

CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – January 17,2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Mulberry City Council was held Tuesday, January 17,2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Center at 606 Church Avenue.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| Steve Hurley | Sarah Kizer |
| Shannon Gregory | Dwayne Fields |
| Justin Trosper | Wilma Winborn |
| Buddy Windborn | Jason Sumpter |
| Mandy Oestreich | Scott Oestreich |
| Jeff Brown | Len Cernak |
| Sadat Rice | |

Stacy Muntz, Kimberly Bruce, Wilma Peevy, Bobby Tweedy and Sheila Trent were sworn in with the oath of office by Mayor Gary Baxter prior to the first city council meeting of the year.

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.

Jimmy Moore made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and previous months minutes. Kimberly Bruce seconded the motion. All present council members voted yes.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Chief of Police Shannon Gregory gave the Police report stating the department had 120 calls, 52 traffic stops, 6 traffic/criminal citations, 10 arrests, and 89 business checks. Chief Gregory stated that for the year 2022 the Police department had 1,602 calls, 318 reports, 661 traffic stops, and 2,915 business checks.

Fire Chief Jeff Brown asked if he may be allowed to give his report during his presentation of new business. Mayor Baxter granted the request.

Public Works Director Dwayne Fields gave his report stating the department had completed another sewer intrusion located at the old Higgins truck wash building. Mr. Fields stated the problem was created due to a 6-inch pipe that was going straight into the city sewer causing a large intrusion that was made worse by heavy amount of rain fall. Mr. Fields went on to state the department still has areas on the road that require repair, but the repairs are being postponed due to the need for warmer weather. The department will soon begin working on another intrusion located at the intersection of

4th and Main as well as multiple water leaks that need to be fixed. Mr. Fields noted that the department had already repaired some new items that occurred over the past few days.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Baxter introduced the New Library Director Justin Trosper and brought him up to speak about the library. Mr. Trosper introduced himself and spoke about the new children's library coordinator. Mr. Trosper stated the library had checked out 708 books, held 90 programs, and had 2,000 people come to the library in 2022. Mr. Trosper thanked his multiple volunteers and expressed gratitude for the hard work completed by the City of Mulberry Public Works Department.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Baxter stated that with this being the first meeting of the year the council needed to establish procedures for the upcoming year's council meetings. Stacy Muntz asked for a change in the meeting date noting she would like attorney Sean Brister to be able to attend all council meetings. She thought this would be helpful if a legal problem or question should arise. Ms. Muntz went on to state that she had spoken to Mr. Brister and his days of availability were the 3rd Monday of the month or the 1st or 4th Thursday of the month. Discussion ensued. Stacy Muntz made a motion to move the monthly council meeting to the 4th Thursday of the month at 7 pm. Sheila Trent seconded the motion. All council members voted yes. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to accept all remaining procedures to be kept in place as they currently are. Jimmy Moore seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. All present council members voted yes.

Mayor Baxter asked Fire Chief Jeff Brown to the podium to speak with the council about the possible purchase of a used fire truck for the Fire Department. Chief Brown stated that two fire trucks had failed their pump inspections last month. One of those trucks that he was discussing had been taken to Conway in hopes of repair. The mechanic in Conway discovered several problems. Upon being notified of these developments Chief Brown discovered it would be cheaper to buy a good used fire truck than it would be to repair the current one. Mr. Brown informed the council that District 1 Fire has a 1994 truck they would be willing to sell to the City of Mulberry for \$15,000.00. This truck has 44,000 miles on it, 5,000 miles on the engine, pumps 1500 gallons per minute, and has passed pumper tests for the past few years.. Fire Chief Jeff Brown asked the council to approve the purchase of the truck from funds available from the previous sales of equipment and the Act 833 account. The amount made from the sale of previous equipment came to \$11,001. This would leave a balance of \$3,999 to be used from the Act 833 account. Discussion ensued. Chief Brown went on to ask the council to do a possible sealed bid or possible salvage sealed bid for the truck taken to Conway for repair. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to give Fire Chief Jeff Brown the authority to dispose of the previous truck how he saw fit. Stacy Muntz second the motion. Discussion ensued. All present members voted yes. Jimmy Moore made a motion to approve the purchase of the used fire truck from District 1 for \$15,000.00 from available funds. Sheila Trent seconded the motion. All present members voted yes. Chief Brown went on to give the report for the Fire Department stating they had 26 calls, 3 fires, 22 rescue calls and 1 service call. Mr. Brown stated the department will also be having fundraisers throughout the year with a few being, the second annual Mike Gray chili supper and pie auction on March 19, 2023, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Chief Brown noted other fundraisers such as the fireworks celebration and a Christmas Gun Raffle.

At this point Mayor Baxter discussed the letting for the contract for the overlay of the streets of Mulberry. Mayor Baxter stated the contract came in at \$837,948.00, with the Mulberry portion costing \$387,623.00. The City of Mulberry received a street aid grant totaling \$300,000.00 leaving the city owing a balance of \$87,623.00. This amount is for all the streets on the west side. Funds from this project would come out of the Capitol Improvement Street fund, the current balance on this account is \$464,231.13. With the council's approval the city would be allowed to withdraw the necessary funds to pay the remaining balance owed on the project. Discussion ensued. Wilma Peevy made a motion to approve the spending of \$87,326.00 to complete the street overlay project. Bobby Tweedy seconded the motion. All present council members voted yes.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-01: An ordinance to Approve a Variance to the Zoning Map of Zoning Ordinance NO. 142. Bobby Tweedy made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2023-01, Sheila Trent second the motion. Discussion ensued. All present council members voted yes. Discussion ensued. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to suspend the rules and read the second and third reading of the ordinance by title only. Jimmy Moore seconded the motion. All present members voted yes. Discussion ensued, with multiple council members asking about an emergency clause. Mayor Baxter asked Assistant Steve Hurley to include one. Sheila Trent made a motion to approve the emergency clause effective immediately, Kimberly Bruce seconded the motion. All present council members voted yes.

MAYOR'S REPORT AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Baxter updated the council on the duplexes being built on 4th street stating the contractors will be adding an additional four-plex to the existing plans. Wilma Peevy asked about asking to have cement added to the front of the duplexes. Mayor asked Dwayne Fields to look at the plans and see if the plans have been followed as approved. Mayor Baxter recognized Councilwoman Kimberly Bruce for her excellent volunteer work as well as informing the council of the Engage Arkansas award the City of Mulberry received. Mayor Baxter gave an update on the groundbreaking work on the pickle ball court and the food pantry expansion. Mayor Baxter informed the city and city council of two upcoming benefit concerts being held at the Mulberry Performing Arts Center. These events will benefit the Mulberry Police Department, the Mulberry Fire Department, and the Mulberry/Pleasant View Bi-County School District. The first fundraiser will be on February 25th with tickets costing \$10. This concert will consist of a Hank Williams Jr. impersonator. The second concert will be March 13th at 2 different times. Shenandoah will be performing at 6 p.m. and 9p.m. with tickets costing \$25.00 apiece.

Jimmy Moore asked about Kirksey Hospital and the income pertaining to it.


Stacy Muntz spoke about an upcoming Easter Egg hunt event coming up, she went on to state that she will have more information once it is available.

With no further business to discuss Kimberly Bruce made a motion to adjourn, Jimmy Moore seconded the motion. All present members voted yes.

This meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

These minutes were taken by Sarah Kizer

APPROVED: 
Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer