

**FOREMAN CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
February 22, 2022**

The Foreman City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 4pm in the Foreman Community Center.

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

Roger Quilty, Recorder/Treasurer was asked by Mayor Harp to call the roll. Present were Alana Cody, Jacqueline Wiseman, Joyce Green, Mike McKee, Perry Young and Tommy McDonald. Deputy Recorder/Treasurer Theresa Woods, Water Superintendent Eddie Smith, and Mayor Harp were also present. Roger Quilty stated we had a quorum. Also in attendance were City Attorney Thad Bishop, LRC Sheriff Bobby Walraven, Chief Deputy Kevin Sanders, and County Judge Mike Cranford.

Regular Session:

The minutes for the regular meeting of January 18, 2022 were presented for review, revision and approval. Mike McKee made a motion to accept them as read. Jacqueline Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The financial report was presented for review and approval. Jacqueline Wiseman made a motion to accept them as presented. Mike McKee seconded the motion. Motion carried.

LRC Sheriff Contract

Mayor Harp stated he had to make a change of the agenda due to scheduling conflicts. Little River County Sheriff Bobby Walraven and Chief Deputy Kevin Sanders was in attendance to speak regarding renegotiating the contract between the Sheriff's Department and the City of Foreman or the option of the city having their own local City Marshall's department. The Sheriff stated over the past five years Foreman has had a contract with the County Sheriff's department and the Sheriff's Department has not increased the contract. Sheriff Walraven stated this has affected the Sheriff's budget quite a bit.

Sheriff Walraven stated he did not come to the meeting to convince the city either way – to keep the contract with the County or have our own City Marshall department, but whatever was decided, he would help the city in every way he could. He stated there would be several steps we would have to go through to accomplish reinstating the city's marshal department. He advised going back to our own Marshal's Office would not be easy. He said by the time we meet all the federal mandates, the recording mandates, and replacing all the equipment, it would be a pretty costly especially after being out for five years. He stated if we wanted to transition over a period of time, he would do what he could to help the city. Sheriff Walraven said he is competing with

deputy salaries in other cities who are paying \$30 an hour. He loses people all the time that move on to other agencies for higher pay after they have gone through the training that the county Sheriff's department has paid for. He stated he has been in conversation with State Legislators asking them to come up with a minimum wage for law enforcement across the state so new hires would not be jumping from one area to another. Sheriff Walraven stated the current pay for his deputies, per person, including sick leave, vacation, and holidays is \$113,000 a year. Mike McKee asked what the approximate cost for dispatch fees were per year if the city chose to reinstate the Marshal department. The Sheriff said it would be about \$100,000. Mayor Harp asked if the charge for a night in jail was still \$38 and the Sheriff confirmed it.

Chief Deputy Kevin Sanders presented the council with a handout comparing the number of calls and the number of miles travelled for 2021 which showed the City of Foreman had 25% of the calls and had a daily average of 159 miles. Tommy McDonald asked if the mileage started in Ashdown. Chief Deputy Sanders said the mileage begins when they hit the city limits of Foreman. Mileage to or from Ashdown is only counted if they have an arrest in Foreman, take the prisoner to the County Jail, then come back to Foreman.

Mayor Harp asked if the Sheriff brought the figures for what it would cost if we stayed with the county Sheriff's department. County Judge Cranford said the original annual contract is \$93,700. Judge Cranford said he has spoken with Mayor Harp and suggested going to \$103,000 and then doing incremental increases each year up to \$113,000. The original contract had no language in it for increases. The Sheriff stated they didn't want the city to take a big hit right away.

Mike McKee stated he thought it would be a good idea to bring the contract up to date. Tommy McDonald stated it has been 5 years and that's a long time and agreed the contract needed to be updated.

The Sheriff stated if we want to go to our own department, we need to set a goal, a time period, and we all want to work together. He said he does not want us to think he is trying to push us either way. Whatever we decide he will help us as much as he can. The Sheriff stated that even if Foreman did not have a marshal's department the County would have to provide law enforcement for the city. He stated if that came to be, if a deputy is needed in both Ashdown and Foreman, they would respond to both of them. It may not be immediate, but they would get there. Mike McKee said he believed in the city paying their fair share. Tommy McDonald said the city realizes there are things such as animal control and code enforcement the city needs to do to step up and help the Sheriff's department. He said it is a learning curve for the City Council about what the County Sheriff's department job is and what the city's job is. He added he thinks we have relied on the Sheriff's Department too much and got a bad taste in our mouth. Now we realize it isn't the Sheriff's department job, so let's get back and do ours. He also stated he would like the council to look everything over and then get back to Sheriff Walraven.

