

**Regular Month Meeting
Benton City Council
February 19, 2018**

The regular monthly meeting of the Benton City Council was called to order on Monday, February 19, 2018 at 5:00 P.M. by Mayor Rita Dotson with the Pledge of Allegiance and opening prayer by Zach Brien.

Council Members Present:

Chris Smithmier	Charles Edmonds
Sherra Riley	Justin Lamb
Rita Murray	Butch Holland

Other Staff Present:

Zach Brien, City Atty	Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treas
Kelly Collins, Gas Mgr	Jeromy Hicks, Police Chief
Harry Green, Fire Chief	
Caleb Curtner, Police Officer	

Cathy and Chandler Maddox were present to commend Benton Gas for helping them when they had a carbon monoxide leak. She appreciated the professionalism from Tracy Puckett and Jason Dunigan. Cathy has contacted First Alert and they have agreed to donate 100 carbon monoxide detectors to Benton Gas to give to those customers who might not have one.

City Attorney Brien read the first reading of an ordinance amending the powers and duties of Mayor.

City Attorney Brien read the first reading of an ordinance amending the mixed use ordinance. Currently C1 and some C2 zoned properties can apply for mixed use status and the current application process is based on the current occupant. This amendment will allow for the initial approved application to continue through occupant changes. There will be some restrictions on this change and each occupant must register with Planning and Zoning office. Brien also mentioned that he would like added to this ordinance for commercial use in industrial zones.

City Attorney Brien read the first reading of an ordinance to amending the sewer service charge ordinance to allow for the City to go through a customer's sewer service line towards the main. City Clerk Bethany Cooper mentioned that it needs to state that the sewer clean-out should be at the property owner's property line before the City will use that as access.

Police Chief Hicks presented the police report for January. There were 16 cases, 18 collisions, 32 citations, 0 written warnings and 637 calls to service. Hicks recognized his officers that worked the school shooting at MCHS on January 23, 2018.

Chief Hicks asked permission to purchase a new Ford Explorer SUV to replace his car, the 2006 Crown Vic. Mayor Dotson stated that there is \$44,000 to cover this in the ABC Regulatory account. A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Lamb to approve the purchase. All agreed. Motion carried.

Smithmier asked why an 8th officer hasn't been hired yet. Hicks explained they are waiting because of the retirement hike issue. Hicks said they are running good with seven officers at this point. Mayor Dotson mentioned that Benton has County and State police help as well. She keeps updated by Chief Hicks and the officers and hasn't had any complaints from the guys at this point.

Mayor Dotson asked approval for Rebecca Sealock to be added to the Planning and Zoning Board. A motion was made by Lamb, seconded by Edmonds to approve. All agreed. Motion carried.

Mayor Dotson requested that the WWTP Account be closed since the loan is now paid off and that the remaining balance of \$78,466.01 be moved to the Sewer Maintenance Account. These funds will be used towards sludge removal at the WWTP. A motion was made by Holland, seconded by Riley to approve. All agreed. Motion carried.

Mayor Dotson would like approval to bid out the City's mowing this year. A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Holland to approve. All agreed. Motion carried.

Mayor Dotson informed the Council that there are a couple of employees who have their conceal carry license and would like to carry at work. Mayor Dotson also made mention that these employees are around inmates at times during the day. City Attorney Brien commented that law allows for government agencies to prohibit open and conceal carry weapons. However, if the weapons are concealed in their personal vehicles and the vehicle is locked, it is allowed. Mayor Dotson decided to leave the proposed policy to not allow. All agreed.

Mayor Dotson presented Gunner Boatright's idea of a pump track to be built at H.H. Lovett Park behind the skate park. A pump track is a practice track for mountain bikers. Mayor feels this will be an inexpensive addition to the City Park. A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Smithmier to proceed. All agreed. Motion carried.

Planning and Zoning Board submitted a list of changes that they recommend for the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning and Zoning Board re-adopted the 2008 Comprehensive Plan for another year to account for any zoning and annexation changes that have been adopted since the 2008 Plan was adopted. They also suggested the following:

- Provide pedestrian/bicycle lanes and/or sidewalks where possible to accommodate a more healthy environment for citizens of Benton
- Plats that come through the Planning and Zoning office need to also be reviewed by local water and sewer department supervisors to note the status of existing water and sewer lines closest to projected development
- The City needs to have any new development install water retention drains on plats.
- Address the minimum size on a single family home outside of apartments or condominiums or other such structures (tiny homes)
- Require "Final as Built Plat" be submitted to Planning and Zoning office.

City Attorney Brien suggested adopting the 2008 Comprehensive Plan with the zoning and annexation updates only and hold off on the other suggestions until the plan is updated. A motion was made by Riley, seconded by Smithmier to approve as suggestion. All agreed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Murray to approve payroll and invoices. All agreed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Holland, seconded by Edmonds to approve the special called minutes of January 22, 2018. All agreed. Motion carried.

The following Mayor and Council items were discussed:

Chris Smithmier – There used to be a 45 MPH speed limit sign on Main Street heading South near H.H. Lovett Park. He asked that this be checked into.

Justin Lamb – Ask that the benches at the skate park be turned toward the skate park.

Butch Holland – The gazebo located by the Benton Electric System shop needs the posts to be re-painted.

Mayor Dotson – Informed the Council on the recent pool update. The following statement was received from Darren Smith with Pinnacle. "I just received an update from the meeting this afternoon between Steele & Albritton and Jan (State Pool Inspector). They are now requiring two (2) 8" lines be installed for the pool drains. This means the existing 6" lines are not adequate." Mayor Dotson has made contact with State Representatives to help get more answers.

Mayor Dotson recognized Drew Williams in attendance as a candidate for State Representative.

There being no further business to come before the Council, meeting adjourned at 6:05 P.M.

Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treas.