CITY OF MULBERRY, ARKANSAS

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – June 17, 2025

The scheduled meeting of the Mulberry City Council convened on Tuesday, June 17, 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:

Seth Fisher, Ward 1 Position 1	Ronnie Adams, Ward 1 Position 2
	Kimberly Bruce, Ward 2 Position 2
Damien Sadat Rice, Ward 3 Position 1	Jeff Marvin, Ward 3 Position 2

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Bobby Tweedy, Ward 2 Position 1

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Hurley, Assistant to Mayor	Kay Baxter
Shannon Gregory, Police Chief	Scott Oestreich, Public Works
Alex Walker, Public Works Director	Mandy Oestreich, Public Works
Darren Fields, Water Plant Superintendent	Marie Crandell-Brown
Jason Sumpter, Assistant Fire Chief	Riley Walker
Ben Brewer, Fire Chief	Laci Matthews
Tammy Watts, Branch Director of the Ralph D. Graf Library of Mulberry	
Charles Kiser Jr., Planning Commission	Victoria Riddle
John Kindrix, Paster First Assembly of God, Mulberry	Jessika Crawford
Curtis Crawford, Firefighter	Haddex Riddle
Thell Riddle, Police Officer	Jasper Riddle
Jared Entrekin, Police Officer	

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:

- **MEMBERS PRESENT:**
  Ronnie Adams, Ward 1 Position 2
  Kimberly Bruce, Ward 2 Position 2
  Seth Fisher, Ward 1 Position 1
  Jeff Marvin, Ward 3 Position 2
  Sadat Rice, Ward 3 Position 1

- **MEMBERS ABSENT:**
  Bobby Tweedy, Ward 2 Position 1

- With five out of six Council Members present, a quorum was established.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Previous Meeting Minutes

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

- **Motion to approve:** Jeff Marvin
- **Second:** Kimberly Bruce
- **Vote:** Unanimous approval

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Police Department – Chief Shannon Gregory:

- One hundred ten calls for service
- Ninety-two traffic stops
- Twenty reports taken
- Three arrests
- Six hundred building checks
- Citation/warning data unavailable this month

Fire Department Report – Fire Department Chief Ben Brewer:

- Twenty-four total incidents
  - One passenger vehicle fire
  - One grass fire
  - Eighteen medical calls
  - Two motor vehicle accidents
  - One swift water rescue
  - One gas leak

Certificates of Heroic Service were presented by the Mayor to Officer Thell Riddle and Firefighter Curtis Crawford for their life-saving actions during a recent swift water rescue on the Mulberry River.

Public Works Department Report – Public Works Director Alex Walker:

- Eighteen service calls
- One hundred ninety-nine manual meter readings
- Five-meter change-outs
- Twenty-Six shutoffs
- One hundred ten visitors to Recycle Center
- No water leaks reported
- The council discussed ongoing concerns with specific sewer and road conditions. Walker noted that multiple road patching projects were delayed by rain but are in progress.

Library – Tammy Watts:

- Received a Dollar General Literacy Foundation Grant
- Hosted One hundred twenty students from Marvin Elementary
- Summer Reading Kickoff drew over one hundred twenty attendees
- May totals: 2,199 visits, twenty-four programs, six hundred sixty-one attendees, seven hundred eighty-five books checked out, ninety-one computer sessions, nine hundred twenty-three Wi-Fi uses.

OLD BUSINESS

- **None**

NEW BUSINESS

Alma Street Waterline Infrastructure Project:

Mayor Baxter presented the plan and explained that the Council was being asked only to approve submission of the project to the Arkansas Water and Wastewater Advisory Committee—not to approve funding.
Jeff Marvin suggested tabling the matter to allow engineers to explore cost-saving alternatives using an existing 12-inch water line.
No formal vote taken. Mayor Baxter agreed to follow up with engineers and revisit the item in July.

Property Transfer Request – First Assembly of God:

Pastor John Kindrix requested donation of a city-owned grass parcel bordered by Third and Fourth Streets. The church offered to maintain the property and cover all associated costs.

Motion to approve transfer contingent on verification of clear title: Jeff Marvin
Second: Seth Fisher
Vote: Unanimous approval.

Planning Commission Appointment:

Mayor Baxter appointed Charles Kiser to the Planning Commission, replacing Tom Smith.
Motion to approve appointment: Ronnie Adams
Second: Kimberly Bruce
Vote: Unanimous approval.

Kiser introduced himself and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Baxter provided the following updates and announcements:

- Workman's Travel Center is progressing with land clearing; groundbreaking to be announced.
- Sewer extension project for Travel Center to be advertised for bids in July.
- Water Treatment Plant upgrades ahead of schedule with final completion projected by February 2026.
- The Industrial Park Drive project is proceeding smoothly.
- Spay/Neuter Grant is still active with funds available.
- Pending grant decisions:
    - Sidewalk Improvement (Senior Center to Dollar General)

    - Ground-Penetrating Radar Equipment
    - Main Street Overlay ($300,000 request – results due January 2026)
- Upcoming grant applications:
    - Arkansas Fun Park (Playground + Shade, no match required, due Aug. 29)
    - Rural Community Grant (Generator for Senior Center)
    - Wild Ones Seeds for Education ($500 for native wildflower seeds)
    - Small Water System Grant (pending info)
- **Laundromat:** Awaiting delivery of equipment, targeting late June opening
- **Youth Shelter:** Open house scheduled week of July 21

National Night Out:
August 5 at Kirsty Park – Crawford County-wide event.
Organized by Steve Hurley, who aims to make it the best ever.

Fireworks Celebration:
Scheduled for June 28 – 25th anniversary of Mulberry's annual display since its revival in 2001.

- **Public Comment Period:**
    - No residents had signed up to speak at the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

This meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The next regular scheduled City Council meeting will be on July 15, 2025.

Minutes written by: Steve Hurley

APPROVED: _____
Gary D. Baxter, Mayor

ATTEST: Carla Dickerson
Carla Dickerson, Recorder-Treasurer