**Special Called Meeting**

**Benton City Council**

**September 10, 2018**

A special called meeting of the Benton City Council was called to order on Monday, September 10, 2018 at 5:00 P.M. by Mayor Rita Dotson with opening Pledge of Allegiance and prayer by Zach Brien.

Council Members Present: Chris Smithmier, Sherra Riley, Rita Murray, Butch Holland, Justin Lamb and Charles Edmonds.

Other Staff Present:

Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer Zach Brien, City Attorney

Jeromy Hicks, Police Chief

Harry Green, Fire Chief

Mr. & Mrs. Crouch of Merrywood Drive were presented to see if the Mayor had any additional information regarding their grinder pump concern. Mayor Dotson has talked with Chad McCann from RiverCrest Engineering to investigate if they are able to connect to City sewer. McCann also informed Mayor Dotson that he knows of no other City that takes over personal pumps like that.

Josh Tubbs, Marshall County Economic Development, was present to discuss updates with Southwest One. There is already a business interested in locating at the new park and a lease is currently being negotiated. This prospective business will have approximately 50 employees and are interested in breaking ground soon. They need confirmation that utilities will be available for them. Currently, Marshall County Fiscal Court and Industrial Development Authority are working on finance options. Marshall County Fiscal Court is prepared to fund the approximate $2.1 million project to run sewer and water to the industrial park location. Tubbs mentioned that the annexation and zoning requirements will need to be prepared for moving forward quickly once a decision is made. Tubbs also mentioned an option for repayment from the City by capturing the payroll tax that will come from the prospective business and reimbursing County. Mayor Dotson asked about property taxes. Tubbs explained that he doesn’t know the terms yet but if the IDA Board leases the property and the building then no property taxes will be collected. City Attorney Brien asked if the proposed infrastructure upgrade will reach the entire industrial park and it will, although road construction will still have to be factored in on top of that figure. Brien was also concerned about how to safeguard the substantial investment made by the City, County and IDA in the event the business doesn’t last. Tubbs said the main goal will be to recruit solid, reputable companies up front. Tubbs commented that the County is dedicated in seeing this project move forward and an agreement will have to be settled upon between the City and the County with the utilities. He anticipates an announcement from the proposed business by the end of September. Smithmier asked how much property this prospective business will occupy and Tubbs said only a small portion. There will be enough room for other businesses to locate. Murray asked the average pay rate. Tubbs wasn’t sure but he said the positions were all salary positions that require a Bachelor’s degree. Mayor Dotson would like the Council to meet with Fiscal Court and IDA so that everyone is on the same page.

Mayor Dotson read the first reading of an ordinance for revenue and taxation setting the rates as follows: real property at 21.3 cents; personal property at 26.89 cents and vehicles at 24 cents.

City Attorney Brien read the first reading of an ordinance to repeal the personnel policy. The personnel policy is being redone and will be adopted by Municipal Order in the future instead of ordinance to help with the ease of making amendments.

Mayor Dotson read the first reading of an ordinance amending the charge to replace sewer caps from $10.00 to $25.00.

City Attorney Brien read the first reading of an ordinance amending Section 73.01 of the City’s Code of Ordinances to allow bicycles to operate on some sidewalks. Mayor Dotson commented that there might need to be a section that does not allow bicycles on Main and Poplar Streets between 10th Street and 12th Street on the Court Square because of all of the businesses.

City Attorney Brien read a resolution limiting the liability of the City of Benton for the compensation wages from Benton Electric System. Benton Electric System operates as a separate entity from City of Benton, with the City only having the authority regarding board membership and the equitable ownership of the assets owned by Benton Electric System. A motion was made by Lamb, seconded by Riley to approve. All agreed. Motion carried.

Chief Hicks presented the police report for August. There were 25 cases, 14 collisions, 13 citations and 630 calls to service. Hicks informed the Council of a new radar system that he ordered to help control speed in Benton.

A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Holland to approve the special called minutes of August 23, 2018. All agreed. Motion carried.

In Mayor/Council items, Mayor Dotson informed the Council that she has been in contact with the State Engineer regarding repaving of Main Street and Poplar Street. Currently the plans are for the State to dig down 10” from 5th Street to 8th Street, relocate the utilities to the right-of-way, replace the water main, curbs, gutters and sidewalks. They will install drop inlets every 20 feet. From 9th Street on out, they only plan to go down 3” and replace the roadway. Their reasoning was that the traffic count wasn’t high enough in that area. The State Engineer thinks there may have been a glitch in the system so they will be taking a recount soon. If the count does not come back any higher, the City will be given the opportunity to replace the water line and the State will backfill. They will not start this project until after Tater Day.

There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 6:34 P.M.

Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer