

Monday, February 10, 2025
Six o'clock p.m.
North Little Rock City Hall Council Chamber
300 Main Street
North Little Rock, Arkansas

The regular meeting of the North Little Rock City Council scheduled for Monday, February 10, 2025, was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Honorable Mayor Terry C. Hartwick.

Council Members had the option to attend the council meeting in person or participate virtually. The Council Chambers were open to the public.

The roll was called and the following Council Members answered to their names: DEBI ROSS, NATHAN HAMILTON, NICOLE HART, LINDA ROBINSON, STEVE BAXTER, RON HARRIS, and SCOTT FOWLER (7/0). *Note: Council Member VINCE INSALACO, III arrived at 6:01 p.m. during the prayer.* City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Whitbey, Deputy City Clerk/Enforcement Officer Jim Scott and City Attorney Amy Fields were also present.

The prayer and pledge of allegiance were led by IT Director John Barber.

On the motion of Council Member Ross and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the minutes from the North Little Rock City Council meeting held on Monday, January 27, 2025, were approved, accepted, and filed as prepared by City Clerk Diane Whitbey (8/0).

On the motion of Council Member Ross and seconded by Council Member Hamilton, and by consent of all members present, communications #1, and 3 were accepted and filed (8/0).

1. Bob Hardin – Annual Financial Report for the Year End December 31, 2024 with Accounting Calendar Years 2023 and 2022 for Young Road Multi-Purpose Improvement District No. 33 (note: filing 77 pages – first page filed as communication only – remaining pages can be viewed in City Clerk's Office).
3. Diane Whitbey – email commending Deputy City Clerk/Treasurer Shelley Ussery for responsive and kind public service.

On the motion of Council Member Ross and seconded by Council Member Robinson, and by consent of all members present, communication #2 was read, accepted and filed (8/0).

2. Joshua P. Woodard, President – Shotgun Dan's Holdings Inc. re: proposed Event Center at 305 Phillips Road and concerns.

PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Hartwick introduced the annual State of the City video for 2024.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARING

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

O-25-07

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A SPECIAL USE TO ALLOW AN EVENTS CENTER IN AN I2 ZONE FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 305 PHILLIPS ROAD IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read one time January 27, 2025, was read a second time this date. Ms. Darlene Worthen is a member of Stewards of Christ Church Outreach Ministry in Rose City. She owns a thrift store in the area and has a non-profit (Life Up Rose City). Her goal is to bring life to the Rose City area. She moved to the area five (5) years ago and has worked with Mr. (Norman) Clifton at events in Rose City and thanked him for his investment in the non-profit organization. She said her church (members) go to other cities to hold events. Ms. Martha Capps lives in Rose City. She had questions about the proposed event center. She was told the building would be leased to another party and the Clifton's would have nothing to do with it. Ms. Capps referenced other events centers in the city. She said an event center requires a big investment. There had been problems with another business in the area. Mrs. Shirley Abel said she is a life-long resident of Rose City. Residents in the area want to see more businesses and development and had concerns about the right type of businesses for the neighborhood. The (proposed) event center is about 10 blocks from her home. There are days when she can hear shots fire on the shooting range at Don's Weaponry as sound carries in the area. She said there will be an increase in traffic during events. Recently, traffic was at a stand-still as people were trying to turn left off of Phillips Road while an 18-wheeler was trying to turn right on to the same road. The neighborhood association doesn't know much about the type of events to be held and referenced family-oriented. The hours included in the legislation could be night-club hours. If the applicant applies for an alcohol permit, that could cause other concerns. Landscaping would improve the exterior. Council Member Robinson asked the applicant(s) to come to the podium. She asked if Mr. Santos Rodriguez currently operated a business within the city. He said he did not. She asked if he had in the past. He advised he had a restaurant in the city about two (2) years ago. Council Member Robinson said she had received calls both for and against the event center. The hours of operation listed in the proposed legislation would be 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 a.m. and allow from 12:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m. to clean up following events. She recommended 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. with 1 hour to clean up (close at midnight). (Note: *Deputy IT Director Edgar Ramirez provided interpretation assistance*). Mr. Rodriguez said if they have a wedding people may stay until midnight or 1 (a.m.). He indicated he was fine with the recommended time change. Council Member Harris asked about allowing the event center to be open to 12 a.m. Friday and Saturday nights. Council Member Robinson referenced concern extending time to

