

MINUTES (AMENDED)
GOSHEN CITY COUNCIL
January 11, 2022 at 6:30
via Zoom and the Community Building

Call to Order: Mayor Max Poye called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Roll Call: Paula Anderson, Colton Martin, John Vaillancourt, Birch Wright and Jamie VanBecelaere were present. Bill Hewat was absent. Mayor Max Poye and Brian Hogue, the City Attorney were also present.

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Poye for changes to the agenda. Lora Nanak noted that "Financial Reports" was listed on the agenda, twice. The Mayor recommended striking the second "Financial Reports". John Vaillancourt motioned to approve the agenda as written, and the Mayor added with "striking the second Financial Report". Jamie VanBecelaere seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: John Vaillancourt made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 14 Council Meeting as written. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Reports for December

A. Annexation Report: Mayor Poye reported the Annexation Committee would meet this month and have something for the next meeting.

B. Arbor Board Report: Mary Smith reports that the budget needs to be passed because the population is greater, so the budget must go up, based on the Tree City Designation. Report is in the Council's packet. Mayor Poye asked if that is \$2.00 per capita for the Tree City Designation. Mary Smith confirmed it is.

Birch Wright asked about the costs about design and building costs for the park kiosk. Mary Smith says she has budgeted \$1000.00 in the Urban Forestry Grant for supplies and equipment. It will be built free of charge.

The Mayor asked if Mary Smith wanted to share the Arbor Board Plaque for the property. She stated there are many diverse trees on the property. The Mayor offered thanks to the Arbor Board and the volunteers. John Vaillancourt mentioned that letter sent to the City Council from the Archaeological Survey should be shared.

Mary Smith stated that the road east out of Goshen used to run through this property.

C. Building Official's Report: JD Demotte reports December was a slow month. Report is in Council's packet. Lora Nanak stated that she received a call from the Census Bureau regarding the \$1,000,000.00 home. They believed she had made a mistake; they will likely call JD Demotte.

D. Financial Report: Lora Nanak reported; financial reports are in Council's packet. As of December 31, 2021 the General Fund was \$986,273.21. The Street Fund was \$211,803.41. The Stimulus ARPA account was \$201,208.38. The police 988 account was \$16,129.63. Total revenue, less expenses and transfers, was \$400,000.00 more. If you put the capital expenditure money in there, the City is \$28,000.00 in the red.

E. Parks & Rec. Report: Ken Smith presented. Report is in Council's packet. A request for architectural services will appear in area newspapers for Mill Branch Park. Professional services are also needed for the FUN Park

project. This particular grant calls for professional services by an architect or engineer. In the \$75,000.00 grant through the state, up to 12% of the funds can be used for these services. Selection should begin after February 17.

Construction of the parking area at Mill Branch has started, and a kiosk will be in the northeast corner of the parking area.

Chuck Jacobus summarized the progress with the DOT grant applications and programs. He reports it starts on March 1, and a meeting will be held to determine what should be included in the application and answer questions. DOT suggested that the application be submitted twice, for two separate programs, for independent consideration by different committees. Ken Smith reports Parks and Rec. will be working more closely with the area Commissioner, which is a new approach this year. Ken Smith will update the transportation grant application and come back to the City Council for review soon.

Parks and Rec. is anticipating the opportunity to work with Natural State Streams on the water crossing at the new park. A tentative plan exists for April/May construction of the stream crossing feature.

The Mayor states that a major rainstorm convinced him the need to have professional service was needed for this project. The estimate to complete this work was \$3,500.00, which the Mayor thought was very reasonable, and would like the Council's blessing for the work. Ken Smith added that there is \$1,800.00 remaining in the Jacobus gift that can be used toward this, so the City would only need to provide \$1,700.00 to total \$3,500.00.

The Mayor states that is the plan, unless he is told otherwise. Jamie VanBecelaere remarked that the Mayor should go for it. The Mayor also stated that after the big rain, the gravel washed and that the road needs a solution. He believes that raising the road 3-4 feet and putting in a culvert would solve the issue, as a long-term plan. Ken Smith states that may be a subject of next year's DOT grant request.

Birch Wright asked if the City should continue to put funds into the area if it continues to wash out. The Mayor states the gravel was 'rearranged' and Mike Bowen was able to fix it. A load of gravel is \$300.00, and would not be required often. Birch Wright shared he wanted to make sure a solution was planned, to avoid having to constantly putting money into it.

Ken Smith discussed a basic set of park rules that are being drafted. The Mayor wants the Council to think about what type of traffic should and should not be allowed on the trails. Paula Anderson is against motorized vehicles, unless individuals are using them for disability assistance. Ken Smith states that best practices in Arkansas will be considered during the drafting process.

F. Planning Commission: Lora Nanak presented. The Planning Commission asked that Lora Nanak start completing a financial report to compare year-to-year. In 2020, \$4,300.00 in planning fees were collected, in 2021, \$6,800.00 was collected. This month, two rezoning requests have been received, and a public hearing will be held.

