

**Regular Meeting of the City Council  
City of Rockport  
1472 Military Road, Rockport, Arkansas  
Tuesday, March 25, 2025**

**Call to order**

Councilwoman Brenda Womble called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation**

Womble led the pledge and offered the invocation.

**Roll call**

*Council members present:* Mayor Kevin Baker, Melinda Baker, Darrell Hughes, Brenda Womble, Jimmy Shuffield

*Others present:* Shira Kelley, Police Chief Toby Morales

*Citizens present:* Brenda Beason and Jim Beason with attorney, Terry Jensen

**Citizen appearance**

Jensen notified the council that he has filed a petition meeting the statutory requirements of Arkansas Code 14-66-08, to detach and de-annex the property of his clients, Jim Beason and Brenda Beason, from the recent annexation into Rockport. He reported that his Freedom of Information request from Feb. 13 was ignored; Womble says the packet was at city hall waiting to be picked up. During this conversation, Hughes found and gave Jensen a stack of paperwork and Jensen's original FOI request letter.

Womble said someone had called the city on Jensen's behalf cancelling the attorney's appearance before the council. Therefore, the city had notified city attorney Greg Vardaman that he was not needed at tonight's meeting. Jensen disclaimed knowledge of the call but agreed to return for the April 15 regular meeting.

**Approval of minutes**

- Hughes motion to approve minutes of January 2025 regular meeting (February meeting was canceled due to inclement weather)
- Baker second
- Voting yes: Hughes, Baker, Womble, Shuffield

## **Departmental Reports**

*Financial statement:* brief report from January; some information is still unavailable between new system and old.

*Police Department:* Morales says police leave policy needs to be adjusted in employee handbook to avoid overtime violations. Hughes will prepare an ordinance.

*Planning Commission:* no report

*Street Department:* M. Baker says gravel is in stock; not all of it has been spread yet. Scott Yarbrough has been spraying ditches; Baker says he needs to take the SDA chemical class and log full details any time he sprays. Hughes says workers need to do more bushhogging this year.

- Baker motion to approve departmental reports
- Hughes second
- Voting yes: Baker, Hughes, Shuffield, Womble

## **Old Business**

*Sewer engineer:* Womble says she has provided all requested information to the engineer except a soil sample and needs details of what the sample should entail. She will call the engineer for information tomorrow.

Shuffield says city should request opinions from other engineers and also request to see a similar system that this engineer has worked on.

*Winch purchase:* Need to obtain a winch for city truck or side-by-side vehicle to use for pulling pumps, dragging brush from ditches, etc.

- Hughes motion to spend up to \$200 for a winch lift
- Baker second
- Voting yes: Hughes, Baker, Womble, Shuffield

*Court location:* Malvern will not allow use of its district court facility for Rockport court, so we will begin holding court at City Hall. ACIC (Arkansas Crime Information Center) has approved. Will verify that we can use Court Automation Fund for equipment (stools, shelves, etc.). For now, the city will have to pay Judge Billy Jack Gibson \$1,000 monthly for service; the state will cover that expense next year.

- Baker motion to request authorization to use Court Automation Fund to prepare City Hall for court

- Shuffield second
  - Voting yes: Baker, Shuffield, Hughes, Womble
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- Hughes motion to begin work on preparing space for court immediately upon receiving the judge's approval
  - Shuffield second
  - Voting yes: Hughes, Shuffield, Womble, Baker

*911 Dispatch:* Hot Spring County has increased rates for dispatch services. In 2024, this was \$8,000 for the entire year. This year, the county is charging Rockport \$46,588.24, to be paid in four installments of \$11,639.56, per a letter from the county. Morales says the city of Malvern is setting up its own dispatch, which could result in further increases to fees the county charges Rockport. He is looking at options to contract dispatch service.

*Security cameras:* Morales located wireless, solar-powered cameras to monitor city hall and the surrounding property, for \$60. The forthcoming truck stop will bring in more traffic, and the city needs to establish improved security measures now.

- Hughes motion to purchase two cameras
- Womble second
- Voting yes: Hughes, Womble, Baker, Shuffield

## **New Business**

*Animal control ordinance:* Shuffield says we need to have a place to hold impounded animals and have all the relevant puzzle pieces in place before approving the ordinance. Womble has located another animal control ordinance to look at in developing ours.

Baker asks everyone to brainstorm a list of possible candidates for the planning commission, and says the city needs to begin performing code enforcement work.

## Adjournment

- Baker motion to adjourn
- Shuffield second
- Voting yes: voice vote, unanimous

*Adjourned, 7:09 p.m.*

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Shira Kelley, Secretary Kevin Baker, Mayor