**Regular Month Meeting**

**Benton City Council**

**August 16, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Benton City Council was called to order on Monday, August 16, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. at Benton City Hall by Mayor Rita Dotson. This meeting was also available via Zoom. The Pledge of Allegiance and opening prayer was given by Rob Mattingly.

 Council Members Present: Butch Holland, Rita Murray, Ann Riley, Sherra Riley, Charlie Edmonds and Kevin Farley via Zoom.

 Other Staff Present: Rob Mattingly, City Attorney; Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer; Todd Riley, Gas Mgr. and Stephen Sanderson, Police Chief

 Randy Barrett, owner of 1211 Poplar Street, was present to discuss his recent high water bill usage of 113,800 gallons. He explained that he is confident no water has been used by him as he has the water shut off valve inside the building turned off. The meter box did get hit in July by Smith Contracting and Chad Warren replaced the box. Benton Water pulled the meter on August 5 and sent the meter off for testing and it came back accurate. He presented pictures from August 5 before Chad pulled the meter that appears this meter has been pulled some time prior. He feels someone has used this meter and replaced it. After much discussion, a motion was made by Murray, seconded by Holland to adjust his bill back to his normal zero usage as they feel it is too big of a coincidence that damage had been done and then the usage increased. All agreed. Motion carried.

 Benton Gas previously published for bids for a new welding truck. The only bid received was from David Taylor for a 2021 Dodge 4x4 diesel for $52,345. A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by S. Riley to accept the bid. All agreed. Motion carried.

 There was discussion on raising the penalties for delinquent business licenses. City Attorney will prepare an ordinance for a first reading at the next regular meeting to propose a 10% penalty after 30 days, 30% penalty after 60 days and 50% penalty after 90 days.

 City Attorney Mattingly read the first reading of an ordinance to specify a sewer clean-out size to 4”.

 City Attorney Mattingly read the first reading of an ordinance on revenue and taxation. This ordinance specified a substitute rate at. 0.22. A. Riley would like the Council to consider increasing the rate a small amount above this rate but keep below the 4% increase which would be .228. Increasing this substitute rate will require a public hearing. A public hearing was set for September 14, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

 City Attorney Mattingly read the first reading of an ordinance changing the current number of Board of Adjustment members from 3 to 5.

 City Attorney Mattingly read a resolution setting September as City Government Month. A motion was made by S. Riley, seconded by Holland to approve. All agreed. Motion carried.

 Mayor Dotson discussed a .32-acre lot that the City owns on West 8th Street and if they are interested in sending this out for bids. A motion was made by A. Riley, seconded by S. Riley to proceed. All agreed. Motion carried.

 Chief Sanderson presented the police report for July. There were 12 cases, 25 collisions, 49 citation violations and 628 calls to service. He announced our new officer, Jake Darnell, that will begin on August 23.

 A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Holland to approve the regular minutes of July 19, 2021. All agreed. Motion carried.

 A motion was made by Holland, seconded by Edmonds to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss land acquisition. All agreed. Motion carried.

 A motion was made by Murray, seconded by Holland to adjourn from Executive Session and adjourn the regular meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Council, meeting adjourned at 7:03 P.M.

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 Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treas.