G. Police Department Report: Chief Travis presented. Report is in Council's packet. Chief Travis reported that the state bid on the two vehicles fell through, which means the City can't get state pricing on pursuit vehicles. A discount can still be received from Superior, if approved by the Council. It will make each unit \$4,000.00 more than was shared by the Chief. The budget is for \$53,000.00 per unit, which is still more than what the vehicles will cost.

Birch Wright recommended approval. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded it. The Mayor asked for any public comment. The motion carried.

Chief Travis indicated that the fifth patrol position is now open again. The Chief is considering hiring an uncertified officer. The uncertified officer must be sent through Academy. This approach would require more training locally.

Birch Wright clarified that the cost of the Academy is free, officer salary is only paid. He also asked if that impacted insurance rates. City Attorney Brian Hogue said he would check with the Municipal League. Birch Wright stated other communities are having trouble recruiting, as well. He supports this. John Vaillancourt also supports this.

Birch Wright asked if overtime would increase to support this. Chief Travis provided schedules for coverage and how OT would be assigned. This schedule will continue 24-hour coverage. Birch Wright, John Vaillancourt and Jamie VanBecelaere all voiced support for this plan.

Birch Wright asked that if the Chief found the recruit was not working out, steps need to be taken quickly to remove them.

H. Stimulus Report: Lora Nanak reported the next scheduled meeting is coming up. She received notice yesterday that guidance has been received on how the money can be spent. The City could spend the money without restrictions. Any suggestions should be sent to Lora Nanak via email, and she will take them to the Committee. The first training is tomorrow on how to spend the stimulus money. She believes if training is occurring, some stipulations must exist. There is \$200,000.00 now and another \$200,000.00, she believes, in April.

Lora Nanak brought up the air filtration system. The Council did not vote on that last month, but did approve the defibrillators. She asked if the Council wanted to vote on the air purifiers tonight. John Vaillancourt stated he believed the City could move ahead on this. John Vaillancourt made a motion to fund the defibrillators and air purifications systems as discussed at the last Council meeting, to come from the funds that the City is getting of \$400,000.00. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Mayor stated that he recalled the Stimulus letter stated the money could be spent on government services, including parks and trails.

I. Street Report: Mike Bowen presented. Report is in Council's packet. Mike Bowen stated that the ballpark cost to repair the washed-out area Mayor Poye referred to earlier was \$15,000.00 - \$25,000.00. That price does not include the bridge, but does include bringing it about three foot above grade. This price doesn't include the water crossing.

Lora Nanak stated a chat question came in asking about using the Stimulus money for premium pay. She said that was going to be discussed next week.

J. Volunteer Fire Department: No presentation. Report is in Council's packet. Jamie VanBecelaere asked why the Fire Department didn't come to the meetings now. The Fire Department was told in the past they could submit a report and not attend. Jamie VanBecelaere asked if she could invite the Fire Department back to the Council meeting. No objection was given.

Old Business

A. Bonuses for Elected Officials: City Attorney Hogue reviewed the decision from the last Council meeting to give bonuses to all City employees. A question was raised after if that included elected officials (Mayor Poye, Recorder/Treasurer Michael Thompson). City Attorney Hogue stated he did not know the answer to that question.

Lora Nanak spoke to Council members outside of the meeting to determine intent. City Attorney Hogue brought the decision to the Council meeting to clarify the intent of the Council.

John Vaillancourt stated that all are deserving. He believed the Mayor stated he didn't want the bonus, and that Recorder/Treasurer Michael Thompson had been in the office a very short time. Mayor Poye stated he is perfectly good without a bonus.

Jamie VanBecelaere believes that Mayor Poye should get a bonus. If he doesn't want it, he can donate it. She told Lora Nanak that she didn't believe Recorder/Treasurer Michael Thompson had been here long enough; perhaps a smaller amount.

City Attorney Hogue asked for a motion. John Vaillancourt motioned to give Mayor Poye a bonus, the same as all full-time city employees, and that we forgo anything for Michael Thompson because of when he started. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded the motion. The Mayor asked for public input.

Colton Martin shared the Council should consider giving a bonus based on the bonus given to officers who have served a similar time. Jamie VanBecelaere stated she would agree. Paula Anderson asked what the amount of the bonuses given was, and was answered \$2,000.00 full-time and \$1,000.00 part-time. City Attorney Hogue stated the motion on the table was ready for a vote.

The vote on the motion was all opposed and defeated. Birch Wright made a motion to give the Mayor a full-time equivalent bonus of \$2,000.00 and Recorder/Treasurer Michael Thompson a part-time equivalent bonus of \$1,000.00, since he has not been in the role a full year. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded the motion. Mayor Poye asked for public input. Motion carried.

B. Budget Approval: Jamie VanBecelaere wished to discuss paying police officers more money. When comparing the salaries of officers to other city employees, she believes officers should make at least the beginning wage of \$43,260.00. John Vaillancourt stated the officers are making that amount. Jamie VanBecelaere stated that the Corporal makes \$37,500.00, if they get a 3% increase this year.

