

MINUTES

City Council of the City of Jeffersonville
Monday, July 8, 2013, 6:00 p.m.
City Hall, Jeffersonville, GA

MEMBERS:

Mayor Shannon Hart
Councilman Mack Bryant
Councilperson Virginia Hollings
Councilman Victor Jordan
Councilman Jeff Lempke
Councilman Richard Stone
Councilperson Annie Williams
Councilman Daniel Young

GUESTS:

Commissioner Tommie Lee Bryant
Washington Sinclair
Oscar Basley, Chief of Police
Pope Langstaff, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Shannon Hart called the July 8th City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

The opening prayer was given by Councilman Victor Jordan, and Mayor Shannon Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Hart then called the roll and noted that Councilmen Mack Bryant and Daniel Young were not present. Mayor Hart also thanked Council for its support during the recent tragedy in her family. While Mayor Hart was offering her gratitude, Councilman Daniel Young arrived.

GUESTS

Notice under the Tree

Commissioner Tommie Lee Bryant addressed Council regarding a letter that had been sent to the owner of the BP station on May 21, 2013. He began by requesting that City Attorney Pope Langstaff no longer contact him, referencing a heated discussion that ended when Commissioner Bryant hung up on Mr. Langstaff. He then asked how many Councilmembers were aware of the letter, noting that the lack of response from Council indicated that they were not aware of it. He opined that the letter appeared to threaten the owner of the BP station, noting that the letter contained allegations of drug use and prostitution. He then asked Chief of Police Oscar Basley how many drug or prostitution cases he has pursued from that spot. Chief Basley responded that he had pursued none. Commissioner Bryant summarized that by this letter, the City was calling all black people that sat under the tree drug dealers and prostitutes. Councilman Lempke requested a copy of the letter. Mayor Hart, reading from the letter, stressed “may have been...could be...if”, noting that the letter did not contain allegations, but was warning the property owner that such illegal actions on his property might endanger his ownership. Commissioner Bryant asked what information the letter was based on, and Mayor Hart responded that some reports came from individuals who had argued under the tree, and others came from residents of the City. Commissioner Bryant pointed out that no arrests had been made relating to this issue, also saying that there had been no complaints from the surrounding merchants. Mr. Langstaff noted that the letter does not accuse any individuals; it states that there have been reports of illegal activity at that location. Commissioner Bryant asked if the letter had been racially motivated and Mayor Hart assured him it was not. Commissioner Bryant then stressed that no laws had been referred to in the letter; Mr. Langstaff responded that property seizure laws regarding drug cases are standard. Commissioner Bryant stressed the need to send law enforcement personnel to handle complaints of this nature. Councilman Lempke opined that this matter did not need to come before Council, and Commissioner Bryant should have spoken with those involved personally. He also noted that any property owner could have written the letter; Commissioner Bryant expressed surprise that Councilman Lempke was now an expert on the letter. Councilman Lempke asked Commissioner Bryant what he wanted Council to do, noting that Council was very busy. Mayor Hart noted that Commissioner Bryant had taken the

floor for fifteen minutes, and that there were other guests that needed to speak. Commissioner Bryant thanked Council for his time and asked Councilman Jordan to answer his questions. Councilman Jordan noted that he took offense to the letter, and stated that most of the people who congregated under the tree were retired. He also noted that Mr. Cooper, whose place they meet at now, was not intimidated by these letters. Councilman Lempke asked if race could be kept out of the discussion. Councilperson Williams asked Commissioner Bryant what district he represents. Commissioner Bryant noted that he was the Commissioner of District 1 which included the City of Jeffersonville. Councilman Jordan concluded the topic by noting that when he had the floor he expected to keep it.

Sidewalks along Main Street and MLK

Mr. Washington Sinclair requested that Council place sidewalks along MLK Boulevard. He noted that many people travel along that road, and that when cars pass pedestrians sometimes must leave the road and walk in the ditches beside it. He also requested that MLK Boulevard cross the entire City, starting on Bullard Road at City limits and proceeds down Main Street past the Twiggs County Board of Education to where East Main Street ends at Highway 96. Mr. Sinclair noted that nowhere else was there a MLK Boulevard that ran for only two blocks. Councilman Stone noted that Councilman Bryant was looking into whether we have the right-of-way to place sidewalks along MLK Boulevard.

