

MINUTES

CITY OF HARTFORD, ALABAMA

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

NOVEMBER 20, 2023

JOHNNY HUGHES COMMUNITY CENTER COURTROOM, 405 SOUTH THIRD AVENUE, HARTFORD, ALABAMA 36344

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Wendel Nolen, Councilmembers Melissa Clements, Ted Thompson, Zane Fowler, Paul Fondren and Ron Adams.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Police Chief Zac Cooke, Utility Superintendent Jerry Sorrells, and Chief Mark Shehee. See Attachment for others present.

CALL TO ORDER- The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRAYER AND PLEDGE- Councilmember Paul Fondren led the prayer which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR WENDEL NOLEN – Welcomed everyone, Asked that we remember the family of Jimmy Bottoms as he passed away earlier today. Welcomes Melissa Rosser and Mark Shehee as new employees.

MAYOR WENDEL NOLEN AMENDED THE AGENDA BY DELETING JEANNA BRANNON, THE PRESENTATION FOR FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARD AND ADDING RONNIE DRISKEL. Council member Paul Fondren made the for motion to amend the agenda as the Mayor stated above. Council member Zane Fowler made the second to the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 6, 2023 – Council member Zane Fowler made a motion to approve the minutes. Council member Paul Fondren made the second to the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC –

Darrell Terry addressed the City of Hartford sign on 52. He stated that the sign is very dark and the lights around it need to be adjusted. He stated that the bushes are overgrown and need to be trimmed so that the sign is more visible. He also wanted to address that he has a neighbor who's power bill was over one thousand dollars and he would like for someone to check this situation out. He asked if that would fall under Jerry Sorrells responsibility, and it was stated by Jerry that it was.

Jo Robinson said that there is a street light out on Maple Ave and asked that someone check on this.

John Threats stated that he is tired of looking at the junkyard on the corner of Strickland and Hilcrest. He asked what could be done about this. Mayor Nolen asked Chief Zac to please start the debating process to get this cleaned up. He assured Mr. Threats that this would be a lengthy process but that it would be addressed.

RESOLUTION 11-20-2022 TO ADD CITY CLERK TO ALL ACCOUNTS – Mayor Nolen read the resolution aloud to council members. All council members were given a resolution to sign. Council member Ron Adams asked if Khrist Brannon could also be added to accounts. Mayor Nolen stated that only three people could be on the accounts. Council member Zane Fowler made a motion to pass the resolution and add city clerk to all accounts. Council member Melissa Clements made the second to the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

ONE TIME PAY INCREASE FOR CITY EMPLOYEES- Mayor Nolen asked that the council approve a one time pay increase for all city employees eligible. He stated that this is their yearly Christmas bonus. A sheet was provided with the total payouts as well as the scale for the increases. Council member Ron Adams asked if the amount was more or less than last year's. Mayor Nolen stated that it was less. Council member Paul Fondren made a motion to approve the one-time pay increase. Council member Ron Adams seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

RONNIE DRISKELL/ADEM GRANT- Ronnie Driskel made a presentation for the ADEM grant of 2.9 million dollars that the city has been awarded. The grant is to upgrade the sewer pump stations (except for the lagoon). Ronnie stated that the grant was a reimbursement funded grant and that city funds would have to be used up front to complete the project. He asked to keep in mind that this was a free grant, and no money would have to be matched by the city. He stated the requirements and discussed deadlines for the grant. Council members stated their concerns about the funding and reimbursement turnaround times. Council member Ron Adams stated that he did not feel comfortable voting for the grant until they were able to review some financial information related to this.

COUNCIL COMMENTS – Mayor Wendel Nolen stated that the Christmas Tree lighting will be held on December 1 and that certificates and plaques would be handed out. Mayor Nolen stated that the Christmas Parade, as well as Hometown Holiday would take place on December 2nd and that he hoped everyone would attend. Mayor Nolen said that this would be a big weekend for the city and he looked forward to it. He also stated that the City's Christmas lunch would be on December 15 and would be held at the community center.

Council member Melissa Clements announced that there will be an Appreciation party for Annie Ward on November 30th from 5pm-7:30pm at the community center and everyone is welcome to attend. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Council member Ron Adams stated that he is excited that the city has filled their open positions.

Council member Paul Fondren wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS – Chief Zac Cooke asked that the council approve a motion to allow the police department to block off the road in front of the bank for the Christmas parade and the Christmas tree lighting. Council member Paul Fondren made a motion to approve the police department to block the road off. Council member Ron Adams seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Fire Chief Mark Shehee gave a report that his department has hired 5 part time employees, 1 full time employee, and converted a part time employee to full time. The ambulance that was broken has been repaired and is now back in service. The sheetrock and mold in the station has been repaired. He reported that the department had 63 medical calls and 5 fire calls. The Chief stated that the current YTD salaries for the department are at \$58,608, and compared to 2022, that number has decreased by \$44,485. Chief would like to say thank you and acknowledge Chief Cooke and officer Reed for helping to prevent the spread of a fire in town until the department could get there.

ADJOURNMENT- Mayor Nolen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council member Paul Fondren made the motion which was seconded by Council member Ron Adams. The motion was passed unanimously.



Presiding Officer