CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – May 20, 2025

The scheduled meeting of the Mulberry City Council convened on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at precisely 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the City Council Center, located at 606 Church Avenue, Mulberry.

Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer

MEMBERS' PRESENT:

Ronnie Adams, Ward 1 Position 2

Kimberly Bruce, Ward 2 Position 2

Damien Sadat Rice, Ward 3 Position 1

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Seth Fisher, Ward 1 Position 1

Bobby Tweedy, Ward 2 Position 1

Jeff Marvin, Ward 3 Position 2

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Hurley, Assistant to Mayor

Shannon Gregory, Police Chief

Alex Walker, Public Works Director

Darren Fields, Water Plant Superintendent

Marie Crandell-Brown

Cathy Adams

Kay Baxter

Scott Oestreich

Mandy Oestreich

Call to Order

Mayor Baxter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., leading the gathering in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Steve Hurley, Executive Assistant to the Mayor, called the roll:

- Present: Ronnie Adams, Kimberly Bruce, Sadat Rice
- Absent: Seth Fisher, Bobby Tweedy, Jeff Marvin

- With only three Council Members present, a quorum was established with the inclusion of Mayor Gary D. Baxter, as permitted by the City's governing rules. Therefore, official business was allowed to proceed.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Previous Meeting Minutes

The consent agenda included the approval of minutes from the April regular meeting and financial statements.

- **Motion to approve:** Kimberly Bruce
- **Second:** Ronnie Adams
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Police Department Report – Police Chief Shannon Gregory:

- 127 calls for service
- Ninety-Four traffic stops
- Seven citations issued
- Twelve reports
- Three accidents
- Five arrests (Four misdemeanors, One Felony)
- 510 building checks
- Chief Gregory introduced new officers Jared Entrekin and Triston Hamby, both with local ties. Officer Entrekin recently graduated from the police academy. Hamby is a Mulberry native.

Fire Department Report – Assistant to the Mayor Steve Hurley:

- Twenty-two total calls in April.
  - One building fire
  - One natural vegetation fire
  - Two brush or brush-and-grass mixture fires
  - One grass fire
  - Nine emergency medical service incidents
  - One motor vehicle accident with injuries
  - Seven severe weather calls
- Discussion included repairs to the Dodge pickup and the newly equipped brush truck. Council members expressed appreciation for the quick and professional storm response.

Public Works Department Report – Public Works Director Alex Walker:

- Thirty-five service calls
- 199 manual meter readings

- Twenty-three-meter change-outs
- Twenty-six shutoffs
- One hundred nine visitors to the Recycle Center
- No reported water leaks
- Director Walker explained that many meters have yet to be converted to radio-read meters. He also addressed continued delays on Alma Street ditch due to wet conditions.

OLD BUSINESS

- **None**

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance 2025-02 Update to Grease Trap Requirements and Pretreatment Standards:

- Steve Hurley read Ordinance 2025-02, expressing the willingness of the City of Mulberry to update grease trap requirements and pretreatment standards.

- **Motion to suspend rules and read Ordinance 2025-02 by title only:** Kimberly Bruce
- **Second:** Ronnie Adams.
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval
- **Motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-02:** Kimberly Bruce
- **Second:** Sadat Rice
- Discussion was led by Water Superintendent Darren Fields regarding the need for updates to align with new Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) regulations. He highlighted the need to upgrade from concrete to polyurethane grease traps and the value of pretreatment to protect the city's wastewater system.
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval
- Emergency Clause declared and adopted to ensure immediate compliance and implementation:
- **Motion to adopt Emergency Clause:** Kimberly Bruce
- **Second:** Ronnie Adams
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Baxter provided the following updates and announcements:

- Storm damage cleanup efforts are ongoing, with public works addressing downed trees at the cemetery and on school property.
- Fence repairs at the cemetery will begin once tree removal is complete.
- Workman's construction has received permits and will begin shortly.

- The new Mexican restaurant has secured permits and a 911 address; work will proceed pending weather.
- Dollar General construction is progressing well.
- The laundromat is expected to open by the end of May.
- Council Member Rice inquired about sunshade grants; Steve Hurley confirmed past applications and explained future strategies for securing funding, including from the American Cancer Society.
- The council and staff expressed appreciation for community volunteers and inter-agency support during recent storm cleanup.

- **Public Comment Period:**

    - No residents had signed up to speak at the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

This meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. The next regular scheduled City Council meeting will be on June 17, 2025.

Minutes written by: Steve Hurley

APPROVED: Gary D. Baxter

Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

ATTEST: Carla Dickerson

Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer