

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
FORREST CITY CITY COUNCIL
FORREST CITY, ARKANSAS
August 6, 2019**

The City Council of Forrest City, Arkansas met in regular session on August 6, 2019. Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Alderman Williams offered prayer after which the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderman Reeves. The following answered roll call: Mayor Williams, Clerk Cochran, Attorney Wright and City Council members: Williams, Evansingston, Reeves, Poteat, Fields, Capps and Oswalt. Alderman Metcalf was absent.

Alderman Oswalt made the motion to approve the July 16, 2019 regular meeting minutes. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat. Roll Call: Williams, Reeves, Poteat, Fields, and Oswalt. All Ayes. Alderman Capps and Evansingston abstained.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Budget Committee

Mayor Williams stated the budget committee met last Tuesday, Alderman Evansingston, Reeves and Metcalf were present. Mayor Williams asked a committee member wanted to give the recommendations. No one present wanted to give the recommendations.

Mayor Williams reported it was a recommendation to give the employee with a Level C Supervisory or Master solid waste license \$100.00 per month starting upon approval. Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the recommendation. The motion was second by Alderman Evansingston. Alderman Williams asked what the level C license allows that employee to do. Mayor Williams stated it allows the city to use that person's license in overseeing the landfill and garbage trucks. Roll: Call All Ayes.

Mayor Williams gave another recommendation concerning Chief Shane Dallas Salary. The recommendation was, after 90-days upon a favorable evaluation from the mayor, Chief Dallas salary will be increased from \$52,500 to \$54,000. Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the recommendation. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Mayor Williams stated the budget committee reviewed items regarding the aquatic center including: to replace the scoreboard and light poles that was damaged with the construction of the aquatic center which totaled \$48,477.80. the replacement of the light pole and scoreboard estimate is \$38,605. He then asked for a motion to put out for bid the scoreboard and light pole. Alderman Reeves made a motion to allow Mayor Williams to bid for the scoreboard and light pole and to purchase the other listed items recommended by the budget committee. Alderman Poteat second the motion. Alderman Capps asked an explanation of the damaged light pole. Mayor Williams stated during the construction of the aquatic center, the pole was removed and due to condition of the pole, it could not be re-installed. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Mayor Williams stated the last item, it was discussed to bring before the full council to elect a chairman for the budget committee. Alderman Poteat made a motion to elect Alderman Justin Reeves as the budget committee chairman. Alderman Fields second the motion. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Alderman Capps asked if the budget committee reviewed the financial statement and expenditure reports; he expressed his concerns about percentages. Mayor Williams stated the budget committee did review the year-to-date reports up to July; there were no main concerns. But he did address budget items with the department heads.

Alderman Oswalt questioned the admin employee physical expense line item. Mayor Williams stated he would look at to see what has been put in that line item.

Alderman Oswalt also stated he is concerned that 70 to 80 percent of the budget has been spent. He stated he would like to see what has been spent year-to-date by the next meeting.

Mayor Williams asked Alderman Oswalt if he was inquiring about a particular department. Alderman Oswalt stated the entire budget.

DEPARTMENT HEADS REPORTS

Civic Center

Jimmy Gains, Civic Center Director reported, as of June 30, 2019 Marcus Freeman, M & M Catering no longer has the contract for the Forrest City Civic Center caterer. The visual equipment is being updated by Danny Uptigrove Sidetraxx. The LED lights have already been

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installed in the auditorium. The drive through arch on the south entrance way has been repainted in stucco finish. Some of the bathrooms, men and women have been made handicapped accessory. Mr. Gaines said he has been having problems with the boiler, he requested an annual inspection from a boiler technician. He stated for future projects, he would like to get each room painted in the civic center, He asked that chandeliers be installed in the Ferguson room and Auditorium, he asked for a propane buffer to better take care of the floors.

Alderman Capps asked if he was advertising for a caterer. Mr. Gaines stated the civic center commissioners was working on getting a caterer. Alderman Capps asked if the state inspects the boiler and how old is it. Mr. Gaines said the state does inspect the boiler once a year and it is around twenty-five old.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer King gave his report. Building permits for the first six to seven months totaling \$4,039,242.64. He has been licensed for asbestos to do condemnations. There are approximately 200 houses on the list for condemnation, 17 of those have been tested and ready for council approval and process to be torn down. Mr. King said future request is to get a laptop and software so he can work from his truck.

