

FOREMAN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING March 21, 2022

The Foreman City Council met in regular session on Monday, March 21, 2022, at 4 p.m. 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 Mike McKee, Joyce Green, Tommy McDonald, Alana Cody, and Jacqueline Wiseman. Perry Young was absent. Water Superintendent Eddie Smith and Mayor Harp were also present. Roger Quilty stated we had a quorum. Also in attendance were County Judge Mike Cranford and County Sheriff Bobby Walraven. Larry Cowling showed up later during the meeting.

Regular Session:

The minutes for the regular meeting of February 22nd were presented for review, revision and approval. Mike McKee made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Jacqueline Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The financial report was presented for review and approval. Mike McKee asked what the copper setter charge was for. Water Superintendent Eddie Smith stated they were meter setters for installing water meters. Mike McKee also asked about the payment to Daniel Spears under the City Water and Sewer Department. Mayor Harp said it was to install streamers to scare the buzzards away from the top of the high-water tank. Mike McKee made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented. Alana Cody seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Citizens wishing to address the Council:

None.

Admin:

Mayor Harp asked Judge Cranford if he had sent the contract to the mayor. Judge Cranford said the County Attorney would send the contract to the City Attorney for the attorney's approval and then the city's approval. Judge Cranford said Mayor Harp could sign the contract if all parties were in agreement. Judge Cranford said basically what the Sheriff's Department was asking for was an annual increase of \$10,000 for the deputy salaries. Currently the city is paying \$93,700 annually for deputies' salaries and that would increase to \$103,700. Judge Cranford said since the original contract between former County Sheriff Gregory and former Foreman Mayor Judy Adams the deputy's salary costs have increased by \$20,000. Judge Cranford said instead of the

city absorbing one huge increase at one time, the contract will increase \$10,000 the first year and in incremental increases of \$2,500 annually thereafter up to \$113,000.

Tommy McDonald said by 2026 we would be paying an additional \$20,000 per year, but we would probably be needing to pay more than that. Mike McKee said so basically, we are waiting for the attorneys right now. Judge Cranford said if the council approves Mayor Harp to sign the contract, then the attorneys would draw it all up. Tommy McDonald made a motion to have the mayor enter into the contract. Mike McKee seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Code Red System

Mayor Harp asked Judge Cranford if the Code Red System was up and running. Judge Cranford stated it was up and running, but he was not happy with the server it is on. He said sometimes it comes right up and sometimes it does not. He stated the website was lrcounty.org and the link is in red at the bottom right of the main page. It was discussed the council needed to send a couple of people to the training for the program. Tommy McDonald attempted to log onto the site using lrcounty.org, but was sent to a different site.

Department Reports:

Administration:

Mayor Harp asked if everyone had copies of the water audit. Mayor Harp said we had a good audit. Mike McKee asked about the charge offs and how old they were. The mayor said he was sure they were from last year because they do the audit every year. Mike McKee asked if there was any recourse they could use to try to collect some of them. Mayor Harp said several years ago RDA and the city worked together to collect bad debt. Mayor Harp said if a customer left a bad debt in the City of Foreman and tried to open an account with RDA or the City of Ashdown; RDA nor the City of Ashdown would allow them to open a water account without clearing their arrears with the City of Foreman and vice versa. Tommy McDonald asked if it could go to a credit report or collection agency. He also stated the list is a lot shorter than it has been in the past. He asked if these people just run the bill up and have the water cut of and then just leave. Mayor Harp said he thought most of them ran it up and left. Mike McKee asked if this had been brought up to City Attorney Thad Bishop, if there was a way to recoup any of these funds. Mayor Harp said you have to pay a collection agency for the service. More discussion followed concerning the collection of bad debt. It was suggested Mayor Harp contact the RDA board members and ask about implementing the new customer policy again. Tommy McDonald made a motion to accept the write-offs as presented and we go forth and try to collect the city's money and work with the other entities of the county to recoup the money. Jacqueline Wiseman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mike McKee made a motion to accept the Water Audit. Alana Cody seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mayor Harp reported the helipad had new lights that actually come on. Mike McKee explained the reason they needed to work is because a helicopter will not land blind. Mayor Harp said it used to be someone had to go down and turn the lights on when needed. Now they will come on at dusk and go off at dawn. We also have a green strobe light in case of inclement weather which is on a switch. Alana Cody asked if someone would have turn the green strobe light on and who turned the lights on. Mayor Harp said the Fire Department turns on the lights when needed. The mayor said we are up to date now on the placement and color of the lights. Bret Rankin moved into town a couple of months ago and is a Master Electrician in Texas and is getting licensed in Arkansas. Mr. Rankin helped with the wiring and lights for the helipad. Tommy McDonald said Mr. Rankin has helped him with the park as well. Mayor Harp said he will be helping us with different projects here and there.

