

April 10, 2017
Five-thirty o'clock P.M.
North Little Rock City Hall Council Chambers
300 Main Street
North Little Rock, Arkansas

The regular meeting of the North Little Rock City Council scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2017, was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by the Honorable Mayor Joe A. Smith.

The roll having been called and the following Aldermen answered to their names: DEBI ROSS, BETH WHITE, LINDA ROBINSON, RON HARRIS, and CHARLIE HIGHT (5/0). Alderman MAURICE TAYLOR, STEVE BAXTER and MURRY WITCHER were absent. City Clerk Diane Whitbey and City Attorney C. Jason Carter were also present.

The prayer and pledge of allegiance were led by Alderman Harris.

On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderwoman Ross and by consent of all members present, the minutes from the North Little Rock City Council meeting held on Monday, March 27, 2017, were approved, accepted and filed as prepared by the City Clerk (5/0).

Note: Alderman Taylor entered the council chambers at 5:36 p.m.

Mayor Smith opened discussion regarding the Annual State of the City (report). Five years ago, the city had to make cuts to save money. City Department heads did a great job in making cuts. The only way to stay in the black will be to increase income. One option is a Sanitation Pickup Fee. Currently there is no charge. Out of the 25 largest cities in the state, there is one other that does not charge a fee to customers. The other option is a sales tax. North Little Rock's Sales Tax (1 percent) is the second lowest in the state. A sanitation fee will only keep the city above the fund balance level until the year 2020. An additional half-cent sales tax would generate approximately \$8 million per year and provide a decent increase (to the fund balance). Alderman Hight said something has to be done to improve the (city's) revenue source and for the future of the city. At this time, he supports a Sanitation fee. Alderwoman Ross said a ½ cent sales tax would not include any increase for roads, etc. (capital improvements). Mayor Smith said areas of need include the Police and Courts Building, the Main Street Viaduct and the 14th Street bridge (running east and west). The Police and Courts Building is at least 55 years old. The City Services Building was built in the 1960's. If growth in downtown continues, the property could be more valuable as something else. If a new Administration Building were built, it could house Police, Courts, and the offices currently located in the City Services Building. Alderwoman White referenced a portion to the report which indicated the city is bringing in the same amount of money as 10 years ago. Expenses have increased by 36% in the same time period. Mayor Smith referenced Oklahoma City and the approach they took in addressing the need for a sales

tax. The tax would be for five years and specific buildings would be constructed. At the end of the five year period, the voters would have the option to continue the tax for an additional five years. So far, the tax has been approved three times. That won't solve the issue here which is ongoing operation and maintenance expenses. The city would not be able to dedicate the entire tax to capital improvements. Mayor Smith then reviewed several charts from the report. Alderwoman Ross said everyone is having to make cuts in their budgets (personal household). Expenses continue to rise. However, salary increases aren't the same. Mayor Smith referenced the ½ cent revenue of \$8 million (per year). The city's aging infrastructure needs to be considered. (A one cent increase would generate \$16 million.) Regarding sanitation fees, Little Rock's fee is \$24.00. The city of Sherwood just increased their rate to \$15.00 per month. Alderwoman Robinson said it appeared that Jonesboro and El Dorado are the only other cities that do not charge a fee. She spoke with a senior citizen who is on a limited income and advised she doesn't go to McCain Mall to shop and would rather see a sales tax over a sanitation fee. Mayor Smith said a sales tax would be the most fair, especially to lower income residents. Alderwoman Ross said when the current one-cent sales tax was voted on in 1999, residents were promised they would not have to pay a sanitation fee. In 1999, sanitation fees were half what they are now. Mayor Smith said in 1999, the Sanitation Department Budget was \$2.5 million. The current budget for the department is \$5 million. This includes equipment, salaries, dumping fees, etc. Fees to use the Little Rock landfill are scheduled to increase as well. Alderwoman Ross said other cities do not provide the same services as North Little Rock. They do not vacuum leaves, or have boom trucks to pick up large items. Mayor Smith said there are 22,000 households in the city. Alderman Hight referenced the increase in the cost of gas (fuel) since 1999. Mayor Smith then reviewed the timeline for calling for a Special Election. If the city wants to move forward with a Special Election this August, the council will need to decide by the end of this month. Alderwoman White referenced the financial impact on cities in other states and asked for information on the effect to the city if additional revenue is not generated. Mayor Smith said the city would have to look at personnel. Losses could include 25 Police Officers, 25 Fire Fighters, 5 to 10 Street Department employees, 4-5 Utilities Accounting employees. The total staff lost could be 100. Alderwoman Robinson isn't for laying off employees. Alderwoman Ross commended city staff on their efforts in reducing expenses. Mayor Smith said the next council meeting (Monday, April 24, 2017), will convene at 5:00 p.m. at which time he will convene a public hearing. He asked Mrs. Karen Scott, Finance Director to put together information on what would be necessary without additional revenue. Alderwoman Robinson said she will contact her neighborhood associations and encourage them to have their leaders at the next meeting. Mayor Smith said a copy of the State of the City was mailed to all Neighborhood Associations, State Representatives and Senator Jane English and the Police and Fire Union (Presidents).

