

**Regular Month Meeting
Benton City Council
January 17, 2017**

The regular monthly meeting of the Benton City Council was called to order on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 at 5:00 P.M. by Mayor Rita Dotson with the Pledge of Allegiance and opening prayer by Justin Lamb.

Council Members Present:

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

Other Staff Present:

Zach Brien, City Attorney
Michele Edwards, City Clerk
Bethany Cooper, City Treasurer
Tracy Watwood, Police Chief
Kelly Collins, Gas Manager
Harry Green, Fire Chief

City Attorney Brien read the Pioneer Fire Contract for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017. A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Murray to approve. All agreed. Motion carried.

Dallas and Lisa Peck were present to discuss the Benton Car Cruise. They are requesting at least \$8,000.00 to continue coordinating the 6 month event. They went over the history of the cruise in since it started and how much it has grown. They also told about all the work they put in to make it successful. Murray stated that she knows of several people that have volunteered and were turned away. Lisa denied this statement. Murray also stated that if they were going to be paid for this position then they wouldn't need so many volunteers. Lisa argued that they still will need volunteers to help them. Murray asked for a list of expenses before she decides to vote to pay them to coordinate the event. Murray also mentioned that she would like donations to come from Marshall County and not surrounding counties. Finally, Murray mentioned that she feels if the Pecks are paid to coordinate this event when it was originally intended to be a volunteer only position, that other volunteers will start requesting to be paid to help with events.

Mayor Dotson polled all Council members and each member felt that they should be paid something for all their hard work to coordinate this event. It was suggested that they be paid \$8,000 from the special events budget line item and with that money, the Pecks are to be responsible for paying the two toilets and the bands. City Treasurer mentioned that in doing this, there will no longer be a summer concert series because it will take away from that budget.

After much discussion, no decision was made. Mayor Dotson is to find out who will be liable if the Pecks are paid directly. The other option is for the City to pay Benton Partnership and then Benton Partnership pay the Pecks. City Attorney Brien and Mayor Dotson are going to find out more information.

Chief Tracy Watwood presented the police report for December. There were 25 cases, 27 accidents, 84 citations of which 31 were for speeding and 578 calls to service. He also gave a call comparison: 2015 there were 3577 calls to service and 2016 there were 7352 calls to service. The increase in calls is due to routine ABC patrol, more aggressive patrol from his officers and some officer generated calls. Watwood stated that alcohol related incidents have not affected their call volume.

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

A motion was made by Holland, seconded by Smithmier to approve the regular minutes of December 19, 2016 and the special called minutes of January 12, 2017. All agreed. Motion carried.

In Council items, Justin Lamb mentioned he has had a couple complaints about the condition of Walnut Street extended that runs behind the old Benton Middle School. Mayor Dotson said the bad spot on that road had already been paved. She will take another look to see if there is another area that needs attention.

Butch Holland gave an update on the Benton Electric Board meeting. They follow the TVA Act. They are going to begin rotating the Chairman of the Board as stated to do so in the Act which currently has not been followed. Holland said that Mark Fisk also told him that Benton Electric is not mandated to have their own by-laws since they are not a co-op. City Attorney Brien feels this is not correct and will contact Mr. Fisk. Holland also mentioned that Benton Electric is going to start charging a \$10.00 fee to deliver the cut-off notice door hangers.

Sherra Riley followed up to see if Mayor Dotson had contacted Randy Fox about doing a pay scale study for all departments in the City. Mayor Dotson said that she has a meeting set up with Mr. Fox on January 19 at 1:30 P.M.

Chris Smithmier wants the council to go ahead and update the temporary business license ordinance before Tater Day so that all Tater Day vendors can be notified before next year. City Attorney Brien will draw up an amended ordinance.

Mayor Dotson informed the Council that we have verbally been awarded the 2016 LWCF grant to re-do the pool house. This grant is a matching grant up to \$75,000. We will be required to hire an engineer or architect to complete this project and it has been recommended by Larry Spears, Commercial Building Inspector, that an architect is hired. She also mentioned that Modern Woodmen has given the City a \$500 credit at Cole Lumber to use towards the pool house. City Treasurer Cooper also noted that with Tim King's Christmas donation envelopes that the City received \$25.00.

Mayor Dotson announced that the bleachers at the grandstand are almost complete. The project was put on hold by Larry Spears per state requirement. The project was mandated to have an architect and engineer. The engineer work was complete but it was never signed off by an architect. Marshall County Fair Board paid to have an architect complete the work.

Mayor Dotson also informed the Council that the City was going to soon be billed by Kentucky Retirement System for a pension spiking penalty on Scott Brown for approximately \$13,000. The spiking penalty occurred because Mr. Brown had a pay increase of over 10% in a 3 year period. Watwood

explained that when Scott was hired, he assured the interview board that he was going to work at least six years. If this was the case, a spiking would never have occurred. However, after a little over a year with Benton Police Department, he cashed in a life insurance policy in order to retire early. Since Benton's pay scale is higher than Murray Police Department's pay scale where Scott transferred from, this was the cause of spiking.

There being no further business to come before the Council, meeting adjourned at 6:53 P.M. upon motion of Edmonds, seconded by Murray. Motion carried.

Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Michele Edwards, City Clerk