Joyce Green asked Sheriff Walraven about the policy on building security checks at night. She requested to be notified if any of her buildings are found unsecured.

While Judge Cranford was still present Mayor Harp asked him about the Code Red program. The Judge reported the program is up and operational and we needed to get someone to go through the training to learn how to access the system and operate it. He stated he has spoken to people in other counties and they all liked the Code Red System. Judge Cranford stated the system is like the school's All Call System. Mike McKee asked what the website was. The Judge said you could go to lrcounty.org and there is a button to log on to Code Red. He said there is also a Smart 911 button as well to advise first responders (Sheriff, Ambulance, and Fire Department) if there is someone at that residence that is disabled, if there is an animal in the home, etc.

Citizens wishing to address the Council:

JoAnn Keeney, the EAST teacher from Foreman High School, said she has some students that came up with an idea to have little Community Libraries placed in areas around the city that students might hang out to encourage them to read. She said there will also be books for adults to enjoy. They would like to put one at the City Recreation Park. Mrs. Keeney said they are looking at possibly using an old filing cabinet from the old high school or build something to keep the books protected. She stated they want to encourage the students and adults to read and even better if it is outside. She said her class likes to be involved in a lot of project-based things. Mrs. Keeney said this is her second year being in a classroom. She wants to encourage her kids to be creative. She thought this was a great idea and wanted to know if the Council would allow them to put one at the park and possibly other places around the city. Mike McKee stated he has seen one like this in Ashdown and it appeared to be doing well. It is a "Take One – Leave One" system. She stated they have a lot of books from both school campus libraries that are recycling their libraries. She also stated they would be having a 'Book Drop' once a year. The council thought it was a great idea and gave Mrs. Keeney approval to put a Community Library at the Recreation Park.

Beautification Committee

Joann Dickens spoke to the council about forming a Beautification Committee with the United Methodist Women to beautify our town before our 1st Pecan Festival in October. Ms. Dickens said her project wouldn't cost the city anything. Ms. Dickens stated it would be a United Methodist Women's Project. She asked if the Council needed to vote on this. Mayor Harp asked for a motion, Perry Young made the motion to allow United Methodist Women's organization to clean-up around the city. Motion was seconded by Tommy McDonald. Motion carried. The discussion continued regarding if it was a City Project or a UMW project. She stated it would be a United Methodist Women's Project for the City of Foreman. Mike McKee mentioned this could go hand-in-hand with the City Cleanup Days. Mayor Harp was asked when he wanted to have the Cleanup Days. Mayor Harp suggested having it in June when it wouldn't be too wet. Perry Young said the city needs to start enforcing residents to clean up their grounds or the city would come in and clean it up and send them the bill. Mike McKee stated there is already an ordinance on the books and Perry Young said it is not being enforced. Tommy McDonald said this is what we talked about last month. He said our ordinances are outdated and need to be amended. The mayor stated in a seminar, Municipal League lawyer Lanny Richmond said we could use council members for Code Enforcement. Mayor Harp asked City Attorney Thad

Bishop if this would be legal. Mr. Bishop stated we could amend the ordinance to say the mayor or his designee. Mr. Bishop said he would look at the ordinance Ashdown has that is pretty comprehensive. There was some discussion about putting a lien on property if the city had to clean it up. Mr. Bishop stated that trying to post a lien against the property is very difficult to do and does not recommend. He said he would put together amendments and present them to the council.

Perry Young brought up the problem with the building on Schuman Street next to 4K Grocery that is starting to fall down. Mayor Harp stated the city has a building across the street that is falling in also. There was continued discussion on some of the other buildings in town that needed fixing up or torn down.

Joann Dickens asked about someone from the Beautification Project and someone from the council going to talk to the owners of these buildings about cleaning it up and would the city be able to help them do anything, not make threats. Mayor Harp said the Project Committee could do that. They can go out and buy paint and fix things up. The city can't do things like that.

