

# City Council Minutes

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

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## Call to Order

Mayor Akers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., City Clerk Taryn Wigley called the roll.

## Attendees

Council members Cedric Leonard, Michael James, Al Peer, Mark Tiner, Craig McRae, Mike Wigley, and Claudia Hartness were present. Clarissa Pace was absent.

## Approval of Minutes

Craig McRae moved to approve the July minutes, Mike Wigley seconded. A yay/nay vote was called, and the minutes passed unanimously.

## New Business

### a. Application Authorizing Water Infrastructure Grant

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Mark Tiner motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Michael James seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mayor Akers informed the council that this will take care of two priority projects with water infrastructure. Michael James motioned to pass the resolution, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

### b. Resolution Amending 1998 One Cent Sales Tax for Scogin Dr.

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Michael James motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. They aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner confirmed that this was just for the budgeting of utility relocation, Finance Director Vickie Norris confirmed. Mark Tiner motioned to approve the resolution, Michael James seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

### c. Resolution Regarding SeaArk Boats Block Grant

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Craig McRae motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Michael James seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Vickie Norris briefly explained that this resolution of for SeaArk Boats project for equipment purchases. Mike Wigley asked if we knew a timeline for when the project would begin. Vickie Norris answered that the account will be opened within a week and the project should begin within two weeks. Craig McRae motioned to accept the resolution, Mike Wigley seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.



**d. Resolution Accepting Bid on Conrad Water Tank**

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Michael James motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Cedric Leonard seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner asked what the source of funding was for the project. Vickie Norris answered that it is budgeted in One Cent Sales Tax in line item 6050. It was budgeted for \$262,500.00 and is under budget with the project costing \$198,000.00 and engineering \$32,910. Leaving \$31,590, before change orders and possible contingent costs. Mike Wigley asked how often they are flushed out, Mayor Akers answered that it is flushed out every 5 years. Michael James asked if the company with the low bid had their own engineering. Mayor Akers answered that they do, and in the future, they could use that to their advantage. Craig McRae motioned to accept the resolution, Mark Tiner seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**e. Resolution Creating New Pay Scale for MPD**

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Mark Tiner motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Claudia Hartness seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Cedric Leonard asked why merit raises were being implemented. Police Chief Carlos Garcia answered that the merit raises will be determined on years of experience and certifications. Mike Wigley asked if this pay scale would give MPD the opportunity to hire and keep quality officers. Chief Garcia answered that it would put MPD at a competitive level to supplement their good reputation and bring in more officers. There are currently 4 openings in the department. Mark Tiner advised the council that this resolution was brought up at the HR Committee meeting and all agreed with the raise. Mark Tiner motioned to accept the resolution. Michael James seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**f. Resolution Declaring 602 and 604 E Pauline St. a Nuisance**

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Craig McRae motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Claudia Hartness seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner asked that since this property and the property on 604 Pauline St. were owned by the same owners, if they could discuss them jointly. Whit Barton answered that they could. Craig McRae motioned to discuss both properties in one discussion and to suspend the rules and read by title only, Claudia Hartness seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. City Inspector Brian Rodgers advised that letters were sent to the owner in May, and he has had no response. Mike Wigley asked if the addresses were local, Brian Rodgers answered yes. Craig McRae motioned to accept both resolutions, Claudia Hartness seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**g. Resolution Imposing a lien on 600 N Main St.**

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Mark Tiner motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. City Inspector Brian Rodgers advised the council that the owner lives out of state and has arrangements with the new owner to remove two large oak trees in the yard. The new owners hired a contractor to remove one tree and didn't pay the contractors. The City had to remove the other tree in



the yard. Mark Tiner motioned to pass the resolution, Mike Wigley seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

#### **h. Resolution Imposing a lien on 506 S Speer St.**

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Craig McRae motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Mark Tiner seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. City Inspector Brian Rodgers advised the council that a notice was sent, and a letter has been posted on the property. The owners address is in Hot Springs Village. The City had to mow the yard, so the owners are being charged for that service. Mark Tiner motioned to accept the resolution, Mike Wigley seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

#### **i. Resolution for Planning Commission Appointment**

Mayor Akers introduced the resolution. Craig McRae motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only, Mark Tiner seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mayor Akers addressed Mr. Stephen Coburn to the council, acknowledging all the volunteer work that he has done in the community. Craig McRae motioned to accept the resolution, Mike Wigley seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

### **Mayor Comment Section**

Mayor Akers advised the council that this section would be an update on the current city projects.

- Well pump #4 project is completed, and water pressure went up 50%
- Davis St. project is waiting on a headwall to be built, the project is slated to be completed October 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Bowser Rd. pump station project will begin September 12<sup>th</sup> and is projected to be finished by October 27<sup>th</sup>.
- West Plant Aeration: Set to start Dec 14<sup>th</sup>, and projected to finish in April 2024
- County drain valve: Fire hydrant was placed at county barn to fix drainage issues.
- Budget: Met with Dept. heads to discuss budgets- all budgets are satisfactory.
- Mayor Akers informed the council that the City paid over \$400,00.00 in electrical bills last year. He is interested in possibly reaching out to some local solar companies to find a solution.

### **Public Comment Section**

Mr. Scott addressed the council and would like to see speed bumps installed on N. Cooper St. He explained that the houses are set very close to the streets and there is a problem with excessive speeding. He also mentioned that the area has already seen tragedy due to speeding.

Diane Johnson informed that council that she has never been late on her water bill. Last month, she was five days late, due to overwhelming responsibilities as a caretaker for her elderly aunt and her husband. She told the council that an employee in the water office told her that her water would have been shut off if she hadn't paid. Mrs. Johnson stated was taken back by lack of compassion. She would like to see policy change, such as a phone call to a customer before their water is shut off. Mayor Akers advised that paying your water bill online could be an option for her, Mrs. Johnson replied that she does not own a computer. Mike Wigley mentioned that it would be nice to see some kind of credit




worthiness policy put in place. Mayor Akers was very apologetic to Mrs. Johnson and advised her that he would have a word with the employees.

**Meeting Adjourned**

Cedric Leonard moved to adjourn the meeting, Mark Tiner seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the meeting was adjourned.

*Jay Wrigley*

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