

Searcy City Council – Regular Session
Tuesday, November 10, 2020 6:00 p.m.
Minutes

Mayor Kyle Osborne called to order the Regular Session of the Searcy City Council. City Clerk/Treasurer Jerry Morris called the roll with the following Council members answering “present”: Logan Cothorn, Mary Ann Arnett, Rodger Cargile, Don Raney, and Mike Chalenburg. Also present was City Attorney Buck Gibson. Chris Howell and Dale Brewer were not initially present.

At this time Mayor Osborne asked, with the Council’s approval, to advance item (6) to this point of the meeting. Item (6) was for the appointment of Tonia Hale to fill the open current term Ward 3 Position 1 Council position. A motion was made by Mr. Raney, seconded by Mr. Chalenburg, to approve the appointment of Tonia Hale to fill the open current term Ward 3 Position 1 Council position. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Arnett, Cargile, Raney, Chalenburg, and Cothorn. Mayor Osborne then closed the Council meeting and asked Judge Eric Kennedy to issue the oath of office to Mrs. Hale. Judge Kennedy issued the oath of office and Mayor Osborne asked Mrs. Hale to join the Council as Ward 3 Position 1 Council member.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 6:00 p.m. prior to the regular November 10, 2020 Council meeting regarding the issuance of refunding and capital improvement revenue bonds by the City of Searcy, Arkansas (Harding University and Harding Place) Public Educational and Residential Housing Facilities Board. Mayor Osborne opened the public hearing. No person requested to speak regarding the issuance of refunding and capital improvement revenue bonds by the City of Searcy, Arkansas (Harding University and Harding Place) Public Educational and Residential Housing Facilities Board. Mayor Osborne inquired of the Council as to whether any of them had any questions or comments. There were none. Mayor Osborne closed the public hearing.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 6:00 p.m. immediately following the previous public hearing on November 10, 2020. The purpose for this public hearing was for the consideration of any public input in determining the amounts of liens to be certified to the White County Tax Collector against certain properties as a result of grass cutting expenses and the abatement of other nuisances that have been incurred by the City of Searcy. Mayor Kyle Osborne opened the public hearing. No person requested to speak. Mayor Osborne closed the public hearing.

Mayor Kyle Osborne reopened and called to order the Regular Session of the Searcy City Council. Tom Martin gave the Invocation, with the Pledge of Allegiance following, led by Rodger Cargile. City Clerk/Treasurer Jerry Morris called the roll with the following Council members answering “present”: Logan Cothorn, Mary Ann Arnett, Rodger Cargile, Tonia Hale, Don Raney, and Mike Chalenburg. Also present was City Attorney Buck Gibson. Chris Howell and Dale Brewer were not present.

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Item (3) on the agenda was for suspending the rules and amending the agenda to add items: (13) continued discussion regarding the purchase of the Searcy Athletic Club building for use as a new library facility, (16-1-h) budget ordinance appropriations for receipt and use of funding to be used for the purchase of new library facility, (16-1-i) budget ordinance appropriation for the purchase of new library facility, and (16-2-f) budget ordinance authorization to expend funds for the purchase of new library facility. A motion was made by Mr. Raney and seconded by Mr. Cothorn to suspend the rules and amend the agenda to add the items. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Cargile, Hale, Raney, Chalenburg, Cothorn, and Arnett.

The minutes of the regular October 13, 2020 meeting of the Council were presented for approval. A motion was made by Mr. Cothorn and seconded by Mrs. Arnett to approve the minutes. The following voted to approve: Hale, Raney, Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, and Cargile.

Clerk/Treasurer Jerry Morris presented and read the Treasurer’s Report which lists the following balances as of October 31, 2020: General Fund: \$1,470,108.14; Street Fund \$2,570,214.20; Capital Equipment Fund \$17,863.83; LOPFI Fund \$201,446.62; Act 833 Fund \$29,849.82; Airport Fund \$94,211.49. The total of all of the preceding funds is \$4,383,694.10. He also reported the following balances as of October 31, 2020: Special Highway Connector Route Tax Fund \$3,227,424.24; 2014 Eight Year Plan Fund \$8,077,590.06; 0.25% Fire Protection Services County Sales Tax Fund \$426,638.30; Court Automation Fund \$50,399.04; Advertising and Tourism Promotion Fund \$1,077,631.12. He also reported a total of \$5,934,239.36 year-to-date in City and County Sales Tax revenues received, which is up \$611,647.57 from the same time in 2019.

