

**Regular Meeting of the City Council
City of Rockport
1472 Military Road, Rockport, Arkansas
Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2023**

Pledge of Allegiance:

Council member Melinda Baker led the Pledge of Allegiance

Opening Prayer:

Council member Brenda Womble led the opening prayer

Roll Call:

Council members present: Darrell Hughes; Jimmy Shuffield, Melinda Baker, Brenda Womble
Mayor Kevin Baker arrived around 7 p.m.

Others Present:

Shira Kelley, Police Chief Toby Morales

Approval of minutes:

- M. Baker motion to accept minutes of Dec. 20 regular meeting
- Hughes second
- M. Baker: Y; Hughes: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y

- M. Baker motion to accept minutes of Dec. 27 special meeting
- Hughes second
- Hughes: Y; M. Baker: Y; Shuffield: Y; Womble: Y

Financial report:

Report unavailable; tabled until next meeting. (Note: no financial report since October meeting)

Departmental Reports:

Planning Commission

Toby Morales asks council to set up a Parks & Recreation bank account. Says community wants to help with the city park, but city needs a fund set up so people can donate. As police chief, he now has too much going on to run planning commission, so he recommends Laura Robbins as new head of planning commission.

- M. Baker motion to instate Laura Robbins over Planning Commission
- Womble second
- M. Baker: Y; Womble: y; Hughes: Y; Shuffield: Y

Discussion of setting up 501(c)(3) and bank account.

- Hughes motion to apply for 501(c)(3) for city for parks account, operated by city, and transfer \$100 from general fund into this account when it is established.
- Womble second
- Hughes: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y; M. Baker: Y

Morales says L. Robbins wants to have porta-potties installed at park until she can obtain grant to purchase prefabricated bathrooms. She found a company to provide porta-potties and clean weekly for \$100/month, and thinks she can get the money donated. Hughes recommends also checking on buying some porta-potties that companies are taking out of service.

Police Report

Morales is considering buying another vehicle. HSC Sheriff's Office wants to purchase 2019 Charger previously assigned to Shane Davis, for \$35,000, with all equipment included. Morales is working with insurance company to have Ford Explorer totaled. New motor from Ford is 18-24 months out. Want to replace it with a used one from somewhere else. City can use money from sale of Charger and insurance money to buy new 2023 Tahoe with about \$14,000 additional funds from city.

- Hughes motion to sell 2019 Charger to HSC Sheriff for \$35,000 and purchase new 2023 Tahoe for total of \$44,342.
- Baker second
- Hughes: Y; M. Baker: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y

Morales has found contract with T-Mobile to provide cell phones for \$25/month for all officers. Will save half the current cost of cell phone bills with a 5 ½ year contract. Helping Heroes plan will save \$1,500/year. Contract needs mayor's signature.

- Hughes motion to authorize Mayor Kevin Baker to sign contract with T-Mobile for Helping Heroes plan
- Womble second
- Hughes: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y; M. Baker: Y

Hughes: also verify that city won't have to pay early termination fee to end current cellular contract.

Morales wants to add canine to police department. Has kennel, vehicle insert and shots already donated. Hughes Animal Clinic will keep veterinary records for the tax write-off. Morales says Haskell PD is ending their canine program as result of police walk-out this week. They may donate it; if they sell it, it will be \$1,500-3,000. (A canine is usually \$24-50,000.)

Current officer (Alex Finney) can handle dog (named Wey). This is not a bite dog – trained for narcotics, tracking and article search. Bryant Police Department will do two-week handler certification course for Finney. Dog is two-year-old Belgian Malinois, with about six years of service left. Finney has offered to provide dog food. Haskell City Council is meeting next week to vote on action on canine.

- Hughes motion to authorize up to \$3,000 from jail fund for purchase of dog.
- Shuffield second
- Hughes: Y; Shuffield: Y; Womble: Y; M. Baker: Y

Morales is working on grant to purchase new radios for police department – all current radios will be phased out at the end of 2024. He has applied for a grant for five (four cars and a spare). Grant has been approved, but don't know yet which part: will city have to pay any or get radios free? Will know by next meeting.

Street Department:

No report

Sewer:

No report

- Hughes motion to accept departmental reports
- Womble second
- Hughes: Y; Womble: Y; M. Baker: Y; Shuffield: Y

Old Business: none

New Business:

- M. Baker motion to purchase shirts for street department personnel from street fund
- Womble second
- M. Baker: Y; Womble: Y; Hughes: Y; Shuffield: Y

- M. Baker motion to suspend 3% annual raise for employees until further notice
- Womble second
- M. Baker: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y; Hughes: Y

- M. Baker motion to raise Rebecca Ivy's pay to \$15 per hour
- Womble second
- M. Baker; Y; Womble: Y; Hughes: Y; Shuffield: Y

Liquor license: Womble says city council needs to pass city ordinance to charge liquor permit application fee. Hughes says he is working on it.

*M. Baker introduces and reads **Ordinance No. 2023-1**, "Authorizing the purchase of a new police vehicle and borrowing money."*

- Hughes motion to accept on first reading
- M. Baker second
- Hughes: Y; M. Baker: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y

- Hughes motion to suspend rules and place ordinance on second reading by title only
- Womble second
- Hughes: Y; Womble: Y; Shuffield: Y; M. Baker: Y

- Hughes motion to suspend rules and place ordinance on third reading by title only, and enact emergency clause
- Shuffield second
- Hughes: Y; Shuffield: Y; Womble: Y; M. Baker: Y

- Hughes motion to accept ordinance
- M. Baker second
- Hughes: Y; M. Baker: Y; Shuffield: Y; Womble: Y

Water leak: Womble says water leak under city hall building is averaging 1,100 gallons per day since Christmas cold snap. Mayor K. Baker has arrived; instructs her to call someone to get it fixed.

K. Baker says he wants the city to hire a part-time secretary in the next month or so. Will discuss in future.

- M. Baker motion to adjourn
- Womble second
- M. Baker: Y; Womble: Y; Hughes: Y; Shuffield: Y

Attest: _____
Shira Kelley, secretary

Approved: _____
Kevin Baker, Mayor

Date: _____