

City Council Minutes

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

Call to Order

Mayor Chase called the meeting to order promptly at 6:00 PM. City Clerk Jessica Hylton called the roll. Because of the social distancing regulations for COVID-19 the meeting was held at the Sadie Johnston Building instead of City Hall.

Attendees

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

Approval of Minutes

Mike Wigley moved to approve the May minutes, Mark Tiner seconded, an yay nay vote was called for, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Reports and Presentations

a. MEDC—Nita McDaniel

Nita was absent, but Benny Ryburn spoke about the Burkes Outlet opening and stated that the MEDC is working on their retail strategies to help bring more businesses to the area.

b. Water Operator—Wayne Morphis

No Report

c. Senior Citizen Center—Cindy Villarreal

They are serving a lot of new people--2589 Lunches last month. They are up to 75 home delivery customers, and they are planning to have a cooling station at the center during the festival this weekend. Cindy thanked the community for bringing snacks to the seniors and the Eubanks family for bringing tomatoes. The seniors have enjoyed putting them up for winter.

d. Fire—Eric Chisom

The fires have slowed down. There were 30 instances and 38 permits last month. The permits brought in \$4991.00. Their construction is going well, and he hopes to get the mason work approved tonight.

e. Public Works—Charlie Hammock

They have fixed 19 leaks, are working on replacing sidewalks and culverts, and have been bush hogging. Past two weeks have been hard with the trash. They've been cussed in the last two weeks more than they have in the last five years. Hard to keep the morale up. The lease is up next year with the garbage truck company, and Charlie recommends not renewing it because they have not been happy with the service. Mayor Chase said they had contacted the old company the city used so that they can get trucks ready if the city decides to change. Mike Wigley asked if the city was taking legal issue with the company for failing to uphold the promises they made in the contract. Mayor Chase said they had not because the company had promised loaner trucks "if they have them," and they haven't had them. Cedric Leonard recommended to stop paying the lease. Mark Tiner asked what the life expectancy of a truck is—it's three years—and suggested the city look into buying trucks. Michael James asked if the

trucks with the other company are roughly the same as what we have now, and they are. He followed up by asking if River City is a premier vendor with the Municipal League. They are. He recommended telling the league that we are unhappy.

f. City Inspector—Brian Rodgers

There were 3 630 violations and 9 756 violations this month. All are in compliance except for one. He's about 2/3 of the way through SNAP applications. He has a resolution up for approval that adds a line for asbestos testing in houses that are going to be torn down. Mark Tiner asked if we had had trouble with asbestos. We're about to. ADEQ only allows 1 per city block without asbestos to be torn down per year without asbestos testing. They have four houses that need to come down on Godbold Street. Mark Tiner asked how much testing is—it's \$7.50 a sample. Mike Wigley asked how many samples per house were needed—houses can require anywhere from 50-150 samples. Mark Tiner followed up by asking if this gives Brian the authority to go into someone's home. Cedric Leonard expressed concern at that possibility. City Attorney Whit Barton clarified that this for properties that are already condemned and are about to be demolished and reminded everyone that we don't want to be in violation of environmental laws. Mike Wigley asked if the property owners would take on the additional costs. They will. Claudia Hartness stated that we can't be at risk with asbestos. Mark Tiner asked if there is another procedure if the house tests positive. There is not. But it ensures that the city does not tear down too many houses with asbestos in them within the same area. Brian did say they have to wet down the area to try to keep the asbestos contained. Cedric Leonard pointed out this would be yet another cost for the homeowner and asked for this discussion to be tabled until July.

g. Planning Commission—Dan Boice

The consultant working with the armory is working on a request for proposals. The surveys they've done showed a great concern regarding the city's infrastructure. The Planning Commission also recently met with McClelland Engineering to discuss the infrastructure and their city plan. The Commission asked some difficult questions and shared concerns and feels like they have a solid plan of action for moving forward. Al Peer asked when the meeting was—it was a couple of weeks ago—and asked if they would meet with McClelland again. Probably not. Mayor Chase stated that all people should come to the meetings. Al Peer asked if they had been talking about the flooding. Mayor Chase said they had. Clarissa Pace asked if the meeting was a recap of the one the council had previously had. It was.

h. Police—Jason Akers

They should have better statistic tracking soon. They are working to repair one of the radios that was damaged in the lightning strike—the other will be assessed soon. The annual racial profiling course went well. PD works with local pastors to share experiences. Cedric Leonard asked what a citizen's assist is. It's helping citizens with rides to the hospital or other non-criminal related help.

