

# City Council Minutes

## Tuesday, January 25, 2022

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### Call to Order

Mayor Chase called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, City Clerk Jessica Hylton called the roll.

### Attendees

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

### Approval of Minutes

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

### Reports and Presentations

- a. Planning Commission—Dan Boice  
They met two weeks ago, and their goal is to create a city plan this year. March 7<sup>th</sup> is an all-day event that will put together all of the studies from UCA. It's a Strategic Planning meeting and will last from 9 am - 3 pm. Renee Treadway resigned, and Dan thanked her for her service. Mark Tiner asked about a plan for the armory. Dan stated they are working on ideas.
- b. Senior Citizen Center—Cindy Villarreal  
Their roof is done. They were down in the number of meals served in December, 2112 meals. So far, they are up in January. She thinks the slump was because of the cold and the holidays. They are going to be sending out a letter asking for donations because COVID has prevented them from being able to do their usual fundraisers. Cindy reported sad news that two vets and long-term members of the center passed away.
- c. Public Works—Charlie Hammock  
Seven big mains broke, and they've been working on patching potholes. They've had a little set back with the trash this month, but it should be straightened out.
- d. City Inspector—Brian Rodgers  
He reported 1 new 630 violation. Two were scheduled for February, but they have been brought into compliance.
- e. MEDC—Nita McDaniel  
Project 0308 is staying in contact with the city. 525 has no updates. 602 met with the Intermodal Board and zoomed with the railroad company. There are no updates on projects 809, 1004, and 1022. Retail development is going okay. A few nibbles no bites. Scoggin Drive is coming along. The DRA is looking for reasons to justify the extended time the project is taking. COVID slowed the project down for 18 months. The MEDC sent in a letter asking for state funds for street repair. They are on hold—which is not a no. They've engaged with HDR in regard to ports/rail access. Last week there was a good meeting at UAM with 30ish people in person and another 15 via Zoom in hopes of helping local industry. They

are working on more grants for the Historic Post Office. Mike Wigley asked about the people interested in the old Stage building. There are no new updates, and the building is still being advertised as being available.

f. Police—Jason Akers

Last year, they had over 11K calls for service, 1300 reports, and over \$400k in seized funds. COVID did impact their numbers from last year. Domestic violence always increase around the holidays. Last year there were about 72 misdemeanor arrests per month and 23 felonies. 370 total accidents. The monthly average is 31 which is a decrease of about 26%. Single vehicle accidents are the highest type of accidents. Accidents also seem to happen more on Thursdays. 25% of accidents are on private property. Cesar found 11K in Meth, 17 guns, 13 felony arrests, 41 felony charges, and 2 drug seized vehicles. The Drone is here, and it is ready to be used. The school resource officer position is going well. The department has also started pulling random 911 calls to help the department improve internally. The department recently worked with the NAACP for domestic abuse month, they're working on getting sleeping bags to the homeless to help with the cold, and they have two of the vehicles ordered last year coming in tomorrow.

g. Fire—Eric Chisom

They had 18 calls last month. 241 for the year, they spent 713 hours in training. The Fire Marshall got plumbing certified, and he should be getting electrical next. The concrete has been poured and the generator is up. They've gotten in 22 new air packs and shifted from gas operated fans to electric. They had a firefighter resign, but they have already replaced him and brought in three new volunteers. There are currently three openings.

h. Parks Commission—Gerald Shepherd

They've remodeled the bathrooms at Western Pines, finished the light project at city park, remodeled field 6 at the sports complex, and are getting ready for ball season to start.

i. A&P Commission—Michael Hudson

They are planning an Easter egg hunt on April 16<sup>th</sup> at Jordan Park. They should have 5000 eggs filled with candy. He is working to get food trucks and live bands on site. Fireworks will happen on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. They are still looking for companies to assess the armory. Mike Wigley pointed out the inter-commission meeting scheduled for March 7<sup>th</sup> would likely need to be rescheduled. Michael agreed.

## Unfinished Business

Mayor Chase asked to amend the agenda, Mark Tiner moved to accept, and Al Peer seconded. Jessica Hylton called roll, and the agenda was amended. Officer Menotti, our K9 unit, presented Chief Jason Akers with the Patriotic Employee Award that thanks employers that go above and beyond supporting employees, like Officer Menotti, who are also in the military.

## New Business

A. Resolution to Adopt Updated 2021 Operating Budget

Craig McRae motioned to read the resolution by title only, Clarissa Pace seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title, Mark Tiner moved to accept the resolution, Craig McRae seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.