Department Reports:

Administration:

Amended Budget

The amended budget was presented for review and approval. Alanna Cody made a motion to accept the amended budget by resolution. Jacqueline Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Water Audit

Mayor Harp reported Berry and Associates finished the water audit and we should have the paperwork next month.

Law Enforcement

Mayor Harp asked if there were any questions on the previous discussion with Sheriff Walraven, Chief Deputy Sanders, and Judge Mike Cranford. Mike McKee suggested tabling any action pending receipt of the proposed renegotiated contract.

Animal Control

Mayor Harp asked Water Superintendent Eddie Smith if there were any dogs picked up this month. He reported they picked up one.

Parks Department

Mayor Harp asked Tommy McDonald for a report on the park. Tommy McDonald said he had handed out the minutes from his committee meeting. He also attached information on items that have been completed since the meeting. He said Brianna Segraves had some money left over from the Draw Down held several years ago for the Recreation Park. Tommy said she has

donated some to the park to buy some tables and he said they have bought two tables so far. They are picnic tables to put out underneath the pavilion. Tommy stated the tables were \$149 a piece at Tractor Supply. He said that he would love to have six, but would be happy with four. Perry Young stated that he would buy one. Tommy McDonald, Mike McKee and Mayor Harp had a discussion regarding using non-skid paint in the breezeway to prevent slip and fall injuries. There was a discussion on the ribbon cutting ceremony the Park Commission would like to have at the first ball game so the community could visit the park and enjoy the sports activities. The Foreman Youth Sports Association (FYSA) does not have a schedule at this time.

Street Department

Mayor Harp stated he is still waiting on the State Grant. They will run down Bell Street and down First Avenue, from Highway 41 over to Fourth Street and from Eighth down to a little past the bridge. That is what our \$300,000 grant covered. Mayor Harp also said he and Water Superintendent Eddie Smith need to have about three clear weather days and rent a roller from Dot's Rental and start patching the roads we want with chip n' seal and the areas we have installed new culverts and put the asphalt over them with a roller. Water Superintendent Eddie Smith was asked if he had anything to add, but he did not.

Water Department

Mayor Harp stated that the power went out again on Monday at the ground storage tank. He said once the generator started up they could smell some rubber burning. Mayor Harp said they found a plug had fallen onto the exhaust. Mall Energy is going to come out and change the plug and do the maintenance on the generator. Water Superintendent Eddie Smith stated it was time to paint the ground storage tank. Mayor Harp stated the panels need taken apart on the room where we have the pumps for the ground storage tank. Over the years the water has rotted out the bottom and there is no way of securing that door. The gate and the room should be secure so no one can get in there. Mayor Harp stated we also have problems out at the sewer pond with the Sensaphone alarm system. Eddie stated he has someone coming to do repairs. Eddie reported right now we are not able to receive any calls if the pumps go down.

Sanitation Department

Mayor Harp stated that Sanitation has been running good.

Unfinished Business

A brief discussion was had on repairing Stephens Street where the city repaired a water leak. Mayor Harp stated the backhoe sold for \$41,000 through Nutt Auction and after paying Nutt Auction their percentage the city received \$38,540.00. Mike McKee asked what we were going to do with the \$38,540. Mayor Harp said there were a couple of things he and Deputy Recorder/Treasurer Theresa Woods had discussed. He said Deputy Recorder/Treasurer Theresa Woods talked about paying it on the backhoe note. Mayor Harp stated since we purchased the backhoe on a lease-purchase contract he thought we would be violation of the contract if we made a lump sum payment. He said if it does violate the contract, we could put the money in savings and make payments from account each month for the new backhoe. City Attorney Thad

Bishop stated we could exercise our purchase option, go to Horatio State Bank and refinance it, if we wanted to. He said we probably could not prepay the lease contract, and there is an interest rate built into that contract. He believed we could pay the \$38,540 and borrow the rest from the bank and accomplish the same thing. Perry Young asked how much we owed on the backhoe. Theresa Woods stated we bought it for \$91,000 and have not had it very long so the balance is about the same. After a lengthy discussion Mayor Harp said he would find out if we could legally pay a lump sum on the lease/purchase note.

Mike McKee said someone needed to be appointed to be trained on the Code Red System. He stated a decision does not have to be made tonight, but he felt it had to be done out of the mayor's office on who to be the administrator.