i. Parks Commission—Taylor James

Finishing up teams. Started taking field fees. \$30 without lights \$40 with. They hosted a 32-team tournament at the complex and a 9 team swim meet at the Tim Chase Pool. The lights at McCloy are being installed now. Al Peer asked how much of the money from the tournament would come back to the city. Amanda Killingsworth stated we charge a set fee per day, per field—around \$130/150 a field. Michael James said it sounded like a successful event and Mark Tiner brought up how much we get from one cent sales tax. Mayor Chase pointed out that we cannot host baseball tournaments because of the number of our fields. Gerald Shepherd took over and stated that he is running over budget and will be coming to the council for additional funding soon. Mark Tiner pointed out that they have already used

\$49,000 of their \$85,000 budget. He also asked for a wish list of outstanding projects and expressed an interest in getting the fields up to where they could be used for baseball. Mayor Chase said we will need more employees.

Unfinished Business

Clarissa Pace asked about the SNAP program. Brian Rodgers had already left, but Benny Ryburn spoke. It was started in 2014. Low income seniors can apply for grants to help them make improvements to their homes. The program has done over a million dollars' worth of improvements. Clarissa Pace asked if there was a certain window that people have to apply in—yes. Applications have to go through local banks. Clarissa Pace asked what banks participated—there are at least four that do this. Mayor Chase shared Brian Rodgers' number 870-367-4410 and stated the process is very competitive because there is so much interest.

New Business

- A. Permission to purchase HVAC unit for the complex concession stand/restroom
Mayor Chase expressed that if we can get a compressor instead of a new unit, we will do so. But we'd like your permission. The council expressed their support
- B. Accepting bid for Electrical work at Well #4
Mark Tiner introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Michael James seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner moved to approve the \$43,011.62 bid by Forrest Electric, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed unanimously.
- C. Accepting bid for Lake Trail Project Phase 1
Mark Tiner introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Michael James seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. The council clarified this is just for phase 1. Whit Barton pointed out that Progressive Trails had written their own specs for the bid. Michael James asked if the people over the project were happy with Progressive Trails. They are. Cedric Leonard asked what the cost of this was to the city. It's nothing. The city's portion of the grant will be paid by private donations. Mayor Chase stated that we have already applied for another RTP Grant for phase II. Michael James moved to approve the design by Progressive Trails for \$244,900.00, Mike Wigley seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed unanimously.
- D. Amending 2022 Street Fund Budget for Scogin Drive Project
Clarissa Pace introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Mark Tiner seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner moved to approve, Cedric Leonard seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed unanimously.
- E. Authorizing Loan Application with Arkansas Natural Resources Commission for Main Street Project
Michael James introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Al Peer seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner asked how much we would be applying for. \$4.4 Million. He followed up by asking how are we going to pay this back? Mayor Chase said we had already discussed it in previous meetings and with Mrs. Norris being absent at tonight's meeting, she did not have the account numbers available. Mark Tiner and Claudia Hartness debated if they had already gone over this, and Al Peer asked for this to be tabled until next month.

F. Authorizing Payment to ARDOT Regarding Scogin Drive Project

Mark Tiner introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Cedric Leonard seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed.

G. Appointing Mike Akin to the Airport Commission

Clarissa Pace introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Mark Tiner seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner moved to accept the resolution, Al Peer seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed. Clarissa Pace asked what was required for the position, and Benny Ryburn stated they usually have to have a plane, but that the Mayor makes the appointments.

H. Accepting a Bid for Central Station masonry work

Michael James asked how the bid compared to what we were expecting. There was one bid for \$22,500. It is high, but the project is still under budget because the firefighters have done so much of the work themselves. Michael James moved to accept the bid, Mark Tiner seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed.

I. Accepting a grant from the Arkansas Aeronautics Commission for the Monticello Municipal Airport

Al Peer introduced the motion and that it be read by title only, Michael James seconded, and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mark Tiner asked if this is a reimbursable grant. Benny Ryburn stated it was an 80/20 split, but because of the city's support of the airport, the airport is able to fully cover the cost. He also thanked the city for the support. Mark Tiner moved to accept the resolution, Al Peer seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called roll, and the motion passed.

Mayor Chase reminded everyone about the Friday Unity in the Community MLK Jr. Celebration that starts at noon and about the fireworks celebration at the complex on July 2nd.

Adjournment

Mark Tiner moved to adjourn the meeting, Al Peer seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.


City Clerk

8-24-22
Date of Approval