Mayor Smith said anyone who would like to speak on legislation (or during public comment at the end of the meeting) can sign in with the city clerk.

On the motion of Alderwoman Robinson and seconded by Alderwoman White, and by consent of all members present, communication #3, 4 and 5, were read by title only, accepted and filed (6/0).

3. Petition requesting Speed Hump at 25th and Division Street, by Quincy Williams and Don Smith (*17 signatures for*).
4. Petition requesting Speed Hump at 25th (Division), by Don Smith (*17 signatures for*).
5. Karen Scott, Finance Director/Chair Energy Risk Management Committee – Energy Cost Recovery Rider Adjustment Factor (ECR) – April, 2017 - .0021 (positive).

On the motion of Alderwoman Ross, and seconded by Alderwoman Robinson, and by consent of all members present, communication #1 was read by title only, accepted and filed (6/0).

1. Alex Shubert, ISO Manager – National Processing Center letter to Mayor Joe A. Smith re: North Little Rock Public Protection Classification: 01/10, Effective: July 1, 2017.

Mayor Smith said the city's ISO Rating is now at ISO-1, which is the highest rating. He commended former Fire Chief James Murphy for his efforts. Alderwoman White asked why Station 5 was not recognized. Acting Fire Chief Gerald Tucker said due to the proximity with Station 6, Station 5 does not count as a Fire Station. Alderman Harris asked about the decrease in (home owners) insurance based on ISO ratings. Alderwoman Ross said not all insurance companies recognize ISO ratings.

On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderwoman Robinson, and by consent of all members present, communication #2 was read by title only, accepted and filed (6/0).

2. Amelia Chudy, email re: Lakewood Property Concerns/Issues – 4700 Hampton A & B, 4750 Randolph.

Alderman Hight said this is an example of a property with a resident who does not maintain their property. He has talked to the city engineer, traffic and code enforcement regarding issues at this address. Alderman Hight referenced a neighbor who recently died. There is now a dumpster in the front yard. There aren't any regulations pertaining to dumpsters. Mr. Tom Wadley, Director of Code Enforcement said there are regulations regarding moving PODS. However, there are no restrictions pertaining to dumpsters.

On the motion of Alderwoman Ross and seconded by Alderwoman Robinson, and by consent of all members present, communication #6 was read by title only, accepted and filed (6/0).

6. Mr. Paul Rivera, North American Motor Grader Operations Manager – Caterpillar, letter to Mayor Smith re: move Medium Wheel Loaders to North Little Rock facility.

Mayor Smith said this will bring about 150 jobs to the city. This will bring the total number of employees back up to about 500.

Mayor Smith invited Alderwomen Ross and White to introduce the presentation of video promoting the Park Hill neighborhood. Following the video presentation, Ms. Jenna Rhodes, Fit 2 Live Department said the video was the third project where the city partnered with the UCA Center for Community and Economic Development. Ms. Rhodes referenced those who were involved including

Professor Zeng and her Graphic Design Class students. Mayor Smith, Alderwomen Ross and White then joined representatives at the podium where they were each presented certificates.

