

CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – March 21, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Mulberry City Council was held Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Center at 606 Church Avenue.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jimmy Moore
Bobby Tweedy
Stacy Muntz
Carla Dickerson

Wilma Peevy
Sheila Trent
Kimberly Bruce
Gary Baxter

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Hurley
Melissa McCullar
Thell Riddle
Dwayne Fields
Jake Pool
Scott Oestreich
Kay Baxter

Mandy Oestreich
Ronnie Adams
Ken Copeland
Justin Trosper
Darren Fields
Ronnie Adams
Cathy Adams

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

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Officer Thell Riddle gave the Police report stating the department had 112 calls, 63 traffic stops, 11 traffic/criminal citations, 6 arrests, 5 assists with other agencies and took 21 reports. He stated that several clean up orders had been issued with citations given on some of them, others were served via certified mail and had been returned. Some of the locations that were close, were served in person. A couple that live out of town had been issued clean up orders and Officer Riddle had intentions to go back and check on those to issue a citation yesterday, but did not get to it. But will get back to them this week. Discussion ensued in reference to the clean up order on the residence close to Jimmy Moore's house. It was noted that there had been some progress on the clean up at that location.

Fireman Jake Pool gave the Fire Report stating the department responded to 1 grass fire, 1 motor vehicle accident and 25 medical calls. He went on to state that it had been a pretty slow month but the Chili Luncheon was a great success and that they were now focusing on the fourth of July celebration. Councilman Jimmy Moore asked if the Fire Department had received the fire truck. Fireman Pool replied that yes, they had received the fire truck. He went on to say that they are going through it and cleaning it. He noted that he was working on the lights right now and they were having problems with the auto maintainer. Fireman Pool stated that he was in the process of

changing that out and putting a new one in. He noted that the Fire Truck runs great and pumps good; they just need to go through and change a few lights and clean a few things up on it. Jimmy Moore asked if the Fire Department had got its other fire truck back. Fireman Pool replied yes, and that Jeff Brown was trying to find a good value for it and has been making calls in regarding this to try to get some money out of it.

Public Works Director Dwayne Fields gave his report stating the department had started the water line placement on Carter Avenue, Holman Street, and Mulberry Avenue in advance of getting those streets resurfaced. Due to the rain they aren't making as much advancement as they would like, but are still working and doing the best they can to get those done. Mr. Fields stated that Mayor Baxter had written letters informing the residents of situations that may occur during the overlay process. He went on to further state that he had been out this afternoon dropping off the letters at the houses of the areas affected and that everyone had received a letter with the exception of a couple of residences on Heard Street and those on the northside of Highway 64. Bobby Tweedy asked about the questions brought up previously on the construction of the new apartments and whether or not we had anything stating they needed to have sidewalks. Mr. Fields replied that he did look in to it and that there was nothing on the plat that stated there is an actual sidewalk in place. Councilwoman Wilma Peevy asked could we add that to the ones that have not been built. Mr. Fields replied yes, the council could bring that up if they would like. He added that it should just be on the new ones as it would be hard to go back and demand that on those that were already built. Councilwoman Stacy Muntz asked if we were talking about the apartments on 2nd and Church Avenue. Mr. Fields replied, yes. Stacy Muntz went on to say, it is on the plat, it says sidewalks in front of the apartments. Mr. Fields asked if she had a copy of that. Stacy Muntz replied that she eyeballed it at the office. She went on to state that she assumed she was looking at the same one that Mr. Fields was looking at. Mr. Fields replied that he did not see that. Stacy Muntz asked which copy he was looking at. Mr. Fields replied that he was looking at a copy that was sent to him. Stacy Muntz questioned if it was the plat at the complex then. Mr. Fields confirmed, no it wasn't but that he would look at it again and see. Councilwoman Wilma Peevy asked if the public works department was repairing any sewer lines at Highway 64 and Carter Avenue. Mr. Fields replied that the line in question had been replaced already. He went on to say that there weren't any issues where they were overlaying on the north side. The water lines on the south side of Highway 64 all the way down to the creek had been replaced as well. Stacy Muntz asked when it was replaced, and Mr. Fields replied, that it was done prior to his coming on board with the city. Stacy Muntz went on to say that she was concerned that she saw it bubbling the last time it rained. Mr. Fields replied that the bubbling was due to an issue from Main Street coming over there. Stacy Muntz followed up asking if that was going to be fixed before the overlay was done. Mr. Fields replied no, but it won't be an issue since we have access to both sides of it. Stacy Muntz asked if that was going to harm the overlay. Mr. Fields replied that it would not be an issue since it was ground water. Stacy Muntz noted that there would be sewage in that water. Mr. Fields replied that there was nothing in the water that would harm the asphalt itself. Discussion ensued. It was brought up during the discussion that the sewer jetter machine has not returned from being repaired. Mayor Baxter stated that the owner of the sewer jetter company had texted that if they didn't have a shipper by Friday that he would have one of his employees deliver the machine. The Mayor went on to say that the machine is ready, it is just waiting to get delivered to the city.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-03: A resolution amending the city and rescue grant budgets for the purpose of claiming police salaries and employer payroll contributions. Discussion ensued. Wilma Peevy made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-03. Shaila Trent seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and all present members voted yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-04: A resolution approving a 2023 amended budget for the City of Mulberry, Arkansas. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-04. Jimmy Moore seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Once discussion concluded all present members voted yes.