Law Enforcement

Tommy McDonald said the only thing he had wrong with Law Enforcement this month was the issue with the pit bull that was picked up on Smith Street. Tommy agreed the dog should have picked it up, but he felt law enforcement should have shot the dog on-site, after it attacked the neighbor's show pig. Mayor Harp said they called the Sheriff and he believes the owners of the pit bull got a ticket. The dog was taken to Ashdown and no one claimed the dog and Mayor Harp said as far as he knows and the dog was euthanized. Mayor Harp said there are two more pit bulls at the same spot and he is trying to catch them. Tommy McDonald stated the thing he is having a problem with is the dog ate up a show pig, which is worth money, but the dog comes and threatens me or my grandchild or dog, they won't even write a ticket or haul it to Ashdown when pit bulls are not allowed in the city to begin with. Mayor Harp said that was why he went through the ordinances and sent them off to the Sheriff so he can put them on his computer. Mayor Harp said I hear all the time, "Well, I don't have that ordinance." Mayor Harp said he sat down and talked with the Sheriff about this stuff. Mayor Harp said they are doing a lot of things with computers in their vehicles now. So, if they need to request an ordinance they can get it. He said there is no reason we should have someone out here dealing drugs on horses, and that's what is happening. Mayor Harp said he gets calls seven days a week about it and it something we need to deal with. There was a discussion about using a firearm to stop a vicious animals in the city, even though there is an ordinance about firing a weapon in the city.

Animal Control

Mayor Harp said it had already been discussed about the pit bull being taken to Ashdown.

Fire Department

Mayor Harp reported they had to replace the clutch on the brush truck. Mike McKee said this vehicle has had a lot of use since the first of the year.

Parks Department

No report.

Street Department

Water Superintendent Eddie Smith said everything is good and waiting for some good weather to do road repairs. Mayor Harp said we did have DOT come in and put a base down at the recreation park parking lot where they are going to store their chips. A discussion followed on the DOT plans for the state highways. Mayor Harp discussed the grant from the ARDOT and the city streets included in this grant. Mayor Harp reported the city will have to go out and scrape the sides of the road off. Once we get good weather, we will be getting a roller and preparing some of the other roads that will be getting chip and seal.

No repairs have been made on Stephens Street at this time.

Water Department

Water Superintendent Eddie Smith stated that the only thing coming up is the tank inspection. The ground storage tank needs to be painted this year; the high tank has another year. Mayor Harp asked if they had to do the inside of the tank and Eddie Smith said they had to do inside and outside. Eddie said it will take a full day to paint the tank and they can't bring the tank back up right away. He said it will be two or three days for the tank to be in operation.

Sanitation Department

Mayor Harp stated that Sanitation has been running good. Mayor Harp said we are supposed to be getting a couple of demonstrations of the truck with the "one-arm bandit" on it. It will actually pick the trash cans up and dump them. It will only take one guy to run it. Mike McKee asked if this was an attachment or another truck. Mayor Harp stated it would be another truck. He said this was the truck they originally wanted to sell us but Mayor Harp didn't want it at that time. The truck has to be within 14 or 15 feet of the can. A question was asked what if someone has more trash than the container will hold. Mayor Harp they didn't get into that, but that was a good point.

Unfinished Business

The Code Red System was previously covered with Judge Cranford. Mike McKee asked who was going to be appointed to go to training in April. He stated Coleen Fowler needs to be one of them and he believed we needed at least two for the city.

The Mayor Harp stated he has tried four different people to put bids on the City Hall roof. He only got one bid from 2L Enterprises (Jared Lewis) and it is for \$28,000. Mike McKee asked if we had figured out where we were going to get the money yet. Mayor Harp said he has not spoken to Deputy Recorder/Treasurer Theresa Woods yet. Mike McKee said we should get it done before the rainy season, but there is no way we will be able to do that. There was a discussion on trying to tie the contractor down on his price, but with materials going up, we could probably only tie him down on his labor. Mayor Harp said the contractor could go ahead and buy all the materials now and do the job after the rainy season. Mayor Harp asked if the council wanted to go ahead and approve it or wait until he had a chance to talk to Theresa

Woods. Mike McKee said we needed to find out where the money was coming from before they did this.

Mayor Harp asked the council if they wanted to give him the authority to go into a contract with the contractor. It was decided to wait until they could talk to Theresa Woods about finding the money, then call a special meeting for it.

Mayor Harp stated he asked Alana Cody to head up the Clean-up Day and she agreed. They decided on the date of May 7th. The discussion for a starting time settled at 8:30am. Alana Cody said she did not think we would be able to get people to come out two weekends in a row. She said in talking with Mayor Harp perhaps we could get people out again the weekend before the Pecan Festival. The Pecan Festival is the 29th of October.