Public Works

Mr. Floyd Patton reported for public works. He stated the workers have been cleaning the ditches on Day and Scotts Streets. A finished project behind Dr. Perkins on Cook Street. The Dawson Road project is about 90 percent finished. They have been cutting and clearing canes on Wolf Street. They are cleaning and clearing ditches around the city. As far as equipment all equipment need to be assessed.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Shane Dallas gave the council handouts of his report. Chief Dallas spoke on the fire department strengths, the fire department's missions, grants received, the opening of fire station #2, ideas on increasing staffing, increasing ISO rating, and long-term goals (see attached).

Police Department

Chief Deon Lee stated it has been a while since he had to give a report to the council, several things have happened in the last year. Chief Lee introduced his new hires and academy graduates. He spoke on receiving grants, needing new equipment for employees and vehicles. Gave out backpacks and supplies for the children going back to school. Chief Lee said the police department get a lot of calls about dogs running loose and citizens not returning the garbage container from the curbs. (See Attached)

Alderman Capps stated it is a city ordinance against leaving the garbage containers out on the curb after being emptied. Alderman Oswalt stated the ordinance need to be twerk, the ordinance does not apply to anyone that lives in a commercial district.

Water Department

Mr. Murdock presented the city council with a report from the Forrest City Water Utility. He stated he received an E-mail response from ADEQ accepting the submittal for submission of administrative order and sanitary sewer evaluation study. August 12, 2019 city water utility will be able to accept credit card payments for water bills for walk in customers; there will be a three card swipe machines in the lobby. Alderman Oswalt asked if there will be a fee to use the cards. Mr. Murdock stated a three percent fee or three dollars minimum.

Park & Recreation

Mr. Taylor reported that Brickey's inmates did a wonderful job at Stuart Springs Park, they will return this Fall. On August 20th and 23rd they will be at the complex painting the dugouts. In September the employees will be painting playground equipment. Mr. Taylor asked the council for three loads of land and mulch for the playground equipment in 2020. Alderman Oswalt asked Mr. Taylor if shredded tire cost more than mulch. Mr. Taylor stated, "It does".

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

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NEW BUSINESS

Citi Trend Sign Easement

Mayor Williams asked Attorney Wright to explain the Citi Trend sign easement. He stated that Steve Edwards is purchasing the former Fred's building, years ago the people owned the building gave the property between McDonalds and First National Bank to the city. Mr. Edwards is asking for an easement to be able to access and change the sign if necessary. Alderman Oswalt made a motion to grant the easement. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat. Alderman Capps asked if the city owned the sign. Mayor Williams stated to his understanding, Mr. Peoples donated the property and sign to the city years ago. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Permission to Request RFP's for Solar Facility

Mayor Williams stated he is asking the council to enter a memorandum of understanding and a request for proposal from the Arkansas Entergy office to request proposal for a solar facility here in Forrest City. The solar system that he is putting out RFP's for are on the preapproved list of companies that do business with the Arkansas Entergy office. Mayor Williams asked permission to bid for RFP's. Alderman Reeves made the motion. The motion was second by Alderman Williams.

Alderman Oswalt asked if the city goes forward with this project, would the group that is chosen, would they facilitate the project. Mayor Williams stated the Arkansas Energy will help with the audit. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Freedom of Information Settlement Resolution

Mayor Williams stated this resolution is a recommendation from the Arkansas Municipal League council regarding this lawsuit. Attorney Wright read **A Resolution Authorizing the City of Forrest City to Pay the Lawsuit Settlement in Epperson vs. City of Forrest City** Alderman Fields made the motion to adopt the resolution. The motion was second by Alderman Williams. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Fire Grant Resolution

Attorney Wright read **Authorizing and Providing for The Acceptance of USDA Rural Development Community Facility Grant for The Purpose of Providing a Portion of the Cost of Acquiring funds for the Purchase A Fire Department Vehicle and Equipment** Alderman Poteat made a motion to adopt the resolution. The Motion was second by Alderman Capps.

