bel Aire continues to grow and in order to keep our community safe, we are adding streetlights which increases the amount of electricity used monthly. Evergy has given its statutory notice to increase their rates. Foulston Siefkin Law Firm regularly represents customers for such rate cases around the country. What they have found is that other electric companies in the US have a municipal rate for streetlights. Their experts have examined actual invoices from various Kansas municipalities, compared them to Evergy's tariffs related to streetlighting and determined that if municipalities were billed appropriately, a municipality could expect an annual savings of approximately 50% of the cost they now pay streetlight electricity. That could be in the neighborhood of a \$50,000 savings per year. The proposed hike, with no change in fees, would add roughly \$10,000 per year to our already high bill.

Foulston Siefkin is working with the League of Kansas Municipalities in creating a coalition of municipalities, the Streetlights Alliance for Fair Energy Rates (SAFER), to oppose the rate hike and negotiate a better rate. The agreement included in the Council packet would allow Foulston Siefkin to represent the City of Bel Aire, as member of the alliance. The City Attorney has reviewed the agreement and will be at the meeting to answer any questions. The cost to Bel Aire will be based on our savings for the first year if the rate case is successful. If the case is not successful, there are no fees. Staff supports the idea of trying for a municipal rate.

**Executive Session (XII)**

Staff is requesting an executive session for attorney client.

**Discussion and Future Issues – Workshop Tomorrow, July 12<sup>th</sup> (Item XIII)**

The special workshop will include an update on the PEC water & sewer master plan, review of 53<sup>rd</sup> Street design and update on the 45<sup>th</sup> Street design.