Alana Cody said she contacted Joanna Keeney and asked if her students would be interested in designing some flyers to put around town and help with the cleanup. Mrs. Keeney said they would love to. Alana Cody said she would get back in contact with her. She said she also spoke to Mayor Harp about sending in the request form for the stuff from Keep Arkansas Beautiful. If we have the cleanup between March and the 21st of May they will try to send trash bags, cotton gloves, disposable gloves, vests, a couple of road signs and t-shirts. Alana said the lady emailed saying she got her request. Mike McKee stated we needed to include the road out beyond the Bulk Plant where there is a lot of trash along the road. Tommy McDonald said we should call the County about helping with the cleanup. It was brought up about getting the prisoners to help out. Tommy McDonald said it would be nice if they could hit the outskirts of town and Alana Cody said it would be nice if it was about the same time as our cleanup. Mike McKee said he thought the dates were fine and we ought to send a letter to every resident in town. Alana Cody said if there was anything she could do, she would help out, just let her know. Mayor Harp said they would see how to fund the cleanup because it does cost the city. Alana Cody said she talked to Ms. Judy Adams. The last time they had a Clean-up Day they recruited the cheerleaders and the football players and she gave them a little bit of money. Alana Cody was wondering how she did that and she was pretty sure she pulled it out of the Industrial Fund with the wording it was for beautification to draw in businesses. Ms. Adams said that nothing was ever said about it. Mike McKee said he was against dabbling into funds that are not designated for that and he is totally against. Alana Cody said in the past they provided hot dogs for the people who participated and asked the council if they wanted to do that. It was brought up in the past Perry Young donated the hot dogs. Alana Cody said she could ask Perry Young to talk to Don Kegley about donating this year.

Mayor Harp stated he had not had a chance to talk to Jerry Dawson on his building. He said he still did not find anyone from the IRS to talk about the lien on that building the city owns on Schuman Street. There was discussion about cleaning up the city owned building that is falling in on Schuman St.

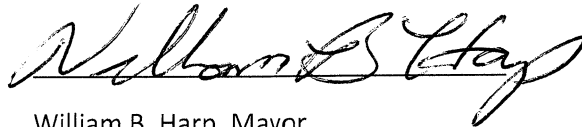
Mayor Harp said he has not been able to talk to Mr. Hanna about swapping the transmissions out on the dump trucks.

Mayor Harp asked about code enforcement and what they could do about it. Mike McKee said code enforcement is on the books but might need to be brought up to date. He said Mayor Harp was going to have to appoint a committee of non-sitting council people. Mike McKee said he thought we needed to get that ball rolling. Alana Cody said she agreed. Mike McKee said they were going to have to find citizens of the city that are willing to sit on this committee and have tough skin. Alana Cody asked if they would have to be living within the city limits. Mike McKee said he expected that they do. Mike McKee stated the mayor said the ordinance specified nine people make up the committee but maybe it has changed by now. Mayor Harp said it probably has changed since the ordinance was written in 1957. Alana Cody suggested all of the council members come up with some names. Mayor Harp said the man from the Municipal League, who has been doing this for years, will come down here and tell us what needs to be residential and what needs to be commercial. He said he doesn't know the full story yet because he hasn't sat down with him but they are telling him the man will come down one time to do this evaluation then he will send the council a packet of recommendations and how to go about doing it. Alana Cody asked if he would be coming before we tried to get up a committee. Mayor Harp said he would like to look for a committee anyway and have these people ready to go when it is set up. Tommy McDonald asked if the committee would vote on how to enforce it, send out letters, and they either comply or not comply and the fine could be levied. Mayor Harp said our ordinance is outdated and feels the man from Zoning will be able to give suggestions to update fine amounts and etc. Mike McKee said that way you could control what is moving in and everything else is grandfathered. Mayor Harp said the only thing we could stop is some of these places that want to put three trailers on one piece of property. He said the Health Department will stop them from that. Alana Cody asked if they had been sent anything and Mayor Harp said they had not hooked up anything. They just have blocks under the mobile homes. The particular lot in question has a house on it already.

Tommy McDonald wanted to go back to talk about sending letters out to all the residents in regards to the Clean-up Day. He asked how many letters would need to be sent out. Mayor Harp stated it would be about 500. Tommy McDonald said he could order door hangers and pay for them and print them if we could walk around and put them on the doors. Jacqueline Wiseman told him she would go half with him.

Mayor Harp asked Larry Cowling if he had anything to say. Mr. Cowling said he wanted to address the Park Committee. Mr. Cowling stated he bought some light poles that were on sale. Mr. Cowling said he would like to donate the four poles to the park. The council thanked Mr. Cowling for his generous donation of the light poles.

Jacqueline Wiseman made the motion to adjourn the meeting until next month on Monday, April 18, 2022. Tommy McDonald seconded the motion. Motion carried.



William B. Harp, Mayor

Attest: 
Roger Quilty, Recorder/Treasurer