

**FOREMAN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
July 19, 2021**

The Foreman City Council met in regular session on Monday, July 19, 2021, in the Foreman Community Center at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Harp. Prayer was offered by Mike McKee and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Recorder/Treasurer Angelina Carver, called the roll. Present were Alana Cody, Mike McKee, Jacqueline Wiseman, Perry Young, and Joyce Green. Mayor William Harp, city attorney Thad Bishop, and Water Superintendent Eddie Smith were also present. Deputy Recorder/Treasurer Theresa Woods joined via ZOOM. Tommy McDonald joined the meeting late via ZOOM. A quorum was declared.

Regular Session:

The minutes were presented for review, revision, and approval. After some discussion, Mike McKee made a motion to approve the minutes and Jacqueline Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The financial report was presented for review and approval. After a brief discussion, Mike McKee made a motion to approve the financial report with Jacqueline Wiseman seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Citizens wishing to address the Council:

Tillie Lile and Joe Green were on the agenda to address the council. Mrs. Lile stated she wished to address the council about the streets in the City of Foreman. She stated she does not reside in the city limits of Foreman, but does drive the streets of Foreman and is concerned with the streets being in such bad repair. Mrs. Lile said she has been told by rumor that the city has a grant for street repairs. Mayor Harp addressed Mrs. Lile's concerns by saying the grant being spoke of was a grant submitted by former mayor Judy Adams. He stated the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) grant is for \$300,000. Mayor Harp said the cost of repairs for the streets Mrs. Adams submitted total \$547,000 and covers repairs for 1st Avenue, Bell St., and 5th Avenue. Mayor Harp stated that he has been working with Steve Morgan with the ARDOT to revise the original grant submitted by Mrs. Adams to reduce the cost to the city. Mayor Harp reported it would be next year before the city gets the grant. He stated at this time the city does not have a grant for street repairs. Mayor Harp told Mrs. Lile that the city is looking into alternatives. Mayor Harp went on to say the city workers are still patching potholes as they can. There was discussion about the streets being torn up by trucks traveling on streets designated as "No Trucks". Mayor Harp stated the coal mix and gravel used to repair the potholes is expensive. Mrs. Lile asked when will we get the grant from ARDOT and how long after receiving the grant will it take to get started with the repairs. Mayor Harp replied that he expected it to be January or February of 2022 before we get the grant. Mrs. Lile asked if once this grant is expended can we apply for another grant. Mayor Harp stated yes, but it takes roughly (3) three years to get the grant. He also said he is working with County Judge Cranford for assistance from the county on chip and sealing some of the city streets. Mayor Harp reported that Judge Cranford has said the county could provide the labor and equipment to chip and seal if the city would pay for the materials. Mayor Harp stated we will have to fix the potholes before we can chip and seal. The question was asked how long the chip and seal would last and Alana Cody said she read it should last about (7) seven years. Mayor Harp stated it depends on the traffic, etc. and keeping the trucks off the streets. Joe Green stated he thought his street was the worse one in town, but after driving around the city he said it is not the worse. Mr. Green said, in his opinion, the worst streets are 4th St., 5th St., and 7th St. and he does not live on those streets. Mike McKee stated they have been working the street problems. He said all towns have street problems. Mr. McKee stated we don't have all the solutions, but we need money to fix the streets as they should be. Mrs. Lile asked, "Do we need to raise taxes"? Mr. McKee stated that we had to raise water rates at the first of the year because of the water rate increase to the city from our water source. He said the city is looking at raising the sewer rates due to the rising costs of maintaining our sewer system and repairs that must be done to our sewer system later this year or early next year to be in compliance with the ADEQ. Mayor Harp stated the city has a wastewater rehab project that will starting soon at the wastewater pond. He reported we have received a loan from USDA and some funding from the state.

Mrs. Lile asked what streets were going to be repaired. Mayor Harp stated Bell St. to the bridge and 1st Avenue from the City Park to Madden St. He said they are still working on the cost estimates. Mrs. Lile asked about the street (Dollarhide St.) which runs between the school and the car wash. Mayor Harp said the street is in bad shape due to the new school construction equipment utilizing the street. Mayor Harp stated the contractor said they would fix the street but would not repave it. Mrs. Lile stated it isn't fixed unless it's paved. She said we have a new school but the street going to the school is awful. Mrs. Lile said we need that street. She asked Mayor Harp to please apply for another grant as soon as possible. Mrs. Lile and Mr. Green thanked the council.

