

Council Meeting
September 2, 2014

Members Present: Mayor Richard C. Barr, members Jody Greene, Buddy Duke, Greg Paige and Butch Fausett.

Others Present: John Flythe, Rhonda Rowe, Tim Tanner, Chad Castleberry, Wayne Giddens, Mike Beverly and members of the public.

Invocation was given by Councilman Fausett.

Approval of Minutes: Councilman Fausett made a motion to approve the minutes of August 18, 2014 as presented. Councilman Duke seconded with all in favor.

Public Hearing: Councilman Fausett made a motion to enter into public hearing to gain input on the proposed FY 2014-2015 budget. Councilman Greene seconded with all in favor. City Manager John Flythe stated the General Fund revenues are down by \$803,500 from last year with a difference in expenses of \$110,885 due to capital items. It includes an increase in the water fund of \$38,250 and sewer fund of \$9,275. The electric fund is down by \$824,500 and the gas fund down by \$234,650. He further explained that over the last 10 years electrical sales are down by 22% with an increase in cost of 44%. Most of this has occurred over the last 3 years. Gas sales are also down by 47%. We need to expand our system and acquire additional industrial customers. Mayor Barr stated we have lost several large manufacturers and need to get those businesses back on-line. The Economic Development Commission is working diligently to help in this arena. Councilman Paige, who was unable to attend the budget work session, questioned the increase in jail costs and related payments to outside entities. It was explained that these are mandatory costs and are directly related to fines. If the amount of fines increase, these costs increase. These costs are a percentage of our fine revenues. Part of these are remitted locally and some to the state. Attorney Tanner added that it was his understanding some of those fine add-ons are being increased this year as well. There were no further comments from anyone present and the public hearing was declared closed. City Manager John Flythe reminded the council that the budget, as presented, includes a 2% COLA adjustment.

Street Closing Request (Path Church): Ms. Karla Walker came before the council requesting permission to block off a portion of the 400 block of N. Burwell Avenue on October 25, 2014 for a Community Fest 2014 sponsored by the youth of the church located at 401 N. Burwell Avenue. She stated they have been studying being a productive member of your community and they would like to bring this event outside of their four walls. They are requesting to block off a portion of the road from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. for the safety of children. She further stated she intends to speak with the management of Goody's to let them know they will not be blocking the entrance to their business. Councilman Paige made a motion to approve the request. Councilman Fausett seconded with all in favor.

Debris Bids: Following a review of the bids presented at the last meeting, city manager John Flythe stated the low bid provided by Langdale Industries to accept debris for \$10.00 per ton or to grind debris on our site for \$10.00 per ton was the best bid. We have three temporary sites available for storage and include the Del-Cook property, property near the pistol range or at the treatment plant. He anticipates a potential savings of \$30,000 per year. During discussion, it was noted that we can pay Langdale to grind the debris and haul it off or we can pay them to grind it and then we sell it. The only obstacle with the second option is finding someone to purchase the material. Councilman Duke made a motion to approve the recommendation of the city manager. Councilman Fausett seconded. All were in favor.

Ordinance #14-4: This ordinance, establishing the tax millage at 6.401 mills for 2014, was read for the first time.

Nuisance Properties: Councilman Paige addressed his concern with the length of time for abating nuisances and wants to ensure that we are following the ordinance to expedite them. He added that the ordinance doesn't state anything about notifying property owners; they should be issued a summons and brought before the judge. In his district alone, working nuisances during the summer would take up to 75% of a person's time. If the property owners have to look at the judge, this will get their attention. He added that people do not always understand due process and the length of time this can take. Councilman Paige also questioned how the city could get its money back on properties we have cleaned and filed liens on. The city attorney stated we need an agreement with the tax commissioner as to how we can foreclose on these liens. They take the same priority as the taxes. We need an agreement with the tax commissioner or for us to do it ourselves to enforce it just like the tax liens. When they pay it off, they pay it off because the property is about to be foreclosed on because of the lien. In priority, liens are just below taxes. Mr. Tanner also added that in some other cities, there is a 10 day look period and then you begin the process of citing them. Some people determine its cheaper to let the city mow their property and that's not the situation you want the city to be in. Mr. Tanner will look into a mechanism to foreclose due to liens and added it would probably take an agreement with the tax commissioner. He also noted there was a company the county uses to collect past fines, who assesses a fee on top of the fine for collection, that might could help. The problem is deciding whether a lien is against the person who owns the property or the property itself. He is looking into that very issue right now and when a determination is made, he will report back.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Rhonda P. Rowe, City Clerk

Richard C. Barr, Mayor