Alderman Evansingston stated the first paragraph reads as though it is a matching grant, does it have to be a cash match, in-kind, or combination of both. Mayor Williams stated this is a general form and it has been done in the past. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Bryant's Pension Resolution

Attorney Wright read **A Resolution Authorizing the City of Forrest City to Pay Former Mayor Larry Bryant One-Half of His Annual Salary for Pension** The motion was made by Alderman Williams to adopt the resolution. The motion was second by Alderman Fields. Alderman Oswalt stated it is the law then asked if the resolution was needed. Attorney Wright stated the resolution is not necessary, but it is a clear way to cover the city. Roll Call: Alderman Williams, Fields, Reeves, Capps, Poteat, and Oswalt All Ayes. Alderman Evansingston abstained.

A Resolution Supporting to Renovate Delta Pointe Apartments

Attorney Wright read **A Resolution Supporting Funding from the Affordable Housing Program for Renovation of Delta Pointe Apartments** Alderman Williams made the motion to adopt the resolution. The motion was second by Alderman Poteat. Alderman Fields stated she does not under the resolution. Her thoughts on the resolution is, the city would be a co-signer. Mayor Williams stated the resolution is not committing the city to any financial support. Forrest City is known as an opportunity zone. The profits the companies make on the sale of houses, if they are invested in the opportunity zone, they do not have to pay taxes on that money. A major renovation will be done to Delta Pointe Apartments by a company that is invested. The company is trying to take advantage of the opportunity zone. A resolution is requested from the city council to show support in their efforts.

Alderman Evansingston questioned Section #1, the designated responsibility. Mayor Williams

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stated that is part of the paperwork. He said he has submitted a letter stating some of the different things that the city is doing in that area such as: cleaning ditches, installing security cameras on the back of the civic center, and taking care of some of the houses that are on the commendation list; that is considered the maintenance part of the resolution. Roll Call: All Ayes.

GENERAL FUND BILLS

Alderman Capps made a motion to approve and pay the General Fund bills in the amount of \$25,709.55. The motion was second by Alderman Williams. Alderman Capps questioned the electrical bill for \$874, he stated the new city hall is still under contract. Mayor Williams stated that is work outside of the contract, it is work done on the flag pole. Roll Call: All Ayes.

STREET FUND BILLS

Alderman Oswalt made a motion to approve and pay the Street Fund bills in the amount of \$13,892.72. The motion was second by Alderman Evansingston. Roll Call: All Ayes.

SOLID WASTE FUND BILLS

Alderman Reeves made a motion to approve and pay the Solid Waste Fund bills in the amount of \$30,840.79. The motion was second by Alderman Evansingston. Alderman Reeves questioned a chemical invoice for \$15,248.56 the shipping is \$2,574. Alderman Evansingston stated it is concentrated and the chemicals usually last three to four months. Alderman Reeves asked if there were other options to purchase other places. Mayor Williams stated noted. Roll Call: All Ayes.

FORREST CITY WATER UTILITY

Alderman Poteat made a motion to approve and pay the Forrest City Water Utility bills in the amount of \$124,065.33. The motion was second by Alderman Williams. Roll Call: All Ayes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and Updates

Mayor Williams announced he has bids from the last council meeting where two vehicles were bided for sale for the fire department. The bids were submitted to Chief Dallas' office, there was one bid for each vehicle, a 1991 Ford truck for \$1,200 from Stanley Roberts and a 1985 Pierce 800 Pumper from the New Castle Rural Fire Department for \$7,500.00; both bids were at minimal.

Mayor Williams thanked all the summer youth program for working with the children: Coach Jim Bailey, Kenneth Taylor city complex, Total Mann Ministries, police and fire departments had different youth programs, community engagement committee, various churches and all Faith base organizations keeping the youth occupied this summer. Mayor Williams announced the conclusion of the East Arkansas Regional Summer youth program ceremony, with the help of Representative Murdock and State Director Mike Preston, this Friday at the civic center from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.

For additional context, reference the August 6, 2019 tape.

Alderman Fields made a motion to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

Cedric Williams, Mayor

Derene Cochran, City Clerk-Treasurer