

# City Council Minutes

Tuesday, October 24, 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 Clarissa Pace, Cedric Leonard, Michael James, Al Peer, Craig McRae, Mike Wigley, and Claudia Hartness were present. Mark Tiner was absent.

## Approval of Minutes

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

## Old Business

### a. Speed Hump Ordinance-2<sup>nd</sup> Reading

Mayor Akers asked City Attorney Whit Barton to fix a clerical mistake on page one, section two, adding the word "extraneous" to a sentence regarding a section of road. Mayor Aker asked the Council if they would like to enact an emergency clause. Mike Wigley answered that unless there was reason to enact the emergency clause, he would like to do 3 readings. City Attorney Whit Barton read by title only and the ordinance will move on to the third reading in November.

## New Business

- a. Mayor Akers asked permission from the council to amend the agenda to remove item B and item F. The representative from Lemons Engineering was not able to attend the meeting due to sickness and item F required more research. Clarissa Pace moved to amend the agenda, Mike Wigley seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the agenda was amended.

### b. Pinning Ceremony

Mayor Akers explained that the City of Lebanon, Mo approached Mayor Akers that they wanted to honor and recognize their veterans. They were able to find all but one veteran, because he lived in Monticello. Mayor Akers introduced Claude Volner, stating that Mr. Volner joined the Air Force in 1965, went through basic training, then was sent to two separate Air Force bases in Texas where he worked as a flight mechanic. From 1966-1967, he worked at the Vietnam air base working on small planes that launched smoke rockets. Mr. Volner received several awards including the Air Force Commendation Award. Mayor Akers and the City Council thanked Mr. Volner for his service and presented him with a certificate and a pin.



**c. Resolution Allowing Free Pool Passes to New Monticello Residents**

Craig McRae introduced the resolution and moved 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 explained that he would be interested in implementing this policy for new residents to keep up competition with other cities and utilize the services that we can offer. He believes that this would make Monticello and Southeast Arkansas a more attractive place to live. Mayor Akers mentioned that if a family were to move in the city limits after the pool already closed for the season, that they would be eligible next seasons pass. Mike Wigley asked if it would count if someone moved from one location in the city to another. Mayor Akers answered that moving within city limits would not count. If you moved from the county to the city, it would count. Mayor Akers added cases would have to be heard case by case if a family was to move to city limits mid pool season. Clarissa Pace asked if there would be a limited number of passes that would be given out to families. Mayor Akers answered that he spoke with the pool manager, and they are working on possibly making passes with names and ages of the family receiving pool passes. Cedric Leonard moved to accept the resolution, Al Peer seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**d. Resolution Regarding Water Debt Negotiations**

Michael James introduced the resolution and moved 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. Mayor Akers explained one instant that happened in the city where a drunk driver ran over a business's water line on a holiday weekend, and the water ran continuously for 3-4 days. When the business discovered this, they had to cover the cost of the extreme water bill. Mayor Akers would like the flexibility to adjust water bills in extreme circumstances where the customer is not at fault. City Attorney Whit Barton added that the resolution has a blank spot where the amount of money allowed adjust is. He added that the Mayors spending limit is \$2500 normally, but he wanted to leave the decision to the council to decide. The council came to the decision to give Mayor Akers \$1000 flexibility. Clarissa Pace asked who would be responsible for investigating these cases. Mayor Akers answered that he would send water operators to the scene to decide what would be considered for negotiation. Michael James moved to accept the resolution, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**e. Ordinance Establishing Code Enforcement**

Michael James introduced the resolution and moved to read the ordinance in its entirety, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called, the aye's had it and City Attorney Whit Barton read. Mayor Akers explained that he would like Brian Rodgers to be a code enforcement officer allowing him to be able to enforce city codes without having to call different departments to enforce different codes, essentially streamlining city code enforcement. Mr. Rodgers would report to the Mayor and the Fire Chief. Mayor Akers added that Mr. Rodgers is a retired fireman and is very knowledgeable on safety and code enforcement. Craig McRae moved to waive the 3 readings and accept the ordinance immediately, Mike Wigley seconded. Michael James moved to enact the emergency clause, Al Peer seconded. City Clerk Taryn Wigley called roll, all present council members voted "yes" and the ordinance passed.



**f. Resolution Continuing Ad Valorem Taxes**

Michael James introduced the resolution and moved 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. Finance Manager Ashley Rodermund explained that there are 3 resolutions that are the exact same except for the Ad Valorem rate, which the council would get to decide on. Michael James clarified that this is a tax that brings revenue into the City General Fund. The current tax is 1.8% and it has not been changed since 1984 and all other surrounding cities are charging significantly more. The council concluded that they would go up to 2.5%. Clarissa Pace moved to accept the resolution, Al Peer seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**g. Resolution Declaring 416 N Maple St. a Nuisance**

Michael James introduced the resolution and moved 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. Brian Rodgers explained to the council that this property and item H would have the same explanation. The owner's daughter visited Mr. Rodgers and explained that her mother, the owner, is deceased. She has plans to demolish both properties but is asking for 90 days to complete the task. Clarissa Pace moved to table the resolution for 416 N Maple and 432 N Maple for 90 days, Al Peer seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and both resolutions were tabled.

**h. Resolution Declaring 432 N Maple St. a Nuisance**

Per above listed resolution, this has been tabled for 90 days.

**i. Resolution Imposing a Lien on 122 Circle Acres**

Michael James introduced the resolution and moved 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. Brian Rodgers explained that the house is unoccupied, the owners live out of state, and he was unable to contact them. Michael James moved to accept the resolution, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

**j. Resolution Imposing a Lien on 218 E Allen St.**

Michael James introduced the resolution and moved 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 seconded. Brian Rodgers explained that the house is unoccupied, and he was unable to contact the owners. Michael James moved to accept the resolution, Craig McRae seconded. A yay/nay vote was called. The aye's had it and the resolution passed unanimously.

## Mayor Comment Section

Mayor Akers listed off several projects and their progress:

-Davis/Merrydale is nearing completion

-Conrad Water Tower updates are slated to start on October 30<sup>th</sup>

-Sunset on the Square had a great turnout with no complaints.



-Options Inc. is asking for the public to refrain from dropping off donations outside of operating hours to prevent donations being picked through and spread all over the square. Media outlets have posted operating hours.

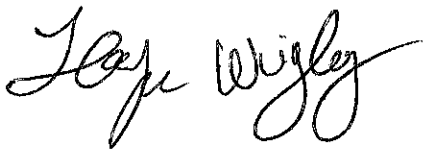
-Mural lighting is completed, and it didn't cost the City anything thanks to Pauline Baptist Church for the lights and the Fire Department for hanging the lights.

-Jackson St. ditch has been repaired

### **Public Comment Section**

### **Meeting Adjourned**

Cedric Leonard motioned to adjourn; Craig McRae seconded. A yay/ay vote was called. The aye's had it and the meeting was adjourned.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jay Wigley".A handwritten mark consisting of two stylized, overlapping strokes, possibly initials or a signature.