Mayor Smith then invited Mr. Leonard Montgomery, North Little Rock Office of Emergency Services (911). He then read and presented a Proclamation to Mr. Montgomery recognizing National Public Safety Telecommunications Week in the City of North Little Rock.

Mayor Smith asked Mr. Bob Major, Director North Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau/North Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission to come forward. Tourism has been a huge part of economic development in our city. Mr. Major then presented a Powerpoint Presentation highlighting their efforts. Mr. Major said the commission and Parks and Recreation receive funding from the restaurant and hotel/motel taxes. Mr. Major said North Little Rock is a “*Destination for all Seasons*”. The Visitors Information Center in Burns Park (on Interstate 40) had over 12,000 visitors stop in for information. Visitors were from 50 states and 21 different countries. This is the only full service visitors center between two state operated centers in Fort Smith and West Memphis. Mr. Major referenced the RV Center in Riverfront Park and the number of visitors who are stopping and staying there. While in town, they are shopping, eating at restaurants and attending events. The Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum (AIMM) also has lots of visitors from around the (US) states and from other countries. There were 103 sporting events in the city, which included 2,200 teams, and 38,000 participants. Mr. Major then reviewed the number of events already held this year. Mr. Major said the Hampton Inn at McCain Mall was received the Conrad Hilton Award and was named one of the top six Hampton Inns in the Americas (North, Central and South). AIMM received three awards from the Arkansas Museum Association. Alderwoman Ross asked if there was a way to count the number of visitors at the Old Mill. Mr. Major said they have looked at options. Mayor Smith commended Mr. Major for his efforts.

No one signed in to speak on legislation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderwoman Robinson and all members present having voted “aye”, consent items R-17-66, and R-17-67 were adopted (6/0). Items R-17-68 and R-17-69 were pulled and called under new business.

R-17-66 (RESOLUTION NO. 9189 – MAYOR SMITH)

A RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN CITY-OWNED ITEMS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT AS SURPLUS; PROVIDING FOR AUCTION THEREOF; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (6/0).

R-17-67 (RESOLUTION NO. 9190 – MAYOR SMITH)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH BUTTERFLY MINISTRIES (SEIS PUENTES PROJECT); AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (6/0). (*amount - \$25,000.00*)

NEW BUSINESS

R-17-68 (RESOLUTION NO. 9191 – MAYOR SMITH)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO ENTER INTO AN ARGEEMENT FOR ELECTRIC CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE WITH CENTRAL ARKANSAS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (CADC); AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. A motion to adopt was made by Alderwoman Robinson and seconded by Alderwoman Ross. Alderwoman Robinson said this program has been helpful to many residents in North Little Rock. Eligibility includes: must be a North Little Rock Electric Department (NLRED) customer, have received a shut-off notice, have an over-due NLRED bill in excess of \$100.00, and a household income of less than 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. This is a great program. Mayor Smith said the program is on-going while funding lasts. On the previous motion, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted (6/0).

R-17-69 (RESOLUTION NO. 9192 – ALDERMAN HIGHT)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO OBTAIN GRANT FUNDS ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK FROM THE ARKANSAS HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT’S “TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM”; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES. Alderman Hight asked Mrs. Bernadette Rhodes. The program in North Little Rock is called “Recycled Bikes for Kids” and is located on Vine and S. A. Jones. Mrs. Rhodes said she met with Mr. Nathan Kelch a few months ago. A previous program made a difference with youth in our city. Mr. Kelch said he would use the grant funds to teach children through bicycle education seminars. The goal would be to teach participants how to get to and from school safely. Their program began in 2008. Since that time, they have given away about 2,000 bikes a year (1,500 for children and 500 for adults). Alderman Hight said this year is when the city will renew it’s Bicycle Friendly application. The resolution was then read. On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderwoman Ross, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted (6/0).

