**Special Called Meeting & Public Hearing**

**Benton City Council**

**September 14, 2021**

 The public hearing was called to order on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 5:00 PM by Mayor Rita Dotson. The purpose of the public hearing was to hear the public’s comments regarding a proposed tax rate increase. No one was present for the public hearing. Public hearing adjourned at 5:01 PM.

The special called meeting of the Benton City Council was called to order immediately following the public hearing.

 Council Members Present: Butch Holland, Charles Edmonds, Ann Riley, Rita Murray and Kevin Farley.

 Absent was Sherra Riley.

 Other Staff Present: Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer and Rob Mattingly, City Attorney;

 Mayor Dotson began the property tax rate discussion. The substitute rate for 2021 is 0.220 cents per $100.00 of assessed value for real property. The rate for 2020 was 0.221 cents per $100.00 of assessed value for real property. Anything above the compensating/substitute rate required a public hearing to proceed. A motion was made by Murray, seconded by Farley to keep the rate at 0.221 cents per $100.00 of assessed value for real property as it was in 2020. All agreed. Motion carried.

 City Attorney Mattingly read the first reading of the revenue and taxation ordinance setting real estate at 0.221 cents per $100.00 of assessment value, personal property at 0.3459 cents per $100.00 of assessment value and vehicles at 0.24 cents per $100.00 of assessed value.

 City Attorney Mattingly explained that abandoned property can have a tax rate set above the compensating rate but not to exceed 0.75 cents per $100.00 of assessed value. He explained what constitutes as abandoned property as well. After Council discussion, it was decided to charge the highest allowable rate. Holland sponsored the ordinance and City Attorney Mattingly read the first reading setting abandoned property tax rate at 0.75 cents.

 City Attorney Mattingly read the first reading of a zoning change ordinance for the old Marshall County Library property located at 1001 Poplar Street from a mixed zone use of C-1 and R-3 to all C-1. Planning and Zoning Board approved and recommended this change to Council. This will encompass the entire block of 10th to 11th Streets and Poplar and Elm Streets.

 Mayor Dotson discussed a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant that she would like the City to apply for in order to add more sidewalk in Benton for the purpose of connectivity and accessibility. The City’s portion would be 20% match and the project is currently estimated at $1.1 million. The proposed areas are West 8th Street, Commerce Boulevard, Morningside Drive, Powell Lane and Ash Street. A motion was made by Edmonds, seconded by Farley to pursue the TAP grant. All agreed. Motion carried.

 There being no further business to come before the Council, meeting adjourned at 5:32 P.M.

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 Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treas.