

CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – September 19, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Mulberry City Council was held Tuesday, September 19, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Center at 606 Church Avenue.

Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jimmy Moore, Ward 3 Position 2

Kimberly Bruce, Ward 2 Position 2

Bobby Tweedy, Ward 2 Position 1

Wilma Peevy, Ward 3 Position 1

Stacy Muntz, Ward 1 Position 2

Sheila Trent, Ward 1 Position 1

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Hurley, Executive Assistant to the Mayor

Lena Pinkerton

Shannon Gregory, Police Chief

Mandy Oestreich

Dwayne Fields, Public Works Director

Scott Oestreich

Jason Sumpter, Assistant Fire Chief

Kay Baxter

Darren Fields, Assistant Water Superintendent

One Illegible Name

Tammy Watts, Branch Director of Mulberry Public Library

Suzy Ferguson, Director of Mulberry Community Food Pantry

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

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

## DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Chief of Police Shannon Gregory gave the Police Department report stating the department had 141 calls, sixty-eight traffic stops, fourteen citations, eight total arrests (7 misdemeanor and one felony), seven clean up orders and 270 business checks. Chief Gregory commended Officer Riddle for his diligent work in writing grants. He noted that Officer Riddle had submitted a grant for fifty-thousand-dollars and was working on a separate four-thousand-dollar equipment grant. Chief Gregory mentioned that he felt confident on that submission. Chief Gregory distributed a copy of the Police Manual and handbook to each council member for them to review that would be discussed for approval at the meeting next month.

Assistant Fire Chief Jason Sumpter gave the Fire Department report stating that the department had twenty-three total calls, three vehicle fires, three grass fires, thirteen medical calls, three cancelled calls, and one service call. Bobby Tweedy remarked on how good the Fire Department looked in the Fair parade.

Public Works Director Dwayne Fields gave the Public Works Department report stating that over half of water customers on Holman Street, Mulberry Avenue and Carter Avenue are on new lines. Council member Muntz asked what was wrong with the water lines on Holman Street, Mulberry Avenue and Carter Avenue. Mr. Fields replied that this was the 6-inch lines that had been installed before the paving had been done to those areas. Jimmy Moore asked if that would give those customers better water pressure. Mr. Fields said it would be effective.

Suzy Ferguson Director of the Mulberry Community Food Pantry gave a report on the Food Pantry. Mrs. Ferguson mentioned that the Lions Club had given a large donation to the Food Pantry and noted that she was thankful for community organizations that see value in the mission of the Mulberry Community Food Pantry. The giveaway this month gave out over 2,000 pounds of raw chicken, over 9,000 pounds of fresh produce, and over 1,000 pounds of bread products, as well as dry boxes, and items such as roses and ornamental pumpkins. Director Ferguson stated that the Pantry served 286 households and they are seeing this number go up each month. There was emergency food given out to ten families this morning. Emergency food is food given out outside of regular distribution. Alma is also serving Mulberry families, so families have multiple places and dates to get food. By late fall the pantry should be distributing USDA products. Construction at the Mulberry Food Pantry has been completed and tours were available after the meeting. There were additional small items that needed to be addressed before the construction would be considered complete and retainage paid. The retainage will not be paid until all construction and any outstanding issues have been completed. Suzy Ferguson mentioned a fundraiser lunch with a desert auction will take place on Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>. The Boo's Cruise t-shirt sales will be benefiting the Mulberry Community Food Pantry this year.

Tammy Watts, Branch Director of the Mulberry Public Library came to the podium to give a report on the Mulberry Public Library. Tammy mentioned that Pam Archuleta had taken another job in July and in August the library hired two part time employees: Jeff Mundine, the new youth programmer, and Mariah Marciano the new multi-generational programmer. In August there

were 111 participants, 1335 books checked out, 1081 books checked in, 195 passive program participants, 862 people had used the Wi-Fi, volunteer hours dropped from 42 to 13. Visits went up due to the back door being available to patrons again. Computer usage in August went down from 72 to 65. Bobby Tweedy asked about Wi-Fi. Tammy mentioned that the Wi-Fi is left on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so that people can have access after hours to use for schoolwork or other needs. Discussion Ensued.

### OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

### NEW BUSINESS

Steve Hurley read RESOLUTION 2023-08 (Number changed due to a numbering error, was announced as 2023-06) A RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY OF MULBERRY TO SUBMIT THE MILLAGE RATES FOR THE YEAR 2023 BY THE CRAWFORD COUNTY QUORUM COURT BEFORE THEIR NOVEMBER 2023 MEETING. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to approve the resolution. Sheila Trent seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All present council members voted yes.

Steve Hurley read RESOLUTION 2023-07 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE CITY OF MOUNTAINBURG, ARKANSAS TO LOCATE THE MOUNTAINBURG DEPARTMENT OF THE CRAWFORD COUNTY DISTRICT COURT IN THE CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS. Kimberly Bruce made a motion to approve the resolution. Sheila Trent seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. All present council members voted yes.

Steve Hurley came to the podium to discuss an Affidavit of Destruction in accordance with RESOLUTION 2011-13. The City had documents to destroy in compliance with Resolution 2011-13 and approval was sought to move forward with destruction of the documents. Discussion ensued. Stacy Muntz made a motion to approve the Affidavit of Destruction and Sheila Trent seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All present council members voted yes.

Mayor Baxter spoke on the City's Motor Grader, noting that it needed major repair work. He stated that he had talked to the County, and they had agreed to do Grading work on Wire Road and Pleasant Hill Road. The County had agreed to do the grading at no charge other than the materials needed for the grading of the roads. Public Works director Dwayne Fields was asked to come to the podium to discuss the costly repairs that would be needed on the City's Motor Grader and how it would work if the County did the Grading of Wire Road and Pleasant Hill Road. Discussion ensued.

## MAYOR'S REPORT AND PUBLIC COMMENT

- Mayor gave an update on the Church Avenue Sidewalk project. He mentioned that there is a railing that needs to be completed where the water comes out of the Quail Run area and runs under Church Avenue. Once that railing is completed and the City trims the trees over the sidewalk, then the project will be complete.
- Mayor gave an update on the Industrial Park Drive Grant, noting that there were no changes or updates on the project.
- Silver Bridge move is coming up very soon, within the next two to three weeks. There are several options on how to move it, but the most effective route has not yet been determined due to the costs of OG&E, Cox, and Windstream cables/lines.
- The roofing project of the City properties should be starting soon. The Mayor discussed the insurance company and contractor process.
- Mayor Baxter called Chief of Police Shannon Gregory and Steve Hurley to the podium to discuss Relativity Public Safety (RPS) being available in the Police Cars. Chief Gregory and Steve Hurley came up and discussed the advantages the City now had with these updates. Discussion ensued.
- Mayor Baxter asked Kimberly Bruce to discuss the City-Wide Cleanup taking place on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Discussion ensued.
- Mayor Baxter announced that the second annual Boo's Cruise Halloween car show, parade and activities would be taking place on Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup>. Discussion ensued.
- The Mayor stated that the Crawford County Fair was an immense success and had a great turnout. Discussion ensued.

Stacy Muntz asked about Ordinance 2022-04 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE FINES/PENALTIES FOR PERMITTING DEBRIS TO ENTER STREETS OF MULBERRY. Mayor Baxter called Chief Gregory and Public Works Director Dwayne Fields to the podium to discuss. Discussion ensued.

Stacy Muntz inquired about the condition of the intersection of Church Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, specifically addressing an issue with the newly paved road. She observed that the new pavement on the Church Avenue side appeared to have cracks. In response, Dwayne Fields assured that McCormick's Works has plans to address and repair the cracks by filling them soon.

Jimmy Moore asked about the Silver Bridge and expressed concerns over the costs associated with the project. Discussion ensued.

Wilma Peevy asked if the police patrol all night. Mayor Baxter replied, yes, the police patrol 24 hours a day.

With no further business to discuss Stacy Muntz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kimberly Bruce seconded the motion. All present members voted yes.

This meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

These minutes were taken by Steve Hurley.

APPROVED: 

Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

ATTEST: 

Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer