

CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – September 20, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Mulberry City Council was held Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Center at 606 Church Avenue.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jimmy Moore	Wilma Peevy
Bobby Tweedy	Sheila Trent
Kimberly Bruce	Carla Dickerson
Gary Baxter	Stacy Muntz

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Hurley	Sarah Kizer
Shannon Gregory	Darren Fields
Kay Baxter	Dwayne Fields
Sadat Rice	Suzy Ferguson
JJ Hurley	Sherry Jones
Kent Corkum	LeJuan Wilson
Jason Sumpter	Sherry Hesson
K.D. Copeland	Nancy Sanders
Deidre Fears	

Mayor Gary Baxter called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., led in prayer, and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance. Sarah Kizer took roll. A quorum was established.

Kimberly Bruce made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Stacy Muntz seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. All present council members voted yes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Chief of Police Shannon Gregory gave the Police report stating the department had 103 calls, 32 traffic stops, 3 traffic/criminal citations, 9 arrests, 2 felony, 7 misdemeanor and 373 business checks. Chief Gregory stated he would like to commend all the secretaries at the office for answering the phones and handling all matters pertaining to the incident. He stated they did a wonderful job and is very proud of them.

Assistant Fire Chief Jason Sumpter gave the Fire Report stating the department responded to 24 calls. There were 1 structure fire call, 1 grass fire call, 18 medical calls, 2 vehicle accident calls, and 2 cancelled calls. Assistant Fire Chief Sumpter stated the department was in the beginning stages of a chili supper fundraiser and hopes to have it planned for the first week of December. He stated he

would have more information at the next meeting. Mayor Baxter asked Assistant Fire Chief Sumpter to give an update on the tankers, Chief Sumpter stated the department has three tankers fully operational and the new one still needed lights but is operational. Chief Sumpter also gave an update on burn bans stating there had not been one issued for Crawford County at the time.

Public Works Director Dwayne Fields stated the department has had several water leaks that the department has had to fix over the last month, they have almost all the holes patched and fixed in the streets, and the sidewalk north of the bank has been repaired. Mr. Fields stated the department worked hard preparing the streets in preparation for the fair parade, they are currently working on the Tenth Street drainage issue and could possibly be closed throughout the week. Mr. Fields stated the department plans to change out the Clay sewer pipe that is currently there and replace it with a PVC pipe, by doing this it would allow the department to concrete around the pipe creating more structure over many years. Mr. Fields also stated he had spoke with the Arkansas Highway Department about the hole on 215 and they will be sending instructions with specifications on how the hole needs to be fixed. Mayor Baxter stated that he had been in touch with other cities in the area and he reported that this is common when the ground starts drying out the way it has been lately. Mr. Fields stated that for the past two days the department has been able to GPS ninety percent of the meters, fire hydrants, culverts, and valves. This was made possible by funding from a grant from Communities Unlimited. Councilman Tweedy asked about cutting back the brush on the streets giving more room for cars to pass safely side by side.

Water Superintendent Channon Phipps stated the new mower the council approved is working out very well. The department has experienced parts shortages, but the parts were received and the valve on the west tank has been installed. Once the part comes in for the east tank it will be installed as well. The aerator, the service pole, and meter loop have been purchased and are waiting on the pole to be installed. Mr. Phipps stated they are working on finding funding for various water treatment projects, such as the raw intake and screens repair, as well as working on updating permits, this includes three phase repair and testing.

### OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance 2022-04: An Ordinance establishing enforcement of parking rules, regulations within the City of Mulberry and its properties, repealing conflicting ordinances, declaring an emergency, and for other purposes. Mayor Baxter stated he had been approached by a council member and through different reports provided by Premier Parking and bank statements Mayor Baxter was able to provide the council with a breakdown of last year's park totals versus this year. With the information gathered Mayor Baxter withdrew this ordinance and had drawn up and sent a change of procedure to Chief of Police Shannon Gregory. This procedure stated the police department would be checking each park twice per shift, totaling four park checks per day, and issuing necessary citations.

Correction of Resolution 2022-09: A Resolution authorizing the Mayor of the City of Mulberry to apply for a grant on behalf of the City of Mulberry and Pawzatively Canine. Mayor Baxter asked Steve Hurley to read the corrected resolution. Mayor Baxter clarified the correction stating at last meeting the council was under the assumption the amount would be \$6,000.00, in fact it is up to \$3,000.00, the City of Mulberry's \$1,500.00 would be matched by Pawzatively Canine's \$1,500.00. Stacy Muntz made a motion to accept the corrected 2022-09 Resolution, Wilma Peevy seconded the motion, all present council members voted yes.

## NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2022-10: A Resolution amending the 2022 adopted budget for the purpose of paying a \$5,000.00 stipend for eligible full-time Law Enforcement Officers per Act 224 of 2022. Mayor Baxter asked Steve Hurley to read the Resolution. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-10, Jimmy Moore seconded the motion, discussion ensued. All present council members voted yes.

Crawford County Library carpet bid. Mayor Baxter asked Diedre Fears, the new Crawford County Library Director to speak. Ms. Fears petitioned the City of Mulberry to pay half the bid for new carpet in the Mulberry Public Library. Ms. Fears presented the Council two bids, bid number one is from Best Floors, this bid includes 175 square yards of carpet, removal, freight charge, trip charge, and trimmers, this bid comes in at \$ 9,778.73. Bid number two is from Dean's Discount Carpet, Inc., this bid includes carpet tile, removal of old carpet, installation, cutting, cabinet moving, and four sticks of mercer, this bid comes in at \$8,331.99. Discussion ensued. Funds to cover half the approved bid from Dean's Discount Carpet Inc. of \$4,166.00 would be taken out of the Sales Tax Capitol Improvement Fund. Jimmy Moore made a motion to approve \$ 4,166.00 out of the Sales Tax Capitol Improvement Fund, Sheila Trent seconded the motion. All present council members voted yes.