Mayor Harp asked if anyone wanted to discuss the contract with the Sheriff's department. Perry Young stated we needed to look at the options we have and what we can do. Mayor Harp asked if the council thought we should continue with going to Standards with the Sheriff and find out what it is going to entail for us to reinstate our Marshall's office or renegotiate our contract with the Sheriff's department. Mayor Harp stated we already know the cost is increasing \$10,000 this year and will increase each year thereafter \$2,000 for as long as we contract with the Sheriff's department. Joyce Green stated it would cost us a lot more than that for our own department. Mike McKee said if we start our own, it is guaranteed that it is going to cost us \$113,000 in salaries. He stated it is also quite clear that we are going to pick up \$100,000 in jail and dispatch fees on top of that, so we are at a quarter of a million dollars. Tommy McDonald said he would still like to find out what it would cost to run our own Marshall's Office. Tommy McDonald said he would like to see the figures for the jail and dispatch fees to see if it is actually \$100,000 a year. Tommy McDonald also suggested paying the County for an additional deputy to patrol in the daytime. He said he would like to know how much it would cost for the Sheriff to hire another deputy and dedicate him to Foreman in the daytime. Mike McKee asked if we needed to act upon the contract. Mayor stated it depended on what the Council wanted to do. Joyce Green stated she didn't think we could make any kind of decision until more research is done. Mayor Harp said he would need a motion to accept the \$103,000 contract. Theresa Woods asked if they wanted to have a written document that spells all of this out. The mayor stated he would work on it.

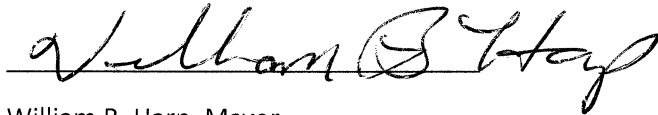
Mayor Harp stated he has talked to contractors about getting a bid for the city hall roof and at this time everybody has work. He said he doesn't know what else to do with it, but he would keep looking. Mike McKee asked if he had spoken to Lewis Brothers about getting a good faith estimate on the roof. Mayor Harp stated they were currently working a job in Oklahoma. He said he would get hold of Kevin again. Mayor Harp said he was the one that came out and gave an estimate last time. Mayor Harp said he gave an estimate of \$14,000 the last time, but he guaranteed it wouldn't be close to that now. He was the one that gave us the drawings and stuff, but we turned down \$14,000. Mike McKee stated we need to have the drawings and know that the roof is going to hold up years down the road. He said we may have to pay a little extra for a good quality job. Mayor Harp asked if everyone agreed with that. There was no response, so he

said he would go back to Jarod Lewis and ask him to look at the roof and give us a bid. Mayor Harp said he would talk to Kevin and see if he would put in a bid also.

Mayor Harp stated he had asked Alana Cody to head up the Clean-Up Days and she has agreed. He said we needed to set a date. Comments were made to make it before it got too hot. Mike McKee suggested the end of May but said the weather may be questionable but should not be as hot as June. Alana Cody said we couldn't do it on Memorial Weekend. Perry Young said it would be better if we did it when school was out so the school kids could participate. Mayor Harp said if we do it on a Saturday, there shouldn't be a problem. Mike McKee stated one weekend wouldn't be enough, that we need to look at a couple of weekends, or a weekend and a couple of mid-week days after that. Tommy McDonald suggested sectioning off different areas. Perry Young said they adopted a street several years ago and that worked out good. Mike McKee suggested Alana Cody bring back a date to the next meeting. Alana Cody asked if she could get together with the mayor and he agreed.

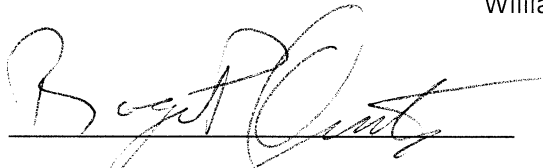
Mayor Harp stated he hasn't talked to Mr. Hannah about the dump truck yet. Mayor Harp asked if there was any new business. Perry Young asked the mayor who was going to work on it. He said he was talking to Mr. Hannah over next to the Pawn Express. The mayor stated he wants to take our work to him because he is right here in town and does good work.

Jacqueline Wiseman made the motion to adjourn the meeting until next month on Monday, March 21, 2022. Perry Young seconded the motion. Motion carried.



William B. Harp, Mayor

Attest:



Roger Quilty, Recorder/Treasurer