

City of Townsend
Commission Meeting Minutes
For
November 17, 2015

Attendance: Those present for the meeting were Mayor Michael Talley, Commissioner Ron Palewski, Commissioner Jackie Suttles, Commissioner Kenny Myers, Recorder Danny Williamson, Police Chief Ron Suttles, Fire Chief Don Stallions, Rick Russell, Tom Sines, Janis Foreman, Doug Ridley, Sam Prescott, Don and Sandy Headrick. Vice-Mayor Becky Headrick was absent.

Pledge: Mayor Michael Talley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.

Minutes: Commissioner Myers made a motion to approve the October 16, 2015 minutes. Commissioner Palewski seconded and the motion passed with four yeas.

Finance Report: Recorder Williamson gave the finance report for the month of October, 2015. Commissioner Palewski made a motion to approve the report. Mayor Talley seconded the motion and the report was approved with four yeas.

Police Report: Chief Suttles stated traffic had stayed heavy, and that he expected it to continue that way until after Thanksgiving. He then reported that seized vehicles in the City of Townsend's possession had been cleaned and prepped for sale. Chief Suttles then conveyed that just over \$10,000 consisting of cash that had been seized in a case in 2010 had been deposited into the general fund. Chief Suttles reported that the jewelry seized in the case was still in possession and that he was checking into options to dispose of it in a way to bring the most revenue for the drug fund. He then informed all that POST training would be earlier in 2016 than in past years. Mayor Talley asked about remaining vacation time for staff and Chief Suttles responded that employees had used nearly all of their allotted time for the year.

Maintenance: Chief Suttles asked the commission when he could give the maintenance worker the go-ahead to put up Christmas decorations. They were unanimous in stating that the decorations could go up right away. There was some discussion about the conversion to LED lights. Mayor Talley asked about bike trail lights with blown bulbs. Chief Suttles responded that two poles were to be replaced, and that additional bulbs would be ordered at that time. There was some discussion about the excessive water bill for the park for October.

Fire Report: Fire Chief Don Stallions reported that everything with the Fire Department was going well. EVO, emergency vehicle operation, training had been completed the prior week. He then informed all that Townsend Volunteer Fire Department (TVFD), had an Insurance Standards Organization (ISO) inspector visit on November 16, 2015. Stallions gave a brief recap of the visit, and prospective positive outcome that could result from the inspection. He pointed out that no results would be communicated to TVFD for roughly eight months. Chief Stallions updated everyone on Rural Metro's plan to station in Townsend, reporting that Rural Metro was still trying to find an economical solution since the first building estimate was more than three-times the budgeted amount (\$60,000 versus budget of \$20,000).

Recreation: Commissioner Suttles reminded everyone that the theme for the 2015 Christmas parade is, "A Very Beary Christmas". She reported that Appalachian Bear Rescue (ABR) would be the parade marshal. Recorder Williamson was asked how many entries had been submitted and he estimated that 150 had been received so far, and that the deadline was 11/25/15. Commission agreed the same amount as last year, \$500, should be given to Commissioner Suttles for the purchase of candy for the parade. As it was a budgeted item, no motion or vote occurred. It was also agreed the parade rain date would be used only in the event of dangerous weather.

Unfinished Business

Old Highway 73: Mayor Talley updated all present on his discussions with Mr. Messer from Blount County Highway Department (BCHD). Mr. Messer indicated that the soil in that area was the toughest he had ever tried to put a road through. BCHD had to excavate much deeper than anticipated, and also had to install a 'geo-grid' to insure stability. Mayor Talley reported that the additional work and materials would result in an overage of approximately \$20,000 to Mr. Messer's original estimate.

New Business

Fair Housing requirements for Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) recipients: Rick Russell presented background for the Fair Housing language requirements for recipients if a CDBG. He suggested the City of Townsend would need to make certain that an ordinance that met the specifications to satisfy Fair Housing mandates be made part of the City Municipal Code. Mr. Russell will send Margaret Norris of MTAS a copy of the notice, with the suggestion it be included as part of the City of Townsend's Municipal Code revision.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Sandy Headrick - "public welfare of the citizens in the City of Townsend". Sandy Headrick began by introducing herself with name, address, and a brief recap of her works and positions. She proceeded to express her opinion, from a written statement, of City of Townsend's operations. One area of concern was bike trail lights that were blown and had not been replaced for some time. Headrick then spoke of the condition of city streets, police department budgeting and the number of vehicles, and concerns over a new city hall building. She then offered to allow others in the audience to voice their concerns and/or opinions. Mayor Talley then asked for any other input.

Doug Ridley voiced questions and concerns regarding a new city hall. Mayor Talley emphasized to all that Building Committee meetings are open to the public, and that anyone interested is welcome to attend. Talley stated that he wished more people would come to the meetings and become involved in decisions that affect the community. Fire Chief Don Stallions spoke and stressed that the meetings are completely open, with the press in attendance sometimes, and that no matter had ever been voted on in the meetings. Commissioner Myers, Chairman of the Building Committee, pointed out that all meetings were announced in the newspaper. Janis Foreman spoke, stating she had only missed five or six commission meetings over the past 2.5 years. She was very complimentary of the way City Commission has conducted its meetings, and stated that she felt very comfortable that anytime she had an issue or wished to express her opinion, she was allowed to. She went on to say that she felt the best source for information on Townsend was in "this room", as she had heard many topics covered, often witnessed dissenting views, and heard both pros and cons discussed on every matter that came before the City Commission in her attendance.

Don Headrick then spoke of his concern as to when a schedule will be put together to fix the city streets. Mayor Talley agreed with Mr. Headrick's concerns and explained that the City of Townsend, had been waiting to get a working agreement approved with BCHD in order to get more work done for the same amount of money. Sandy Headrick spoke again with a promotion of wreaths that were being sold for the Kiwanis Club. Sam Prescott inquired as to when the next building meeting would be held. Mayor Talley responded that there was no need for a meeting now, but that it would be announced with plenty of advanced notice. Recorder Williamson stated that commission meeting minutes were on the City of Townsend's website, and that there were no minutes kept of the building committee meetings, as it is not a standing committee with any elected officers. Mayor Talley thanked everyone for coming and for their input, and encouraged all to come to every meeting.

There being no further business, Mayor Talley made a motion to adjourn at 8:26 P.M. Commissioner Myers seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

City Recorder

Approved: _____ date _____
Title: _____