Resolution 2022-11: A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Sell Surplus Vehicles by Public Auction and for Other Related Purposes. Mayor Baxter asked Steve Hurley to read Resolution 2022-11. Discussion ensued, Jimmy Moore made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-11, Sheila Trent seconded the motion. All present members voted yes.

Mayor Baxter brought up Dwayne Fields to speak on a proposed quote for a new mower for Vine Prairie Campgrounds, Boat Ramp and Archery Range. The council was presented with two bids on a Kawasaki Bad Boy ZT Elite 48" to 54" mower. Bid number one is from Alma Tractor for a 54" ZT Elite Kawasaki, Alma Tractor stated they did not have a 48" but they would quote the 48" price of \$5,849.00 for the 54" to the City of Mulberry, this quote would not include taxes. Taxes on this bid come to \$570.28 bringing the total bid to the mower to \$6,419.28. Bid number two is from a company in Oklahoma and is for a 48" ZT Elite Kawasaki for the same price of \$5,849.00. The funding of the new mower would come from the Parks & Recreation Improvement Fund which has \$69,011.99 in the account right now. Mayor Baxter stated the 2023 budget will include a new mower to include other areas the city mows. This mower will receive regular maintenance to improve the longevity of the mower. Mr. Fields stated as of that moment, at Vine Prairie there is a Grasshopper diesel mower and two old worn-out riding mowers. This new mower would replace the two riding mowers. The Grasshopper mower would be used for spraying and other miscellaneous jobs around the park. Councilwoman Kimberly Bruce asked if another mower could be used down there instead, to which Mr. Fields replied no, because it is a full-time job for the employees that do the mowing for the other areas in the city. Councilwoman Stacy Muntz asked how many employees there are? Mr. Fields replied there are four but corrected himself stating there are six, four are full time and two part time and of those, two do nothing but mow and he still must supplement help in order to keep up. Councilmen Tweedy asked if this mower would be strictly for the use of Vine Prairie to which Mr. Fields replied yes. Councilman Tweedy asked if there was any place to store the new mower to which Mr. Fields stated they do have tarps the mowers are stored underneath are kept covered when not in use. Councilwoman Trent asked how many mowers the city does have right now to which Mr. Fields

replied 3 that are in operation for the street department and 1 in operation at Vine Prairie. Councilwoman Muntz asked if that included the mower at the water treatment plant, Mr. Fields replied no, that mower is specifically for the Water Treatment Plant. Councilwoman Muntz asked how many acres the city mows, Mr. Fields replied there is a lot, this includes the New Cemetery, the City Park, Kirksey Park including a portion of Kirksey Hospital, the areas around the water towers, the fire departments, and Bluff Hole. This does not include the areas former Mayors have made agreements with on certain areas around the city and the lot on Highway 64. Mr. Fields stated that part of the Contract for the Attendants is they maintain the grounds. Councilwoman Muntz asked why they needed two mowers, Mr. Fields stated they are doing the work at the same time but there are times where one if not both mowers are in the shop for repairs, more discussion ensued. Bobby Tweedy made a motion to approve spending \$6,419.28 from the Parks and Recreation Improvement Fund to pay for the 54" ZT Elite Kawasaki Bad Boy mower from Alma Tractor.

Mayor Baxter presented to the council an item that was not listed on the agenda, this item is the approval to purchase a 1999 Chevy Suburban diesel from the Federal Surplus in the amount of \$1,400.00. Mayor Baxter stated the vehicle would be for the Public Works department and at present time they had claimed the vehicle and were bringing this up to the council, the council in-fact could vote to send the vehicle back. Mayor Baxter brought back up Public Works Director Dwayne Fields to inform the council. Mr. Fields informed the council they originally went to look at another vehicle but upon physically viewing said they declined it. This vehicle had several things that the city would have to spend immediate money on and would end up costing more. So, the department found the above-mentioned vehicle is a four-wheel drive and was originally listed at \$2,800.00 but they were able to talk them down to the \$1,400.00 called the Mayor and received permission to secure the vehicle. Discussion ensued. Funds to cover the cost would come from the Vehicle Reserve Fund, in this fund there is \$16,960.22. Jimmy Moore made a motion to approve the purchase from the Vehicle Reserve Fund and keep the 1999 Chevy Suburban diesel, Sheila Trent seconded the motion. All present council members voted yes.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor spoke about the current and upcoming projects happening around the city, including the Food Pantry bids will be opened Thursday September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2 o'clock at 606 Church Ave, the Pickleball court has received notice to proceed, and Kirksey Hospital project has been completed. Mayor Baxter also mentioned upcoming projects that are happening around town, this includes street overlay to begin in 2023 and the Fall cleanup will be October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Wilma Peevy asked about bathrooms being locked at the City Park.

Kimberly Bruce spoke about the lot at 9<sup>th</sup> and Jackson, stating a portion of it had been cleaned, but a portion of it was still very grown up. She also asked about grants that would provide coverings for the playground equipment at the City Park.

With no further business, Sheila Trent made a motion to adjourn, Kimberly Bruce seconded the motion, and all voted yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.13 p.m.

The minutes were taken by Sarah Kizer

ATTEST:

Carla Dickerson  
Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer

APPROVED:

Gary D. Baxter  
Gary D. Baxter, Mayor