Item (7) was for the reappointment of Jana Miller and Becky McGuirt to five-year terms on the Searcy Parks and Recreation Advisory Board with each’s term set to expire on November 3, 2025. A motion was made by Mr. Raney, seconded by Mr. Chalenburg, to approve the reappointment of Jana Miller and Becky McGuirt to five-year terms on the Searcy Parks and Recreation Advisory Board with each’s term set to expire on November 3, 2025. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Raney, Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, Cargile, and Hale.

Item (8) was for the appointment of Bill Ford to a five-year term on the Searcy Parks and Recreation Advisory Board with the term set to expire on November 3, 2025. A motion was made by Mr. Cothorn, seconded by Mrs. Arnett, to approve the appointment of Bill Ford to a five-year term on the Searcy Parks and Recreation Advisory Board with the term set to expire on November 3, 2025. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, Cargile, Hale, and Raney.

Council member Dale Brewer arrived at this time and took his position on the Council. Item (9) on the agenda was for the appointment of Butch Gardner to a five-year term on the Searcy Board of Public Utilities, with the term set to expire on December 31, 2024. A motion was made by Mr. Raney and seconded by Mrs. Arnett to approve the appointment of Butch Gardner to a five-year term on the Searcy Board of Public Utilities,

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with the term set to expire on December 31, 2024. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Cothorn, Arnett, Cargile, Hale, Raney, Brewer, and Chalenburg.

Item (10) was for the recognition from the Arkansas Association of Chiefs of Police for the Searcy Police Department. Mayor Osborne explained to the Council that due to unforeseen circumstances preventing the presence of concerned parties, he would like to table this item until the regular December 2020 Council meeting.

Item (11) on the agenda was a preliminary presentation for a 2021 budget. He stated to the Council to use the 2020 budget as a starting point for a budget proposal. He also noted that discussions have taken place and would continue with the department managers in order to help determine 2021 budgetary items.

Item (12) was for the presentation to the Council of the Searcy Water Utilities audit report for the fiscal year ended on June 30, 2020 and 2019. The copies of the audit report had not been received by the Council members at this time, therefore Mayor Osborne stated that this would be tabled until the regular December 2020 meeting and that he would make sure that the reports are provided to the Council members.

Item (13) was for continued discussion regarding the proposed purchase of the Searcy Athletic Club building for use as a new location for the Searcy Public Library. Mayor Osborne informed the Council that a purchase price of \$1,700,000.00 (with the City of Searcy paying \$850,000.00 and the White County Library Board paying \$850,000.00) had been proposed and that the seller also agree to pay half of the total waterproofing costs of up to \$170,000.00 (sellers portion of waterproofing costs would be not more than \$85,000.00). Mr. Brewer asked if any estimates have been procured as to the cost of any remodeling/renovations that will be needed to make the building useful as a library. Mayor Osborne noted that there has not been any estimates made but that the White County government has appropriated funds towards renovations and that the White County Library Board also has funds available. A motion was made by Mr. Raney and seconded by Mr. Cothorn to accept the proposed terms of the purchase of the Searcy Athletic Club building and for the authorization to proceed with the preparation of a negotiated contract for the purchase. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Arnett, Cargile, Hale, Raney, Brewer, Chalenburg, and Cothorn. Mayor Osborne noted that the contract/closing documentation will be prepared and that he would be calling a special Council meeting to consider the authorization to enter into an agreement for the purchase of the Searcy Athletic Club building.

Item (14) was a resolution approving the issuance of refunding and capital improvement revenue bonds by the City of Searcy, Arkansas (Harding University and Harding Place) Public Educational and Residential Housing Facilities Board. Mr. Gibson read the resolution in full. A motion was made by Mrs. Arnett and seconded by Mr. Cothorn to approve the issuance of refunding and capital improvement revenue bonds by the City of Searcy, Arkansas (Harding University and Harding Place) Public Educational and Residential Housing Facilities Board. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”:

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Cargile, Hale, Raney, Brewer, Cothorn, and Arnett. Mr. Chalenburg abstained from voting. **Resolution 2020-33**

Item (15) was a resolution approving amounts of liens to be certified to the White County Tax Collector against certain properties as a result of grass cutting expenses and abatement of other nuisances. Mr. Gibson read the resolution in full. Motion was made by Mr. Cothorn and seconded by Mrs. Arnett to pass the resolution. Motion carried with the following voting “yes”: Hale, Raney, Brewer, Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, and Cargile. **Resolution 2020-34**