Mr. Roger Quilty and his wife were on the agenda to speak. Mayor Harp gave the floor to Mr. Quilty. Mr. Quilty explained that he and his wife, Debbie, are the coordinators for Little River County Quilters. Mr. Quilty stated they have meet with the Quorum Court and the Little River Chamber of Commerce. He said they are not selling anything, but they are trying to build tourism and bring in money to the county by having people come to see the Quilt Trails. Mr. Quilty showed the council a sample of a painted wooden quilt that could be placed on a building. He said the quilt pattern can be designed by the person buying the quilt but must be approved by the State Quilters. Mrs. Quilty stated that an individual may paint the quilt or Karen Owen, a Foreman resident, will paint them for anyone for a reasonable fee. Mr. Quilty said you can have the quilts painted in various sizes. Mrs. Quilty said there is a list of addresses on the Quilt Trail. She said when they travel they use the list to visit these cities and see the quilts from other regions. Mr. Quilty said he and his wife want the city's help in promoting the LRC Quilters in this project to help promote tourism in our county.

Department Reports

Administration:

Mayor Harp asked Attorney Bishop to speak about the clinic opening. Mr. Bishop said the clinic is waiting on Medicare authorization. He stated the clinic is ready to open as soon as they get the authorization.

Mayor said he has contacted Municipal League lawyers John Wilkinson and Lanny Richmond about the city getting a low interest loan to finish the sewer line repair project and repay the loan with the second half of the American Rescue Plan money we will receive next year.

Mayor Harp stated we needed to open a new account for the American Rescue Plan money we are to receive this month. A motion was made by Perry Young to open an account with Horatio State Bank. The account to require (2) two signatures for withdrawal. The authorized signers on the American Rescue Plan Fund to be William B. Harp, Theresa Woods, and Coleen Fowler. Jacqueline Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mayor Harp stated the sealed bid opening was Friday, July 16th. He said the property location 203 & 205 Schuman St. sold for \$1,200. He said the (3) three pieces of equipment; John Deere backhoe, New Holland tractor, and Sewer Jetter machine sold for a combined total of \$9,357.00.

Law Enforcement: The Law Enforcement report for June was presented for review. The deputies drove approximately 3,800 miles for the month. Deputies responded to (103) calls for service including (16) disturbance calls, (2) suspicious person calls, (10) medical calls, (2) animal complaints, and (3) accidents. Deputies made (4) misdemeanor arrests, (2) felony arrests, served (2) warrants, and issued (17) warnings and (21) citations. Deputies also located (4) open doors while conducting security checks and collected \$2,280.00 in fines for the city for the month of June.

Fire Department: No Report.

Parks Department: Mayor Harp reported the construction of the concession stand/restrooms is coming along. He said they are waiting to pour cement to allow handicap access on the sides of the building.

Street Department: Eddie Smith reported they are doing good and trying to get caught up. Perry Young inquired about using the Infrastructure money for the streets. The council discussed how much money comes in to the Infrastructure account each month. Currently the account has \$37,000 and last month \$7,800 was received from the City Sales and Use tax. Mayor Harp spoke to Judge Cranford about putting down hot mix on Stephens St. in front of the Quilty residence. He said there is 310 feet of area that needs to be repaired. It is 310' by 20'

wide. The cost to the city will be \$7,000. Mayor Harp stated the resident at 311 Murphy St. has received a letter about driving his truck on the streets. Another letter will be sent 310 Murphy St. about driving his truck on the streets. Mr. Bishop told the council that the truck ordinance is in place, the violators need to be written a ticket and Mr. Bishop said he would prosecute. A lengthy discussion followed. Mike McKee stated the city should approve to repair the area on Stephens St. as discussed for \$7,000. Alana Cody made a motion to approve the county repairing the 310' x 20' area in front of the Quilty residence by the county. Motion was seconded by Perry Young. Motion carried.

Perry Young said we should get a loan to fix the streets and the payment come from the Infrastructure Account each month. A lengthy discussion followed.

Jacqueline Wiseman asked about the culvert repairs on Schuman St., 6th Avenue, and Dollarhide. Eddie said they know what needs to be done to repair the culvert on Schuman St. and will working on getting the materials to fix it.

Water Department: Mayor Harp stated we have a problem with the Case backhoe. He said when Judy Adams was mayor; we had problems with the alarms going off on the backhoe and Scott Tractor mechanics drained the fluids in the transmission where he found non-metal particles. We are now having similar problems. Mayor Harp said Eddie has drained the fluids and cleaned the screen. He stated there were more particles in the filter. Mayor Harp stated he is not sure how long the backhoe will last. He said the backhoe is used a lot. A lengthy discussion followed. Perry Young and Joyce Green asked Mayor Harp to contact a Caterpillar salesman about lease prices on a backhoe. Mike McKee asked Theresa Woods if we have the money in the Water Department for a new piece of equipment. She responded no, if they were wanting to purchase a new backhoe.

Eddie said the school has asked for another 2" meter. We will have to order.

Eddie said the sewer pipe has been delivered for the Bell St. project.