Bids for Water Treatment Control Systems

Mr. Garry Garretson noted that the control systems for the water distribution system were not working. He stated that after Council voted to accept bids on the water control systems, only one company responded, J. K. Duren Inc., out of Roswell, Georgia. The bid was for updating the controls for both the high-service pumps and the wells. The bid from J. K. Duren Inc. was for \$26,800, and the work will be completed within 30 days. Councilman Lempke asked what funds were left in the GEFA account. Mr. Garretson replied that there was about \$66,000 left, but that \$10,000 were needed for the water meters, leaving about \$55,000. Mayor Hart summarized that Council had approved the project in order to stop the sudden and unpredictable loss of water in the City. Mr. Garretson noted that the controls would not stop a pipe from leaking, but that the system would be much more reliable. He also noted that Mr. Sidney Lattimore has been running the pumps manually for weeks, and that this was not a desirable situation. Councilman Lempke asked if Council should wait for more bids, Mr. Garretson replied that bid invitations had been sent to many companies, but only J. K. Duren Inc. had responded. He also said that the City had made a good faith effort to seek the lowest bid. Councilman Jordan wanted assurances that the work done would not have to be redone a few weeks later. Mayor Hart wanted to know if the new system had alarms that would notify people that the pumps were down. Mr. Garretson replied that the new system would be completely digital, noting the mechanical deficiencies of the current system, and would include an audible alarm, a flashing light, and an auto-dialer to

reach specific individuals. Councilman Jordan motioned to accept the bid from J. K. Duren to repair the water controls, Councilperson Williams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2013 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Mayor Hart noted that on pages nine and ten of the June 10th Minutes, May 13th should be changed to June 10th. Councilperson Annie Williams motioned to accept the minutes from the June 10, 2013 City Council meeting into the record. Councilman Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed with five votes, Councilperson Hollings abstained due to her absence at the June 10th meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR JUNE 2013

The Water Fund Account (Account 281) began with a balance of \$22,279.89. There were 26 deposits totaling \$33,879.47, and 34 withdrawals totaling \$27,967.61. There was also interest paid on the account in the amount of \$1.97. The ending balance was \$28,186.46. There was one deposit in transit of \$610.33 and outstanding checks, totaling \$1,728.54 leaving a computed balance of \$27,068.25.

For the month of June, city clerk Chris Nelson reported that the General Fund Account (Account 257) began with a balance of \$104,064.73. There were a total of two deposits during the month totaling \$17,192.97. There were 63 withdrawals totaling \$48,732.00 leaving the account with an ending balance of \$72,525.70. There were 22 outstanding checks, totaling \$9,309.60, and one deposit in transit of \$6,379.53 leaving a computed balance of \$69,595.63.

The Recorder's Court Account (Account 1131) began the month with a balance of \$7,653.85. There were two deposits totaling \$2,135.00, and six withdrawals totaling \$436.62. This left the account with an ending balance of \$9,352.23. There was one outstanding check in the amount of \$34.34 and one deposit in transit of \$370.00, leaving a computed balance of \$9,687.89.

Mr. Nelson noted the supplementary financial documents in the Councilmembers' packets. The General Fund wrote checks totaling \$47,098.63, Mr. Nelson noted that six of the checks written off the General Fund were for the Water account, and that those would need to be repaid. Water Account wrote checks totaling \$12,076.42, and Recorder's Court wrote checks totaling \$439.29 in the month of June. June checks totaled \$65,754.18. The revenue for the General Account came to \$8,392.60. The revenue for Recorder's Court came to \$1,153.00. The plumbing expenses had dropped in June, coming to \$325.00, after a high in April.

In regards to the GEFA loan, Mayor Hart noted that there had been only one transaction. June started with \$48,577.02, and ended the month with \$46,706.35.

Councilperson Hollings motioned to accept the financial reports, seconded by Councilman Lempke. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Beautification and Recreation: Councilman Bryant was absent from the June 10th meeting.

Budget and Finance: Councilman Stone said that he had nothing to report at this time. Mayor Hart reminded Council about the 2012 Payroll Audit conducted in May. Mr. Nelson relayed to Council that the City had received a refund check from GMA for about \$13,500.

Building and Grounds: Councilman Jordan noted residents on Highway 96 had complained about people speeding in the school zone, and asked if Council could put up a sign with flashing lights. Chief Basley responded that the State Department would have to provide the sign, but in the past, would only provide standard signs at that location. Councilman Young noted that the speed limit changes from 45 mph to 35 mph near the old ball field, where a school bus stop is located. He suggested installing a “School Bus Stop Ahead” sign. Chief Basley stated he would call the State Department to see what requirements they would need to install a flashing school zone sign.

Fire Protection: Councilman Daniel Young had nothing to report at this time.

Industrial Development: Councilperson Williams remarked that there was nothing new at this time.

Planning and Zoning: Councilman Stone reported that he had nothing to bring before Council at this time.

Public Safety: Chief of Police Oscar Basley requested permission to have the City of Jeffersonville decals removed from his car, and having a “Chief” decal placed on the front. He also requested that the windows of his vehicle be tinted to protect the interior. Mayor Hart requested estimates for decal removal and window tinting.

Chief Basley also asked about the status of Barton Edward Knott Jr.’s application. There was general consensus to discuss the matter in closed session and make a motion after reconvening. Mayor Hart asked if there were any vehicle maintenance issues during the month, and Chief Basley replied that there were not.

Rural Development: Councilperson Williams reported that she had nothing to bring before Council at this time.

Streets and Bridges: Councilman Bryant was not in attendance, but Councilman Stone noted that there were potholes in Richard Drive, and residents must pull off the road to get by them. Councilman Jordan noted the pothole at the intersection of Main Street and North Church Street had been cut when the City was looking for a valve. Councilman Lempke mentioned that there were excess pieces of asphalt at the water treatment plant that could be shaped to fill the hole.

Mayor Hart summarized that the City would find out the cost of filling the potholes on Richard Drive and at the intersection across from the bank building.

Councilman Young noted that a resident on MLK Boulevard has a driveway that has sunken due to the culvert collapsing beneath it. He mentioned that he was unsure whether the responsible party was the homeowner or the City. Mayor Hart said that the City would have to check on the right-of-way to determine responsibility. Councilman Lempke suggested getting Morgan Slay, the Fire Chief, to use a fire hose to spray through the culvert to check if the culvert had collapsed.

Water and Sewer: Councilman Lempke noted that Mr. Garretson had already discussed most of the distribution system. He asked how far along the meter replacement project had come, and Mr. Garretson noted that the meter replacement process was nearly complete; it was only waiting for a handful of larger meter to be shipped in. Councilman Lempke asked how the software upgrade was progressing, and Mr. Nelson replied that the City had signed the purchase agreement with Harris Computer Systems, and Council would have to sign a lease agreement with GMA.

Councilman Lempke noted that both pumps were working at the MLK lift station; Pete Regula was scheduled to repair the control panel there. At Solomon Drive, one pump was working at the lift station, and could handle the flow while the other pump was being repaired. Councilman Lempke noted that eleven of the twelve aerators are working at the treatment plant; they had been repaired by PCM. He remarked that there was confusion over who was to contact Bridges Electric to repair the security lights, and that Sidney Lattimore would contact them soon.

Councilman Jordan wondered why there was water running in the ditch on MLK Boulevard, Councilman Lempke responded it was most likely because the controls were not working properly and the pumps were overflowing. Mr. Garretson noted that since Sidney Lattimore was operating the pumps manually, the clear well was overflowing and running off down the hill.

Welfare and Sanitation: Councilman Richard Stone stated that he did not have anything at this time, but he was working on gathering the addresses of delinquent properties within the City.

Mr. Garretson, in updating Council about the Watson Road project, noted that the contractor had moved equipment to the site, and construction should begin shortly. Councilman Lempke asked when Watson Road would be reopened and Mr. Garretson replied that it would depend on the weather. He offered further details about the construction process.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Bank closure, moving City accounts

Mayor Hart reminded Council that the City was in the process of moving its three main accounts, and that the Bank of Dudley was required by the FDIC to gather information on account signers. She requested that Councilmembers who had not yet provided the information to stay after the meeting to fill out the forms.

Councilman Lempke inquired what the status of Sunrise Bank was at this time. Mayor Hart replied that it will be closing and all account still there would be moved to CB&T whose closest branch was on Highway 96 in Warner Robins.

NEW BUSINESS

There being no New Business, Councilperson Williams moved to go into Closed Session with Councilman Lempke seconding. The motion carried unanimously, and Council went into Closed Executive Session.

RECONVENE JULY 8 CITY COUNCIL MEETING

After Closed Executive Session, Councilman Lempke moved and Councilperson Hollings seconded that Council reconvene: All in favor.

Councilman Lempke made a motion to hire Mr. B. Edward Knott at an initial salary of \$10.00 per hour, to be increased to \$11.00 per hour after the completion of a six month probationary period. Mr. Nelson notified Council that starting January 1, 2014 the Federal Government would allow a maximum probationary period of 90 days before health insurance could be offered, and suggested that the City reduce its probationary period to 60 days to avoid possible fines for running over the probationary deadline. Councilman Lempke amended his motion to reduce the probationary period to 90 days. Councilman Jordan seconded the motion, the motion passed with five votes, Councilperson Hollings abstaining, noting she was not at the interview.

Councilperson Williams requested that Chief Basley be notified of Council's decision. Upon his arrival, Mayor Hart informed Chief Basley of the decision to hire Mr. B. Edward Knott and the conditions of his hiring. Chief Basley had reservations on whether Mr. Knott would accept the position at that rate, and asked if Council could do better. Councilman Young replied that Mr. Knott would receive his raise at the end of 90 days after a successful performance report. Discussion followed about performance reports.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Jordan moved to adjourn the July 8, 2013 Council Meeting, seconded by Councilperson Williams: all in favor.

After no further business, the July 8th meeting of the Jeffersonville City Council adjourned at 8:42 p.m.