Item (16) on the agenda was a budget ordinance to:

Section 1. The budget for the City of Searcy, Arkansas, is amended in the following manner:

a. Appropriate \$124,193.00 from Special 1% Connector Route Tax Fund unappropriated reserves to the ‘NORTH MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS’ expenditure account (#13 5-900-54-03) for construction services on the North Main Street improvement project;

b. Appropriate \$9,516.02 from 2014 Eight Year Plan Fund unappropriated reserves to ‘ROLLING MEADOWS/CLOVERDALE DRAINAGE’ expenditure account (#14 5-130-05-02) for Rolling Meadows/Cloverdale Addition drainage improvement project engineering services;

c. Appropriate \$77,766.32 from 2014 Eight Year Plan Fund unappropriated reserves to the ‘COUNTRY CLUB ROAD IMPROVEMENT’ expenditure account (#14 5-900-54-01) for construction services on the Country Club Road improvement project;

d. Appropriate \$5,000.00 to the General Fund ‘POLICE DONATIONS’ revenue account (#01 4-000-90-03) and appropriate \$5,000.00 to the Police Department ‘DONATIONS EXPENSED’ expenditure account (#01 5-060-05-06) for a donation from Walmart;

e. Appropriate \$3,600.00 to the General Fund ‘FIRE DONATIONS’ revenue account (#01 4-000-90-07) and appropriate \$3,600.00 to the Fire Department ‘DONATIONS EXPENSED’ expenditure account (#01 5-070-05-17) for a donation from Walmart;

f. Appropriate \$5,000.00 from General Fund unappropriated reserves to the Police Department ‘UNIFORMS’ expenditure account (#01 5-060-01-07);

g. Appropriate \$7,500.00 from General Fund unappropriated reserves to the Mayor’s Department ‘LEGAL EXPENSES’ expenditure account (#01 5-010-01-11) for expenses

related to foreclosure on cleanup liens that have been placed against certain properties;

h. Appropriate \$850,000.00 to 2014 Eight Year Plan Fund to 'PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING' revenue account (#14 4-000-80-01) and appropriate \$850,000.00 to 2014 Eight Year Plan Fund 'LIBRARY FACILITY PURCHASE' expenditure account (#14 5-020-54-01) for the receipt and use of funds to be used toward the purchase of new library facility;

i. Appropriate \$850,000.00 from 2014 Eight Year Plan Fund unappropriated reserves to 'LIBRARY FACILITY PURCHASE' expenditure account (#14 5-020-54-01) to be used toward the purchase of new library facility;

Section 2. The Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to expend the following sums:

- a. \$11,638.16 to Stephenson Oil Company for fuel for all departments;
- b. \$108,217.06 to Regions Bank for payment on the loan for the construction of the Searcy Swim Center (#14 5-085-05-01);
- c. \$124,193.00 to Township Builders, Inc. for construction services on the North Main Street improvement project (#13 5-900-54-03);
- d. \$9,516.02 to Morrison – Shipley Engineers Inc. for Rolling Meadows/Cloverdale Addition drainage improvement project engineering services (#14 5-130-05-02);
- e. \$77,766.32 to RL Persons Construction, Inc., for construction services on the Country Club Road improvement project (#14 5-900-54-01);
- f. \$1,700,000.00 for the purchase of building for use as a new location for the Searcy Public Library (#14 5-020-54-01);

A motion was made by Mr. Raney, seconded by Mr. Brewer, to suspend the rules and allow reading of the ordinance by title only. Motion carried with the following voting "yes": Raney, Brewer, Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, Cargile, and Hale. Mr. Gibson read the ordinance by title only. A motion was then made by Mr. Chalenburg, seconded by Mr. Brewer, to adopt the ordinance. The ordinance passed with the following voting "yes": Brewer, Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, Cargile, Hale, and Raney. Mr. Gibson then read the emergency clause of the ordinance. Motion was made by Mr. Raney, seconded by Mr. Brewer, to adopt the emergency clause, with the following voting "yes": Chalenburg, Cothorn, Arnett, Cargile, Hale, Raney, and Brewer. **Ordinance 2020-40**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

Minutes Approved: December 8, 2020

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/s/ Kyle Osborne
MAYOR OF SEARCY

ATTEST:

/s/ Jerry Morris
CITY CLERK

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