

SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 18, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor and Council met a week early on November 18, 2021, due to the Thanksgiving holiday, in person at the Jackson EMC Community Meeting Room. The Mayor, Clerk and council members Brian Kopenick, John Barber, Donna Gantt and Marilyn Walton were present. In addition council member elect, Mike McElroy was in attendance.

Minutes of the October meeting and the October Financial Reports were approved.

A vote on the Zoning Ordinances was tabled again to allow for a work session and additional input from Mayor, Council and concerned citizens. The matter will be addressed again at the December meeting.

Mayor Walton gave an update on the continuing changes with respect to uses for ARPA funds. He also advised that the Chevron had re-submitted their request for premium pay for one month for their employees along with the Verification however the Verification needed a revision so we are waiting on the new verification before proceeding with approval of the application. The Clerk advised that she had verified that the owner of the Chevron had not received any additional funds.

Mayor Walton asked everyone if they had reviewed the proposal from GEC with respect to their conducting the environmental study that is necessary in the loan application process for the new City Hall. All council members indicated that they had reviewed and felt it was very comprehensive and based on other quotes Mayor Walton had received the Mayor recommended and the council approve moving forward with GEC at a total cost of \$5,700.00 which funds will come from the SPLOST account.

The Clerk advised that budget amendments were needed to the Grounds Upkeep budget and the advertising budget and recommended increasing the advertising budget by \$500.00 and the Grounds Upkeep budget by \$2,100.00. The recommendation was approved.

Mayor Walton advised that we would be bidding out the grounds upkeep for next year and that he planned to recommend a decrease in the budgeted amount to only allow for seasonal cutting. This will be discussed further at the Budget hearing. Mayor Walton also discussed some other thoughts he has with respect to the 2022 budget such as not continuing with the membership in the Chamber of Commerce and encouraged council to share their thoughts as well.

The Clerk advised that council needed to set the budget hearing which is routinely prior to the regular meeting in December which will be December 23rd. The budget hearing was scheduled for December 23, 2021, beginning at 6:30.

Mayor Walton had the Clerk read an e-mail from Commission Chairman Todd Higdon concerning possible reallocation of the TSPLOST funds.

Mayor Walton advised that he has been working with the City Attorney and has been in communication with other Mayors with respect to compensating the Clerk as the only City Employee with premium pay using ARPA funds as well as Mayor and Council. Although our Mayor basically serves as a department and council have been required to be out in public during the pandemic as of now elected officials are not allowed to receive any type of compensation using ARPA funds however as stated earlier this continues to change. Mayor Walton asked for patience as he continues to monitor this to make sure that everything is done correctly.

Mayor Walton also advised that he was exploring the possibility of an increase in the compensation for Mayor and Council who have had the same pay since at least 2008. He will be bringing this back before council as soon as he has more information on the process.

Council member Gantt discussed the food distribution that she had brought before council last month with some additional information about the partnership with Huff Grove Baptist Church. It was decided to move forward with the food drive which will be held in February, 2022. Council also decided to help the Senior Center with Meals on Wheels although nothing specific was discussed. Council member Gantt also advised that Ms. Mitchell who was at our last meeting and was going to follow with Ms. Gantt about possible services to the City had not contacted her.

Council member Walton advised that the Christmas Decorations would be going up the following week and asked if the City wanted to have a tree lighting as in the past. It was decided to have the tree lighting on December 6, at 6:00 p.m. The Clerk will provide an announcement to the Madison County Journal.

Council member Koepnick gave an update on the relocation of the flag poles.

Mayor Walton advised that the Fire Department would not be ordering the turn out suits until next year and that since they could not provide a receipt for payment the \$11,000.00 allocated for this purchase would be held until such time as they can provide a receipt.

Council member Barber advised that he was having trouble getting in touch with the company about the speed bumps for Easy and Davis Streets but hopefully would be able to speak with them in the next day or so.

There being nothing further the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Sandra Pou, City Clerk