

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
FORREST CITY CITY COUNCIL  
FORREST CITY, ARKANSAS  
January 4, 2018**

The City Council of Forrest City, Arkansas met in regular session on January 4, 2018. Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Alderman Williams offered prayer after which the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderman Echols. The following answered roll call: Mayor Bryant, Clerk Cochran, Attorney Cline and City Council members: Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. Alderman Reeves was absent.

Mayor Bryant stated the first order of business for 2018 is the organization of the city council. Alderman Capps recommended that all the organizations in the city council would remain as it was in 2017. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat.

Alderman Williams recommended that Alderman Fields become the Mayor Pro Tem. Alderman Oswalt stated that he has no opposition to Alderman Fields becoming Mayor Pro Tem but it has always been a practice that the most senior member be the Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor Bryant stated since there is a motion on the floor, if that motion fails, then the vote would go to the second motion. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Echols and Fields All Nays. Alderman Metcalf, Capps, and Poteat All Ayes. Alderman Oswalt Abstained.

Alderman Williams then made a motion that all other organizations remain the same other than Alderman Fields become mayor pro tem. The motion was second by Alderman Echols. Alderman Capps stated he did not see a reason to change the committees. Roll Call; Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. All Ayes. Mayor Bryant stated Alderman Oswalt will remain personnel chairman, Alderman Echols will still be budget chairman and Alderman Poteat will fill Roger Breeding's positions.

Alderman Oswalt made the motion to approve the December 19, 2017 regular meeting. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Alderman Williams made the motion to approve the December 28, 2017 special called meeting. The motion was second by Alderman Fields. All Ayes. Alderman Oswalt Abstained.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Nuisance Abatement Ordinance**

Attorney Cline stated he posted January 2, 2018 date for the reading of the ordinance in the newspaper in error. He recommended a motion to table the third reading of the ordinance until he could run the corrected meeting date. Alderman Oswalt made the motion to table the 3<sup>rd</sup> reading of the nuisance abatement ordinance. The motion was second by Alderman Capps. Roll Call: All Ayes.

**Budget Meeting Update**

Alderman Echols presented the council with a list of nine recommendations for the 2018 budget. **Alderman Echols made recommendations as follows:**

- 1.) Increase the district court clerks who are at base pay level (\$9.25) to \$10.25 per hour  
Police Dispatcher \$1.00 per hour

Motion was made by Alderman Capps. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat.

Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. All Ayes.

- 2.) Increase the salary of Public Works Director to a range of \$45,000 to \$50,000 (based on experience and certifications)

Alderman Echols recommended that the position pay \$47,500. The motion was second by Alderman Metcalf. Alderman Fields suggested paying \$50,000. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Echols, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. All Ayes.

Alderman Metcalf and Fields said Nay.

**January 4, 2018 Council Meeting cont.**

3.) Increase heavy equipment operators' salary by \$1.00 to \$2.00 based on experience and equipment certification. Alderman Echols stated the committee will revisit #3.

4.) Increase the salary of all other employees by 3% not named by categories. Alderman Oswalt asked Alderman Echols if she would exclude city council member in her motion. Alderman Echols made a motion to increase all other city employees by 3% not named by categories except for council members. The motion was second by Alderman Oswalt. During the discussion Alderman Capps stated he would like to make a motion to exclude all elected officials including (mayor, attorney, and city clerk) Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Oswalt, and Poteat. All Ayes. Alderman Capps said Nay.

5.) Increase the salary of the Forrest City Water Utility Director by \$12,500 for 2018 and retroactive to 2017. The motion was second by Alderman Fields. After a lengthy discussion. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, and Fields. All Ayes. Alderman Capps and Oswalt All Nays. Alderman Poteat Abstained. Mayor Bryant voted yes. Vote passed.

6.) Alderman Echols stated the committee would revisit item #6.

7.) Increase the Fire Marshall salary up to \$0.25 more than captain's salary. The motion was second by Alderman Fields. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. All Ayes.

8.) Increase garbage truck drivers up to \$2.00 per hour based on experience. The motion was second by Alderman Fields. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. All Ayes.

9.) Increase police auxiliary officers' salary from \$6,000 up to \$12,000 per year. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Metcalf, Echols, Fields, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt. All Ayes.

**Ordinance Creating a Water And Sewer Commission**

Alderman Williams stated based upon what is written all five water commissioners could be appointed by the mayor. He stated, since the city has four wards, it should be written that one commissioner would be appointed by the council members from each Ward and the mayor would have one appointment.

Alderman Oswalt asked Attorney Cline if the law that forms water and sewer commission gives the power of appointment to the mayor or does it allow mayor and or city council appointments. Attorney Cline stated the language comes straight from state statute.

Mayor Bryant stated he can choose the commissioners but the city council would have the ultimate decision.

Mayor Bryant stated he put the ordinance before the council for discussion and to clear the air. He stated commissions are setup so they could not be controlled by certain council member. He also stated that commissioners cannot raise rates or make certain decisions until it is brought before the city council.

Alderman Capps asked if the commission could hire or fire and give raises. Mayor Bryant stated yes.

Attorney Cline stated there are a few corrections that were brought to his attention by Alderman Oswalt that need to be changed. Section 2: the language "qualified electors of the city or who are qualified electors of the area" should be removed and just read, "qualified electors of the city".

Attorney Cline stated the other correction is, when the initial terms were discussed, the five commissioners need to have staggered terms so all the commissioners will not go off at the same time. The way the state statute reads, the first appointed commission shall serve a term of 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 years each to be designated by mayor and city council; After the first appointments, the commissioners would begin an eight-year term.

Attorney Cline stated he would do first reading with the corrections and the second reading would be title only.

Mayor Bryant asked for a motion for first reading of the ordinance. Alderman Fields made the motion. The motion was second by Alderman Metcalf. Roll Call: All Ayes.

**January 4, 2018 Council Meeting cont.**

Attorney Cline read the ordinance for the first reading.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Forrest City Housing Authority Appointment**

Alderman Oswalt made a motion to appoint Emily Holley to the Forrest City Housing Authority. The motion was second by Alderman Williams. Roll Call: All Ayes.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS and Updates**

Mayor Bryant announced that he checked with the architect on the old social security building; the construction price would run between \$70 and \$100 per sq. ft. depending if electrical work is needed or if the heating & air units need to be changed.

Mayor Bryant stated he received a call today and the pool designs are ready. He stated he will ask permission to seek bids at the next meeting. The plans will be available at that time.

For additional context, reference the January 4, 2018 tape.

Alderman Echols made a motion to adjourn at 7:05 p.m. second by Alderman Fields

---

Larry Bryant, Mayor

---

Derene Cochran, City Clerk-Treasurer