Birch Wright stated he is a big supporter of the police. He stated there are Human Resources considerations, such as experience, education and prior jobs. A salary recommendation should be from the Mayor and not based on a feeling based on what another employee makes. Jamie VanBecelaere asked if the employees get evaluations. Birch Wright feels this should be the subject of an executive session discussion. John Vaillancourt stated there are many other responsibilities to be considered. Jamie VanBecelaere stated that all roles need to be considered for increases. John Vaillancourt shared the Chief has approached the Council about this before and it has been done in the past.

City Attorney Hogue asked for the Chief's and Mayor's opinion. The Mayor is in favor of paying officers more. The Mayor requested that the Council go through the budget approval process, since it can be amended, and he will talk to Chief Travis specifically about this issue and have something for the next Council meeting. City Attorney Hogue agrees.

Lora Nanak stated that the salary report had an inaccuracy and she will fix the figures to reflect correctly. The actual amount of the budget doesn't change.

Paula Anderson asked about page two under City Hall, utility, cable and internet, telephone. The number is drastically lower than the YTD total. She asked if there was a new service provider. Lora Nanak stated that they had switched providers from AT&T to OzarksGo.

Paula Anderson asked about the salary increases for employees, whether it will be 3% or 5%. Five percent is in the budget, and Paula Anderson is fine with this amount. Jamie VanBecelaere asked if these raises are based on evaluations or across the board, and Paula Anderson said that is a question for the Mayor.

Jamie VanBecelaere asked what the cost-of-living increase was. Birch Wright stated it is 2-3% in most industries.

Colton Martin motioned to accept the 2022 budget with 5% pay increases. Paula Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

City Attorney Hogue commented that a vote needs to occur on the resolution in the packet. Birch Wright made a motion to read the Resolution by title only. Paula Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

City Attorney Hogue read: "Resolution No. 2022-1, Resolution Adopting 2022 Budget".

Jamie VanBecelaere made a motion to approve the Resolution, John Vaillancourt seconded. Motion carried.

C. Report on Bank Building: The Mayor's opinion is that the building will need a lot of work. The cost is \$690,000.00. Lora Nanak agrees that it would cost too much money to fix up. The Mayor's suggestion is that the City talk to Mashie about buying the parcel that adjoins the two acres behind the Community Building. John Vaillancourt made a motion that we move ahead and forget about the bank building and look at the Mashie property for a location due to expansion and building a new city hall. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Paula Anderson mentioned that the property needs to be suitable for building and parking lots, and determine what the needs are for the future.

Birch Wright shared that he didn't believe a motion was needed, as the Council would not want to give the impression that the Mashie property has been preselected. The Mayor agreed and stated that other properties would be considered also.

New Business

Citizen of the Year Award: Mayor Poye recognized Ken and Mary Smith as the Citizens of the Year for their work for the City of Goshen. A plaque will be placed in City Hall with their names. Mary Smith is very appreciative of the volunteers. Both were very surprised and touched at receiving the award.

Reports/Comments by Mayor, Aldermen, City Attorney: Mayor Poye stated the Arbor Board President asked if the City was interested in sponsoring the Arbor Board Annual Meeting (Master Gardener Convention). The sponsorship is \$250.00.

City Attorney Hogue was asked if the City could sponsor such an event. He stated he was unaware, but would follow up and advise the City if it was a problem, prior to cutting a check. John Vaillancourt, Jamie VanBecelaere and Birch Wright are all in favor. Birch Wright states the City should have some sponsorship guidelines around what can and can't be sponsored.

Colton Martin motioned to approve a sponsorship of \$250.00, subject to the legality. Jamie VanBecelaere seconded it. Motion carried.

Mayor Poye discussed the position on the Boston Mountain Solid Waste board. A representative from the City Council should be appointed. Colton Martin has volunteered to be the representative. Mayor Poye asked City Attorney Hogue to create a resolution appointing Colton Martin to the position. Colton Martin was hereby appointed by Mayor Poye to the position until the resolution was prepared.

Mayor Poye discussed fixing the roof on City Hall. Mike Bowen received a recommendation that the roof could be fixed by a sealant that could be mopped on the shingles for about \$250.00 a bucket.

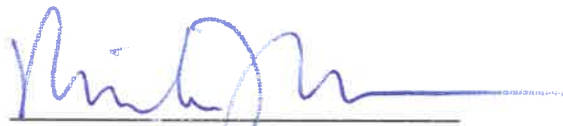
Mayor Poye stated the parking lot bid had been cleared up, and it has started.

Jamie VanBecelaere shared that the Twin Bridges work has started and they have run into a solid rock underneath the river and they must drill through it.

City Attorney Hogue shared a notice from Lora Nanak and the Municipal League. It recommended that at the beginning of each year the City should review all rules, procedures. Lora Nanak shared Ordinance 181 with City Attorney Hogue (adopted 2020), and he recommended that if any changes need to be made it is addressed at the next meeting.

Public Input: Carolyn Jordan asked about the Goshen ZIP Code update. She believed it depended on the census outcome. Lora Nanak responded about eight months ago; she's not heard anything back and will check on the status.

Adjournment: At 8:08PM John Vaillancourt made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Colton Martin. Motion carried.



Michael Thompson
Recorder/Treasurer



Max Poye
Mayor