

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HULL MAYOR AND COUNCIL

August 24, 2022

Meeting Held in Person at Jackson EMC

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Paul Walton. Those in attendance in addition to the Mayor were council members Brian Koepnick, Mike McElroy and John Barber, and Clerk, Sandy Pou.

The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent prayer was observed prior to the start of the meeting.

The minutes of the July meeting and the financial reports were approved unanimously after a motion by John Barber and a second by Brian Kopenick. Council member Barber did have a question about the countercheck written by Mayor Walton to which Mayor Walton replied that this would be discussed later in the meeting.

Prior to addressing old business Mayor Walton advised that with Ms. Gantt's resignation a new Mayor Pro Tem needed to be appointed. Mayor Walton recommended that council member Mike McElroy serve as Mayor Pro Tem. This recommendation was approved unanimously after a motion by Brian Koepnick and a second by John Barber. The oath will be administered at the September meeting.

Under old business Mayor Walton advised that things were moving along with the loan process for the new City Hall.

Mayor Walton also advised that he would like to move the meeting with NEGRC with respect to the Comprehensive Plan from September 21st to September 22nd at 6:00 p.m. prior to the regularly scheduled council meeting. All council members indicated that they would be available to meet on the 22nd. There have been several citizens interested in serving on the steering committee with council member Koepnick offering to be the city official serving on the committee.

Mayor Walton requested that the Clerk read a letter that he had received on behalf of the City from Senator Warnock praising the City for their work in securing federal funding for a new city hall.

Under new business Mayor Walton presented and went through a special financial report that he had prepared showing funds the City had been able to secure through grants, loans and other resources since his tenure as Mayor. A copy of this report is attached to the minutes for reference.

Mayor Walton advised council that the City had received the second installment of the ARPA funding and that the uses for the second installment of funds had broadened and the funds could actually now go into the City's general funds however since we already had an ARPA Account established the funds had been moved into that fund for easier record keeping and reporting.

Prior to presenting the new travel policy that Attorney Clark had prepared a copy of which had been provided to council members and the Clerk for review, Mayor Walton presented an overview of the amount of travel he is required to do which was much more than he expected

when he first took office and when the current travel policy was approved. He not only travels for training and other direct city business but travel is required with respect to his service on committees representing the Cities in the county and in his role as second vice president of GMA and on the membership advisory committee with GMA. The consensus of council is that all of this travel is considered city business as defined in both the current travel policy and the new travel policy. In this regard the Clerk advised that there were several charges made by the Mayor on the City Credit Card that were not authorized under the existing travel policy that being alcohol charges and meals for the Mayor's spouse. There was some discussion between the Mayor and Council as to whether these charges should be reimbursed to the City by the Mayor. The exact amount was unknown but could be determined by the Clerk. Motion was made by John Barber and seconded by Brian Koepnick that these unauthorized amounts be reimbursed. Council members Barber and Koepnick voted in favor of the Motion and council member McElroy voted against. Motion passed.

At this time the Mayor presented a recommendation that the new travel policy be approved. Motion was made by Brian Koepnick and seconded by Mike McElroy to approve the new policy. Council members Koepnick and McElroy voted in favor of the recommendation with council member Barber abstaining. Motion passed. The Clerk then had a number of questions for clarification purposes since under the travel policy it is her responsibility to make sure Mayor and Council are all abiding by the policy.

With respect to the countercheck written by Mayor Walton for cash Mayor Walton explained that due to the excessive amount of travel wherein he was required to use his personal vehicle his vehicle needed some repairs to the brakes. His car being a German car he got a price from the Mercedes dealership which was \$1,890.00 for repairs. He has a personal mechanic who works on German cars however he only accepts cash payments therefore Mayor Walton wrote the countercheck for cash to pay the mechanic. Mayor Walton further explained to council that with the new ARPA funds car repair was an approved expenditure. There was some discussion about looking into purchasing a government surplus vehicle that could be used by Mayor and/or council for required city business. Mayor Walton advised that he had already been looking into this possibility. After further discussion a motion was made by Mike McElroy, seconded by Brian Koepnick and unanimously approved that the Clerk transfer \$1,600.00 from the ARPA Account to the general fund to cover this expenditure.

The Clerk was requested to register Mayor Walton and council member McElroy for the District 5 meeting coming up and also to provide council member McElroy with a copy of the new city charter.

Lastly, the Clerk advised that the City had received an e-mail from Chamber of Commerce Director, Anna Strickland, requesting that the City consider continuing their membership in the Chamber at the Bronze Level for a costs of \$125.00 per year. After some discussion a motion was made by Mike McElroy, seconded by John Barber and unanimously approved to continue the membership as requested. The Clerk will mail a check for the membership dues.

There being no further business motion was made by Mike McElroy, seconded by Brian Kopenick and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Sandra Pou, Clerk