

Town of Oak Grove, AR

Town Council Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2023

- ❖ Mayor Robert Fairweather called to order the regular meeting of the Oak Grove Town Council at 7:00 pm at the Oak Grove Town Hall. All present asked to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.
- ❖ Council Members present Jayme Wambold, Lajunta Plumlee, Stacey Sutton, and Terry Hutchison.
 - Absent: Gary Gray
- ❖ Stephanie Shepherd read the minutes from the October 3, 2023, meeting. Jayme Wambold made a motion to accept minutes as read, seconded by Stacey Sutton. All Agreed
- ❖ Verified Financial Statements for September 2023 and Preliminary Financial Statements for October presented to Council. Motion made by Terry Hutchison to approve statements as presented, seconded by Lajunta Plumlee. All Agreed.
- ❖ Monthly Bills for October 2023 were presented. Motion made by Jayme Wambold to pay bills, seconded Terry Hutchison. All Agreed.
- ❖ Proposed Budget for 2024 presented to the council. Mayor Fairweather called into consideration an executive session to review with the council the town employee payroll for 2024.
 - Executive Session entered at 7:13pm -- Regular session resumed at 7:24pm
- ❖ The council and Mayor amended the 2024 Budget presented with an increase of Salary for the positions of Town Clerk to \$30,000 annually and Fire Chief to \$10,000 annually. Stephanie Shepherd to adjust budget sheets to reflect the changes approved by Council.
- ❖ Therefore, Resolution 121-2023 was presented to the council by Mayor Fairweather for the approval of the 2024 Budget. Resolution read by title only. Motion made by Jayme Wambold to approve amended 2024 budget, Seconded by Terry Hutchison. All Agreed.
- ❖ Update on Oak Grove Community Building (Schoolhouse)- The Building Inspectors from Green Forest and Berryville inspected the Oak Grove Community Center on October 17, 2023 – Both inspectors agreed that the building is safe to reopen for public use. A letter signed by the inspector(s) to be presented to the Council.
- ❖ Mayor Fairweather discussed with the council the current rental fees for use of the building. He suggests Council consider an increase – current donation request \$25 for rental – suggested increase to \$50 for 1 day of use and \$25 for each additional day of use after and a separate \$25 payment to be held as cleaning & damage deposit (separate \$25 payment will be returned after building checked, approved, and keys are returned). Jayme Wambold made a motion to approve the increase in fees for Community Center use, seconded by Lajunta Plumlee. All Agreed. Rates to increase with reopening of building for public use.
- ❖ Update on Water Meter Project – ALL new meters installed as of November 2nd. The necessary software for integration into our current billing program to be installed on November 13th. Representatives from Core and Main to be present on November 14 & 15 to ensure synchronization into the computer billing system.
- ❖ Water Department – Stephanie Shepherd request use of vacations days on Friday December 1st and Tuesday, December 26th. If approved, the Water Department Office will be closed on these days. A new office chair was purchased by Stephanie Shepherd. Due to age and extended use, the Water Department Printer has reached a point where it is unrepairable. Therefore, a new computer system and printer was purchased by Mayor Fairweather.
- ❖ Stephanie Shepherd would like the Council to consider repairs to the Town Hall and Water Department. The Office Floor and Town Hall Entryway have become unsafe due to extensive termite damage. The termites and other pests have been eliminated by NW Pest Management Company. After much discussion

Lajunta Plumlee made a motion to temporarily move the Water Department into the main area of the Town Hall for safety reasons, seconded by Jayme Wambold. All Agreed. This is a big project and should be researched thoroughly. The Council will continue discussing options at the next meeting regarding the repairs of our current structure or if a new building would be more economical.

- ❖ Update on road maintenance for Eagle Lane – Stacey Sutton informed the council that discussions with Mr. Huskey’s lawyer are still underway, and she hopes for an update at the next meeting.
- ❖ The council was notified of 1 certified letter sent to owners of property violating Town Ordinance 94-2016.
 - Gary High- Rental property located at 81 CR 614

FIRE DEPARTMENT – Storm Siren tested at 7pm

- ❖ The Fire Department Rag Ball Benefit Tournament has been postponed until spring.
- ❖ The Fire Department will be hosting a Fish Fry Benefit on Saturday December 9th and request use of Community Building for benefit. The council agreed to allow building use for benefit.
- ❖ The Fire Chief asked the council when Christmas lights need to be set out for the electric company. Stephanie Shepherd to contact Carroll Electric and coordinate with Fire Chief.
- ❖ Fire Chief McKelvey proposed an increase for the 2024 Fire Memberships dues that will go out after the first of the year. The fire dues will not be included with the county property taxes assessed for 2024, we will be sending as done in previous years. The Current cost of fire dues is \$50/year. An increase to \$60.00/year was proposed. Jayme Wambold made motion to approve increase of Fire dues, seconded by Terry Hutchison. All Agreed. Fire Due Membership to be revisited at end of 2024, with review of 2025 budget.
- ❖ Chief McKelvey requested the council consider allowing the Fire Department to enter into agreement with a Recovery Collection Service. The collection service has no annual billing fees and only receives payment when they can collect outstanding fire service bills. This company would help the fire department recoup monies expended for fire service to those who have NOT paid their fire dues for the year. The council agreed to let the Fire department proceed. An ordinance detailing the agreement to be presented for reading and approval at the next meeting.
- ❖ Terry Hutchison put forth to council the purchase of a line boat by the town for water rescues. The used boat was purchased by Chief McKelvey at the Branson RV Resort. Alderman Hutchison proposes the Town purchase it from him at \$1,500.00 using General Funds, Seconded by Jayme Wambold. All Agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- ❖ Christmas Bazaar to be held at the Oak Grove Community Center on Saturday, December 2nd.

Jayme Wambold made motion to adjourn, Seconded by Stacey Sutton. All Agreed.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:43 pm.



Robert Fairweather / MAYOR



Stephanie Shepherd / RECORDER