Sanitation Department: Mayor Harp reported the Sanitation Department is running well.

Animal Control: Nothing to report.

Unfinished Business: Mayor Harp asked if the council reviewed the HomeServe USA information in their packets. The council discussed the information that was presented in their packets and asked questions. After a brief discussion, Tommy McDonald made a motion for HomeServe USA to use the city logo. Perry Young seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Scott Sims from Premier joined the meeting via phone. Mr. Sims explained to the council that Premier was a fiber optics company and would like the council's permission to come into the City of Foreman and use our right of ways to install fiber optic cable to the residents of the City of Foreman. He stated they started in Hope, AR (4) four years ago. They have now spread into Nashville, Dierks, and the southern part of Hempstead County. Mr. Sims stated Premier would like to help the City of Foreman apply for the Arkansas Broadband grant and also a federal grant called NTIA. He said he would like to submit applications for both grants to have a better chance of being approved. He stated that the deadline for the Federal NTIA grant is within four weeks. Mr. Sims said they are asking for a sponsor for Premier to bring high speed fiber optic internet into the City of Foreman. He stated that fiber would be 100 mgs up and 100 mgs down. He said the pricing has not been confirmed, but looking at the 100 mg package being \$65 per month, no contract. Mr. Sim went on to say they also offer a 50 mg package with a price point of \$50 to \$55 per month. He said they would submit the plan for all the city limits of Foreman. He said they would need a place to put a 10' x 12' or 10' x 15' building to house their communication equipment, preferably with a concrete pad on city property. Mr. Sims stated if Premier wants to provide wireless outside the city limits they would do a tower rental and place their antennas on the water tower to reach the more rural areas outside the city limits. Mr. Sims said that Arkansas requires someone to sponsor the project and put out a single public notice that the City of Foreman is participating in the program. The Federal program requirements a more complicated. The paperwork for the application must be submitted and approved. Mr. Sims said they are unclear if the payment would go to Premier or the city. He

stated he will be getting an answer tomorrow. He stated a company from Dallas area does the project. Attorney Bishop asked if Premier pays a franchise fee. Mr. Sims said they would collect and Premier has a tax company that would submit the franchise fee to the city quarterly. Mike McKee asked if the billing would be done by the city or Premier. Mr. Sims said the Arkansas grant would come directly to Premier and they would pay the invoices. He said they are not sure about the Federal grant at this time how the money will be handled. He stated they had received some information but it was still not clear. Mr. McKee asked how far out of town does the signal reach. Mr. Sims stated it has been their experience the best case is (6) six miles in a circle or worst case (3) miles in a circle. Mr. Sims said only the fiber optic 100 and 50mg are included in the grant. He said if Premier provides wireless, which will not be included in the grant but paid by Premier. Mr. Young asked if residents just outside the city limits would be able to get the fiber optic high speed internet. Mr. Sims said it is a little flexible. We would need to specify the areas and he will send a map. Mr. McKee asked what the timeline was. Mr. Sims said the Federal grant pays out in November each year and Premier will have (1) one year to complete the project. Mr. Young made a motion to accept the proposal from Premier for fiber optic high speed internet within the city limits of Foreman. Mr. McDonald seconded the motion. Motion carried.

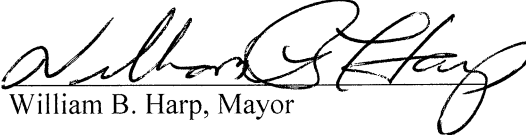
Attorney Bishop addressed the council about an issue with cities of the 2nd class hiring a city attorney. He said he recently found out that cities of the 2nd class cannot hire a city attorney who is outside the city limits. Mr. Bishop has talked with Lanny Richmond of the Municipal League about the issue. Mr. Richmond said it is legal for the City of Foreman to enter into a contract with the City of Ashdown to provide Mr. Bishop' for his services. Mr. Bishop stated it would be contract labor and the City of Foreman is currently paying him \$750 per month and Mr. Bishop stated he is in agreement remaining the same. Mr. Bishop said he is willing to accept the agreement. Mr. Bishop presented a Resolution to be approved to enter into the contract with the City of Ashdown for Mr. Bishop's services. Mr. Young made the motion to accept the Resolution to go into contract with the City of Ashdown for legal services provided by Attorney Eric T. Bishop for a cost of \$750 per month payable to the City of Ashdown, with a (14) fourteen day termination period. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Executive Session: None

Regular Session:

The next council meeting will be held on **Monday, August 16, 2021**, at 4pm in the Foreman Community Center.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by a motion from Jacqueline Wiseman, seconded by Perry Young. Meeting adjourned.


William B. Harp, Mayor

Attest: 
Theresa Woods, Deputy Recorder/Treasurer