R-17-70 (RESOLUTION NO. 9193 – MAYOR SMITH)

A RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO ISSUE A PROMISSORY NOTE TO PROVIDE SHORT-TERM FINANCING UNDER AMENDMENT NO. 78 TO THE ARKANSAS CONSTITUTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY (*Golf Carts*) HAVING AN EXPECTED USEFUL LIFE OF MORE THAN ONE YEAR; AND PRESCRIBING OTHER MATTERS PERTAINING THERETO; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. A motion to adopt was made by Alderwoman Ross and seconded by Alderman Hight. On the motion of Alderwoman Ross and seconded by Alderwoman White, and by consent of all members present, the

resolution was amended as follows: 2nd *Whereas strike through \$5,500.00 and insert \$300,000.00; Section 2: strike through \$5,500.00 and insert \$300,000.00; and Section 3: insert following \$5,361.33 PER MONTH FOR 60 MONTHS (6/0).* On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderman Taylor, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted as amended (6/0).

R-17-71 (RESOLUTION NO. 9194 – MAYOR SMITH)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO SELL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2013 SCHAER STREET IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK TO CARELINK OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Alderwoman Ross and seconded by Alderman Taylor, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted (6/0). (*former Gloryland Family Fellowship Church property*)

R-17-72

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT WITH THE L'OREAL USA; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was called and held by the sponsor, Mayor Smith.

R-17-73 (RESOLUTION NO. 9195 – MAYOR SMITH)

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND CERTIFYING AMOUNTS OF LIENS TO BE FILED WITH THE PULASKI COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR AGAINST CERTAIN REAL PROPERTIES IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS AS A RESULT OF GRASS CUTTING EXPENSES AND ABATEMENT OF OTHER NUISANCES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. A motion to adopt was made by Alderwoman Ross and seconded by Alderman Taylor. Mayor Smith convened a public hearing. There being no one present wishing to be heard, the public hearing was adjourned. On the previous motion, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted (6/0).

O-17-26 (ORDINANCE NO. 8900 – MAYOR SMITH)

AN ORDINANCE DEFINING “CREDIT ANALYSIS” TO BE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE UNDER ARKANSAS LAW; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Alderwoman Ross and seconded by Alderman Hight, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (6/0). On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderwoman Ross, and the roll having been called and all members present, having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was adopted (6/0). Emergency clause adopted (6/0).

O-17-27 (ORDINANCE NO. 8901 – ALDERMEN BAXTER AND HARRIS)

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A CONDITIONAL USE TO ALLOW METAL WORK AND CUSTOM FABRICATION IN A C-4 ZONE FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED ON WEST 37TH PLACE IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. Without objection, Alderman Harris was added as a co-sponsor. On the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderman Taylor, and by

consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (6/0). On the motion of Alderman Taylor and seconded by Alderwoman Ross, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was adopted (6/0). Emergency clause adopted (6/0). (*applicant: Mike Marlar – Marlar Engineering*)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Bobby Taylor said the council comes up with laws to solve issues. People work hard for their property. If the council’s rules and regulations are not enforced, that causes residents to lose interest. It’s taken over two years for his neighbor to start cleaning up. He doesn’t mind paying for sanitation service. However, he has seen trucks go past stuff and not pick it up. Mr. Taylor referenced trash on Highway 161 that has been there three weeks. Mr. Jodie Carter is a member of the Dixie CDC. He reviewed his resume with the council. He wants to support the city and wants to see something happen with the 500+ vacant lots in Dixie. The city owns 26 of the lots. Mr. James Ard said the man who works on bikes is good. He said he gives away a lot of bikes. He doesn’t want to see taxes go up, but doesn’t see another option. Mr. Ard asked for a report on the Mayor’s meeting with Waste Management. The city should collect from people who don’t have business licenses. People go door-to-door asking to cut lawns. Mr. Joe Reynolds is opposed to a Sanitation fee. He would support a public sales tax vote. Streets and other issues need to be taken care of. Ms. Whitbey reminded the public that if they see someone conducting business without a license, they should contact Code Enforcement or the non-emergency Police number with a description of the individual(s), vehicle make and model and license plate number. Alderwoman Ross asked if people doing lawn work had a tag that they place on their dashboard or mirror.

There being no further business to come before the Council, and on the motion of Alderman Hight and seconded by Alderman Taylor, and by consent of all members present, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m. (6/0), until the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be held on Monday, April 24, 2017, at five o’clock p.m. in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, located at 300 Main Street, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

APPROVED: _____
MAYOR JOE A. SMITH

ATTEST: _____
DIANE WHITBEY, CITY CLERK