

**Regular Monthly Meeting of the City Council  
City of Rockport  
1472 Military Road, Rockport, Arkansas  
Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2022**

**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; Brenda Womble; Melinda Baker. Hughes presided over the meeting until Mayor Kevin Baker arrived at 6 p.m.

**Others Present:**

Shira Kelley; Damon Dyer; Sgt. Toby Morales; Cpl. Chris Medlin

**Approval of Minutes:**

Discussion of sewer system related to upcoming truck stop. Womble has been ill and has not yet spoken to vendors about accepting sewer payments online, but said the city has received good response to the letter asking sewer customers if they're interested in online payments.

- M. Baker motion to accept minutes of Nov. 8 regular council meeting
- Womble seconds
- M. Baker: Y; Womble: Y; Hughes: Y

**Financial Report:**

Report unavailable; tabled until next meeting.

**Departmental Reports:**

*Planning Commission*

Toby Morales says the commission has not met this month due to holidays, hunting season, etc. The commission now has five members and will become more active after New Year's.

*Discussion/liquor license:* Dyer says a couple of people went to a meeting of the Arkansas Beverage Control Board. Businesses have to go through "a lot of hoops" to obtain a liquor license. Beer/wine can be sold anywhere, but hard liquor cannot be sold within 1,000 feet of a church or other specific entities. Discussion of potential vendor locations in Rockport.

*Discussion/new businesses:* Dyer says someone has expressed interest in establishing a wrecker service behind the Circle K station going toward Magnet Cove. Burger Barn is also looking for a local site and may be interested in building beside the new truck stop.

*Discussion/code enforcement:* Morales has been getting policies from Haskell and Saline County to pattern Rockport code after, but those will need to be amended/edited. Discussion of dogs, leash laws, nuisance/vicious animals. K. Baker says he wants to keep Rockport rural for people who are responsible animal owners, but set code so irresponsible owners can be addressed.

Street Department:

Dyer is about to purchase 10-12 bags of asphalt to make repairs to Cuffman Mill and Sand Road. Said he has salt stocked and ready for upcoming inclement weather.

Police Department:

Morales presents proposal for reestablishing police overtime (see documents he provided to council). To question from K. Baker, Morales recommends 15 hours per officer, per pay period, on a trial basis. He has prepared a sign-in sheet to log all activity officers conduct on overtime. Medlin emphasizes this overtime program is just for traffic enforcement (tickets, making contact), and is not for responding to calls or taking reports. Recommends requiring officers to make X (undefined number) of contacts during overtime.

K. Baker says he's okay with a trial run but wants to see records of results.

- Womble motion to approve police overtime on a trial basis for three weeks, beginning with the next pay period (Dec. 25)
- M. Baker seconds
- Womble: Y; M. Baker: Y; Hughes: Y

*Discussion:* officers are close to maximum allowable accrued comp time. Medline explains comp time requirements per federal law. Need another officer; in about a year should be NIBRS-compliant for federal grants to fund full-time officers.

Several HSC sheriff's deputies are interested in working part-time and should be able to do so after new sheriff takes office Jan. 1.

*Discussion/police vehicles:* Morales says the department is down to units due to mechanical issues. (One has been repaired and is ready for pickup.) K. Baker says need to work hard over next six months to get funding to replace unit.

*Discussion/court:* Morales says in past officers had a contract to work as bailiff for Circuit Judge Stephen Shirron, but that ended due to double-dipping. They want to start again. In the past, the court paid the city, and the city disbursed the money to the officers. K. Baker says if officers can do this without it costing the city, he supports it.

*Other:*

- Morales says officers need to be more disciplined about turning in time sheets, getting them signed.
- Morales is working on setting up camera to record audio/video in meeting room. Will be used for police interviews as well as recording planning commission, agenda and council meetings. Will be hooked to a light switch with red light to alert when recording.
- Medlin will research cost of upfitting all city vehicles with GPS trackers; Morales describes one vendor proposal that would only cost \$150/month to cover all city vehicles. K. Baker instructs them to present a proposal and results of overtime trial period at January meeting.
- Dyer says a community service worker in one hour last week picked up three bags of roadside litter on the on/off ramp just a few days after the ramps had been cleaned. M. Baker will work on getting inmates for January cleanup.
- Discussion of trucks parking along on/off ramp. Police department will monitor.

Sewer Department:

Dyer needs to order four filters. He has contacted Arkansas Rural Water Association; they're sending a technician to check the sewer system. They think the engineer used inappropriate numbers (outside of industry standards) which set treatment requirements unattainably high. Will meet next week. K. Baker wants to meet with them when they come. Also going to evaluate whether directing treated wastewater into a pond instead of a sometimes-dry creek would be better.

- Womble motion to accept all departmental reports
- Hughes seconds
- Womble: Y; Hughes: Y; M. Baker: Y

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:**

*Rural Water Association coming to discuss sewer plant – already discussed.*

*Morales discusses camera system – already discussed.*

*M. Baker introduces and reads **Ordinance No. 2022-6**, “an ordinance setting forth certain regulations for the sale of alcohol, beer and wine for on-premises consumption, and the sale at retail and convenience stores of beer and wine for off-premises for the city of Rockport, Arkansas.”*

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

M. Baker reads by title only.

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

M. Baker reads by title only.

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

*Discussion:* payment of Shane Davis' time upon retirement. Womble will check bank accounts to see how much can be paid immediately and how much later.

Morales requests city ordinance and says he will request judge's order to destroy old files (some dating back to 1997). Council will hold special meeting 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 27, to pass ordinance.

**Adjournment:**

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

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Shira Kelley, secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Baker, Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_