

Town of Oak Grove, AR

Town Council Meeting Minutes

January 2, 2024

- ❖ 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 Gary Gray, Jayme Wambold, Lajunta Plumlee, Stacey Sutton, and Terry Hutchison.
- ❖ Stephanie Shepherd read the minutes from the November 7, 2023, meeting. Jayme Wambold made a motion to accept minutes as read, seconded by Lajunta Plumlee. All Agreed
- ❖ Verified Financial Statements for October and November 2023 and Preliminary Financial Statements for December 2023 presented to Council. Motion made by Lajunta Plumlee to approve statements as presented, seconded by Stacey Sutton. All Agreed. End-of-Year Financial Statements to be presented at next meeting.
- ❖ Monthly Bills for November and December 2023 were presented. Motion made by Gary Gray to pay bills, seconded Lajunta Plumlee. All Agreed.
- ❖ Update on Water Meter Project – ARPA FUNDS ***Please See Project Review Sheet for more info***
 - System installation and integration completed November 17, 2023
 - The contract with Mid-South Meter Group has been fulfilled and funds spent.
 - Contract exception: Damaged meter boxes – final invoice notes deductions by Engineer
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Oak Grove Community Center update on attic insulation. Estimate for spray foam insulation received from Shawn for \$8,000.00. The council discussed need for insulation and agreed to try and gather additional estimates. Jayme Wambold to reach out to local providers for estimate.
- ❖ NO update yet on Fun Parks Grant.
- ❖ Jayme Wambold informed the Council of recommendation to help increase eligibility of Oak Grove in Future grants. Due to the current average income reported on the Census for town residents, the town is not eligible for many grant options. This is due to renter income not properly being represented, as the Census only regards property owner income. She would like the council to consider hiring NWAEDD to conduct a survey within the town to better reflect the average income of the residents and to include only those who live within town limits. This could lower the average income, increasing our eligibility for grants and other funding.

FIRE DEPARTMENT – Storm Siren tested at 7pm

- ❖ Ordinance 122-2024 authorizing an agreement between Oak Grove Fire Department and an Emergency Service Cost Reimbursement provider to allow the collection service company to seek reimbursement on behalf the Fire Dept, helping the fire department recoup monies expended for fire service to those who have NOT paid their fire dues for the year. The company has no annual billing fees and only receives payment when they can collect outstanding fire service bills. Ordinance Read by title only. Motion made by Jayme Wambold to approve ordinance 122-2024, seconded by Lajunta Plumlee. All Agreed.
- ❖ Fire Department Fish Fry Benefit and Silent Auction was held on December 9th. Many locals showed up to support our fire fighters and help enrich a great sense of community here in Oak Grove. The event raised \$7800.00 for FD Auxiliary.

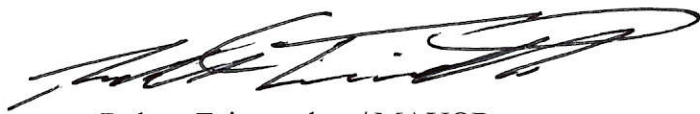
- ❖ Fire Chief McKelvey informed the council of the ISO inspection and that it went well. The Fire Department rating went down from 10/10 to 7/10 which is good. Rating could be improved again with the possibility of a substation for the fire department.
- ❖ Chief McKelvey updated the council about the Fire Master Equipment discussed in text with council estimated total \$11,039.50 for the purchase of boots and helmets. The council agreed equipment is needed for a safe and efficient fire dept. Gary Gray made a motion to approve purchase, seconded by Lajunta Plumlee. All Agreed. Invoice to be Paid from *833 Funds.
- ❖ Fire Chief would like someone to inquire as to the proper funds that should be used for paying the Fire Chief. The current payroll is budgeted to be paid by the FIRE funds and while this has never been flagged by the auditors, he believes the salary should be paid by town funds after discussions with other local departments. Mayor Robert Fairweather to reach out to AR Municipal League for verification and update council at next meeting. 2024 Budget will need to be adjusted to reflect this change.
- ❖ The Fire Chief would like the council to consider approval of the Fire Department acquiring and maintaining a reserve fuel tank. With the only town gas station closed permanently, a reserve fuel tank would allow the Fire Department to better respond to emergencies and provide fuel during extreme weather conditions when traveling far may not be possible.
- ❖ Fire Chief requested use of the Community Center to host the Annual Fire Department Dinner on Thursday, January 16th at 6:30pm. The council approved. Fire Chief invited council and families to join them.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- ❖ Lajunta Plumlee asked the council to consider allowing a regular scheduled event at the Community Center for the local 4H sewing club – “Sew Happy”. They would like to use the building on the second Saturday of every month from 10am-12pm for their meeting. The council discussed and agreed to allow “Sew Happy” to use building each month. Gary Gray made motion to waive rental fee for schoolhouse as this is for a non-profit organization, seconded by Stacey Sutton. All Agreed (Lajunta Plumlee- Abstained)

Jayne Wambold made motion to adjourn, Seconded by Terry Hutchison. All Agreed.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:22 pm.



Robert Fairweather / MAYOR



Stephanie Shepherd / RECORDER

Water Project Review

ARPA Grant Funds & Water Funds Spent

TOTAL Awarded Amount \$81,836.43 ALL ARPA FUNDS EXPENDED DEC 2023
(3 payments \$40,800.43 in Sept 2021, \$107.03 in Oct 2021, and \$40,917.97 in August 2022)

	ARPA FUNDS	WATER FUNDS
NWAEDD	\$2,000.00	
	<i>(for grant services from 4/2022 to 6/2023)</i>	
CEA	\$7,805.00	\$195.00
	<i>(5 payments at \$2830, \$930, \$1040, \$3005, \$195)</i>	
Midsouth	\$71,151.37	\$1,283.63
	<i>(1 invoice at Finish \$72,435.00)</i>	
MISC		
Core & Main		\$704.59
		<i>(Materials to repair damaged Meter Boxes)</i>
Intedata		\$995.00
		<i>(Softwater Program Soft Read)</i>
Newspaper Ads	\$876.06	
	<i>(Ad for Engineer & Ad for Contractor)</i>	
Bank Fee	\$4.00	
Pollard Water		\$4,719.79
		<i>(Marking Posts to help prevent meter distruction)</i>

TOTAL FUNDS SPENT ON WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS & REPAIRS

ARPA	\$81,836.43
WATER	\$7,898.01
TOTAL SPENT	\$89,734.44

Invoices still anticipated from
NWAEDD
Excavation for Box installation

Remaining invoices to be paid by WATER Funds