B. Resolution to Adopt Updated 2021 One Cent Sales Tax Budget

Al Peer motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title, Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Cedric Leonard seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.

C. Resolution to pass the 2022 Operating Budget

Craig McRae motioned to read the resolution by title only, Clarissa Pace seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title, Clarissa Pace moved to accept the resolution, Craig McRae seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.

D. Resolution to pass 2022 One Cent Sales Tax Budget

Clarissa Pace motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title, Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.

Mark Tiner took this moment to state for the record that the council approved a 5% raise for city employees and remind them to make sure their departments are not wasting funds.

E. Ordinance Creating Monticello Police Department Drug Control Fund Budget

Clarissa Pace motioned to read the resolution by title only, Mark Tiner seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Cedric Leonard asked if the funding was coming from grants. It is not. He followed up by asking if we needed to read the ordinance three times. Whit stressed that this needed to get decided on tonight and recommended waiving the other readings. Mark Tiner moved to waive the other readings and to accept the ordinance on the condition that an emergency clause is added. Michael James seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.

F. Resolution to Adopt a Budget for Monticello Police Department Drug Control Budget

Clarissa Pace motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed

G. Ordinance Creating District Court Probation Fund

Mark Tiner motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Mark Tiner moved to waive the other readings and to accept the ordinance on the condition that an emergency clause is added. Craig McRae seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, Mike Wigley had stepped out of the room, and the motion passed.

H. Resolution to Adopt a Budget for District Court Probation Fund Budget

Al Peer motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Al Peer seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.

I. MEDC Contract

Mike Wigley pointed out that the math regarding the 12 monthly payments don't add up. Whit Barton agreed, as written the math is for 11.

- J. Resolution to Approve the MEDC Contract  
Craig McRae motioned to read the resolution by title only, Claudia Hartness seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Mark Tiner moved to accept the resolution with the corrected math, Michael James seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.
- K. Lease Extension Agreement with Drew Memorial Hospital  
Mark Tiner asked what they currently are paying. \$1500 a month. Clarissa Pace asked how long the extension is for? It's through November.
- L. Resolution to Approve the Lease Agreement with Drew Memorial Hospital  
Mark Tiner motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Cedric Leonard seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.
- M. Resolution to Appoint Joel Steven and Chris Selby to the Airport Commission  
Mark Tiner motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Mark Tiner moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.
- N. Resolution to Appoint Shannon Herman to the A&P Commission  
Craig McRae motioned to read the resolution by title only, Al Peer seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.
- O. Resolution Allowing EFS to Redistrict Monticello  
Craig McRae motioned to read the resolution by title only, Claudia Hartness seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Mark Tiner asked if the total cost was \$2000, and it will depend on if they have to redesign maps. Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.
- P. Resolution for Asbestos Abatement to the Old Historic Post Office  
Clarissa Pace motioned to read the resolution by title only, Craig McRae seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, the ayes had it, City Attorney Whit Barton read the title. Mark Tiner asked if the funds were already set aside. They are. Craig McRae moved to accept the resolution, Clarissa Pace seconded, City Clerk Jessica Hylton took roll, and the motion passed.
- Q. Permission to bid for HVAC for old Historic Post Office  
Mark Tiner moved to accept, Al Peer seconded, an aye/nay vote was held, and the ayes had it.
- R. Discussion with Jason Arnold with Tower Point about contract use on towers  
Clarissa Pace asked how the company can help the city get control over the assets of our water towers. Jason explained that the company takes the risk of a tenant/renter who does not pay etc. They are essentially a third-party negotiator. Mark Tiner pointed out the contract is for \$350,000. That stays consistent for the city and Tower Point can look for other renters if the need arises. Michael James expressed concern over the contract being for 99 years and asked what happens if we don't want your

services in 15? Jason pointed out that the 99 years is just an average for the life of the tower itself. Michael James pointed out that the proposed agreement has each of the city's towers listed as either AT&T or Verizon, when in fact both companies are on each tower. He also suggested a recalibration of their offer. Mayor Chase stated Tower Point went off the numbers we had sent them. Claudia Hartness stated she would like to see a better presentation. Michael James stated he was not interested in the idea because he did not want to give up control of the towers themselves. Mike Wigley wanted to know how much AT&T and Verizon are paying now and would like to see a copy of the current lease. Craig McRae believes we shouldn't close the book on this idea just yet.

**Adjournment**

Cedric Leonard made the motion for adjournment, Clarissa Pace seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:31.

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Mayor

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Date of Approval