

City of Townsend
Commission Meeting Minutes
For
February 22, 2016

Attendance: Those present for the meeting were Mayor Michael Talley, Vice-Mayor Becky Headrick, Commissioner Ron Palewski, Commissioner Jackie Suttles, Commissioner Kenny Myers, Recorder Danny Williamson, and Police Chief Ron Suttles. Audience members attending were William Irby, Pete Girard, Margaret Norris, and Janis Foreman.

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

Minutes: Commissioner Palewski made a motion to approve the January 19, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Myers seconded and the motion passed with four yeas votes. Vice-Mayor Headrick abstained as she was not present at the January meeting.

Finance Report: Recorder Williamson gave the finance report for the month of January, 2016. Vice-Mayor Headrick made a motion to approve the report. Commissioner Suttles seconded the motion and the report was approved with five yeas votes.

Police Report: Chief Suttles warned everyone to be on the watch for counterfeit money, as two businesses had reported receiving bogus bills in ten and twenty dollar denominations. Chief Suttles then reported that weekend traffic had been picking up considerably. He also stated that he had left a couple of messages with the sales representative in charge of fleet sales and hoped to get the budgeted police vehicle ordered soon. As for seized property, Chief Suttles reported that the vehicles should be ready to go on the auction site next month, and the jewelry should be sent for an appraisal or be sold as scrap before long.

Maintenance: Chief Suttles reported that clearing and cleaning had been taking place at the City Park property and its perimeter. He indicated that the truck now being used for snow removal was performing very well. Chief Suttles informed that he had received verbal commitment from Chico Messer, acting Blount County Highway Department Superintendent, to come to Townsend and perform an assessment of the various levels of paving needs for the City's streets. Mayor Talley complimented how much better the edging work made things look and asked about getting the entire length done. Audience member Pete Girard suggested checking to see if the City could get an edging attachment to fit its zero-turn mower.

Fire Report: No representative was present

Recreation: Nothing to report this month.

Unfinished Business

Public Hearing for Ordinances: Mayor Talley opened the forum for public hearing at 7:25 PM. Audience member Bill Irby asked about the origination of the ordinances, i.e. if they are state regulations or making current ones better, etc. Mayor Talley gave background on the ordinances, and read the ordinance headings. With no further input or questions from the public, the public hearing was closed at 7:28 PM.

Stormwater Ordinance from Planning Commission #283-16-1P - This being the second reading, Commissioner Myers made a motion to pass the ordinance. Commissioner Palewski seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

Landscaping Ordinance from Planning Commission #284-16-1P - This being the second reading, Commissioner Myers made a motion to pass the ordinance. Vice-Mayor Headrick seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

Fair Housing requirements for Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) recipients #285-16-1C - This being the second reading, Commissioner Myers made a motion to pass the ordinance. Commissioner Suttles seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

New Business

City Employee Insurance – Mayor Talley opened discussion on the topic by informing that Recorder Williamson, who is eligible for coverage under the City of Townsend insurance plan, had remained on the plan offered by his former employer. Williamson was recently told that plan was going to be discontinued and he now needs to go on the City’s plan. This prompted Recorder Williamson to begin urging Humana for a revised quote, and to have the City’s broker to also get other insurance quotes. Recorder Williamson then presented spreadsheets to the commissioners. He also explained that he had polled several other nearby municipalities to determine how much their level of contribution was toward spouse and/or family insurance expense. He related that other city’s contributions for spouse/family ranged from 70-80% to 100%, as compared to the current rate of 25% contribution made by the City of Townsend. The spreadsheet included an example that considered the City of Townsend changing their contribution amount for spouse/family to 75%. With the plans priced, there was one plan offered that would be a cost reduction to the City. After much discussion, questions, and answers, the decision was made to table any action to the March 15, 2016 meeting. Williamson was asked if he could get more pricing. Audience member Margaret Norris of Municipal Technical Advisory Service was asked if she knew of any insurance brokers who might help. She said that the city of New Tazewell had just gone through this process and was very well pleased with their broker. She said she would get the person’s name and number to Recorder Williamson the next day. Vice-Mayor Headrick had questions about the networks, as did the Mayor, and Recorder Williamson was asked to verify that all employees and family members would not suffer from a network change. Audience member Pete Girard asked who was dictating the amount of contribution, the City or the insurance company? He was told it was the employer, and he pointed out there was actually two issues at hand, changing insurance companies and changing contributions.

FY-2015 Audit Vote – Mayor Talley opened the discussion by reporting that the audit report had been received last month and asked if anyone had questions or input. With no feedback offered, Commissioner Palewski made a motion to accept the audit report. Commissioner Myers seconded and it passed with five yea votes.

OTHER BUSINESS:

There being no further business, Commissioner Myers made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 P.M. Commissioner Suttles seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

City Recorder

Approved: _____ date _____
Title: _____