MAYOR'S REPORT AND PUBLIC COMMENT


The Mayor spoke on the progress of the overlay project and noted that Forsgren (the company doing the project) was currently in Dyer and when they finished, they would be working in Mulberry. The Mayor expects them to be in Mulberry in the next week or so. He noted that last week it was announced that the Air National Guard in Fort Smith will be the new home to the Foreign Military Sales Program Pilot Training Center and that this growth in our community would be a very positive item, and it is projected to bring about a billion dollars annually to the area. Tyson Foods is shutting down its plant in Van Buren and that would displace close to 1,000 employees. The Mayor has been working with other Mayors in the area to discuss how we could help keep these people in our area by helping people in their career endeavors as well as other ways. The Spring Clean Up is scheduled for April 15th. Kim Bruce noted that there would be a breakfast at 8:30 am that morning and that she had been coordinating with Churches and volunteers for this day. She noted the last two to three cleanups we have had about fifty volunteers at each. Mayor mentioned that the flyer for the Spring Clean Up would be going out in the next water bill and asked Kim Bruce if she had anything she wanted to add to the flyer. Councilwoman Bruce noted that she was already in discussions with Melissa McCullar to make some changes on the flyer. Mayor Baxter discussed the Bunny Egg Drop coming on April 8th at the Fairgrounds. He went on to discuss the Disc Golf Tee signs and Course map at the Disc Golf Course at City Park. He went on to note that construction had started on the Pickleball court at the City Park as well, but the rain has been delaying progress on that. Mayor Baxter stated that the Food Pantry expansion had begun, and noted that the concrete pad was done and they were waiting on the walk in freezer and cooler to be put in. He also stated that the tree by the pad had been cut back as it was too expensive to cut down the tree. Mayor Baxter said that he had attended a meeting with the engineer on the water treatment plant expansion and that the engineering drawings will be sent to the state for approval by the end of April. An exact date as to when we would go out for bids has not been set, but is expected to be in the Fall. The Highway Department sent notice this week that we can go out for bids on the sidewalk project on Church Street from 64 highway to 10th street. The engineer on this project is out of the office until Monday and he would be working with her when she returned on this item. He went on to state that the City has been getting a lot of paperwork on the concrete project on Industrial Park road and that the paperwork process has begun. Compass Cold Storage has set a date for the ribbon cutting on April 27th, but a time has not been set. Mayor Baxter discussed the concerts we had recently and how well they were received by the public.

Jimmy Moore stated that he had heard on the news that water treatment plants were going to have three other items that they had to test for in the future. Discussion Ensued. Darren Fields said he had not heard this and that he would investigate it. Mayor Baxter mentioned that the State was requiring a Water Rate Study and that we should have that information next month.

With no further business to discuss Stacy Muntz made a motion to adjourn, Kimberly Bruce seconded. the motion. All present members voted yes.
This meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

These minutes were taken by Steve Hurley

APPROVED: 
Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer