

Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2018

The Mayor and Board of Commissioner met in a called meeting and a regular monthly workshop session on Monday, February 26, 2018 at 5 p.m. at City Hall.

Mayor Lowe called the meeting to order with Commissioners present being: Lamar Hughes, Sam Moser, Edward Lee, Billy G. West, and Bill W. Stockton. City Attorney John Cleveland was present.

Mayor Lowe opened the single bid received for paving and striping the downtown parking lot from A & A Asphalt Inc totaling \$28,886. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the bid, with Commissioner Hughes seconding the motion. Commissioner West stated that the concrete and curbing work just completed downtown and \$10,000 of the paving could come from state street aid, with the remaining funds provided by the general fund from eclipse proceeds and downtown funds. All voted in favor, with none opposed. The motion was carried.

The called meeting was adjourned and the workshop session was opened.

Visitor Jane McGuire had requested a place on the agenda. She thanked the board for allowing her to speak and addressed them regarding the proposed rezoning at the Velta Hall property on Old Athens Pike, encompassed in Ordinance No. 959. She stated she was representing the neighborhood called Valley View, which was over 60 years old and comprised of 36 residences, many of whom are elderly homeowners who rely on their property values. She voiced concerns over the rezoning including what other businesses are eligible within C-3 zoning; that a trend will begin so that all property surrounding the neighborhood will be commercial; traffic increase, which is already a problem in her opinion; and the signage allowed in a C-3 zoning. She also stated that the potential business' inability to find another suitable property is not a justification to rezone this parcel. She stated she had a petition with 27 signatures opposing the rezoning ordinance.

Mayor Lowe reviewed the upcoming March 5, 2018 meeting agenda. The Resolution to authorize a payroll deduction through the State of Tennessee Retire Ready programs will replace the existing 457b plan through Nationwide as a voluntary payroll deduction for employees. Drew Freeman with the State of TN was present to answer questions. He stated this option has no impact on TCRS, other than it allows the state to do training more holistically as employees will have both options. City Recorder Jessica Morgan also noted the state's fees were 0.25% compared to 1% currently being paid by employees who elected to contribute. She reiterated there was not a deadline to pass this resolution but the recent tax law changes may help encourage city employees to invest their unexpected extra funds.

Mayor Lowe reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan for 2019-2023. Commissioner Lee moved to request the ladder truck be removed from the plan, as the aerial truck will suffice.

Chuck Whited reviewed Ordinance NO. 961 entitled An Ordinance to amend Title 13 of the Sweetwater Municipal Code. He noted that the implementation of the Administrative Hearing process allowed us to assess a fine for unlawful clutter but did not provide that the city could clean it up at the owner's expense. John Cleveland had recommended reorganizing Title 13 to enable cleanup activity and enforcement for any violation in Title 13.

The Resolution to amend the Employee Handbook was reviewed. City Recorder Jessica Morgan explained the existing policy provided that employee could only use banked sick days for multiple days with a doctor's note. The amendment would allow employees to use banked sick days for only one day if needed but still required a doctor's note. It also clarified the difference in banked days versus current days. Commissioner Moser added that the Resolution would give another layer of flexibility to the employees in using their allotted time. The board agreed to move forward on the Resolution, so the recorder advised she would add the required public hearing to the agenda and run the public notice.

Mayor Lowe also mentioned upcoming legislation sent to us by TML that if passed would require cities to move their election dates. The Mayor asked for the board's thoughts. Commissioner West advised that when the last charter committee updated the charter, they discussed the possibility of moving the election date. He advised the consensus of the committee was that the city elections were bipartisan and moving them to coincide with the general election would bring politics back into the city elections. He suggested the board pass a resolution to oppose those actions. City Recorder Jessica Morgan advised she had sent emails to each committee chair and one more representative and senator advising we opposed the bills. She added that the mayor would receive email updates on the progress and if the bills made it out of committee, we could draft a Resolution.

No further action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

This the 26th day of February, 2018.