clean up after closing. Council Member Hamilton asked what time Shot Gun Dan's (Rose City) closed. Mr. Shawn Spencer, Planning Director was not aware of any time restrictions on this property or in the immediate area. City Attorney Fields said this item is a Special Use. Other properties may be under straight zoning which would not have a time condition. Council Member Robinson reminded everyone this is an event center application, not a restaurant. Council Member Fowler asked about security. Mr. Ramirez read from a document which included each event would have licensed security present. Council Member Robinson said the building could hold 700 people. In the event alcohol would be served she would recommend two (2) licensed security personnel present if there were 350 or more people present and alcohol was served. Council Member Robinson reminded everyone all event centers are vetted by the council. She referenced several other locations across the city. Council Member Robinson asked the Planning Department to provide the number of parking spaces needed at the location. If there are 700 people parking should remain on (their) site. If overflow is necessary, a permit should be obtained from other property owners. Council Member Ross asked the maximum number of parking spaces allowed. North Little Rock Fire Marshal Brent Almon had not seen the setup of the building which is over 11,000 square feet. Some of it may be used for offices. If an area were setup for play activities it could be one person for every 50 square feet. If the setup was for a dance floor it would be one person for every 5 square feet. The load could be 350 to 700 or more depending on the setup. There are at least nine changes that will need to be made to the building before it could be an event center which included fire alarm, exit signs, etc. Once plans are submitted, the Fire Marshal would review those. A business license would not be able to be issued until after conditions were met. Council Member Ross said when the item went before the Planning Commission it was mentioned there would be an application for a beer and wine permit. Mr. Rodriguez confirmed he would hold the license and be the one selling beer and wine. She asked who the applicant (for this legislation) was. City Attorney Fields said it looked like it would be in the name of OK Event Center/Santos Rodriguez and Clifton Family, LLLP. Council Member Ross asked Mr. Rodriguez if he would be present for all events or have an event planner on site. Council Member Robinson advised she would amend the hours of operation. Mr. Clifton said he had talked with the Fire Marshal and would be in favor of all of the recommendations. There had been discussion about the applicant's previous business operation. Mr. Clifton referenced emails pertaining to the same included in copies he received from the City Clerk's Office. Forty of the emails pertained to Mr. Rodriguez, the City Clerk's Office and his alcohol license. Seventeen were related to his Planning Commission application for an event center (at his previous location). Mr. Rodriguez closed his business in North Little Rock. Mr. Clifton referenced the State of the City presentation shown earlier in during the meeting. In 1937, his family started doing business in the city and had continued to do so. In the past eight (8) years, since (East) Broadway was widened his family purchased and renovated 17 properties, which have brought new business to the area. That is what he is trying to do with this application. Mr. Clifton referenced 50 signatures from business owners in Rose City to Prothro Junction in support of this event center. He read a letter from Mr. Rodriguez to the Council. The letter referenced Mr. Rodriguez inexperience and lack of understanding of city laws and

regulations. He failed to meet some of the deadlines to turn in paperwork. He had a returned check due to a bank transfer and did pay it as soon as he was notified. He hired an attorney who can help him keep track of renewal dates and interpret rules and regulations. Council Member Ross asked what recourse other business owners in the area could take if overflow parking occurs. City Attorney Fields said the city does not enforce parking on private property. Council Member Hart referenced the State of City presentation and how the city wants to grow and communicate. She apologized to Mr. Rodriguez for his past experience with the city. She said there had been adverse reaction. She talked to multiple people about the goal of this business but had seen hostility. She said (for the record) this is not who we are and it should be considered when dealing with people in North Little Rock. Council Member Ross said it is the job of the City Council to protect the neighborhoods by asking questions. This is not hostility from the council. Council Member Hamilton agreed with asking questions. Council Members should be aware and use caution when extending certain parameters and restrictions to some businesses and not others. He trusted the police department to deal with criminal issues. He trusted the Planning and Fire Departments to handle issues with their regulations. Council Member Robinson asked the Planning Department for a set number of parking spaces required. She said there had been rumors of a nightclub at the location and reiterated the hours of 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. and the number of licensed security if alcohol is served. Council Member Hamilton referenced the city's new events center and applying the same conditions to that location. Mr. Clifton said the time restriction is not fair as it does not apply to any other event center in the city. Council Member Robinson then held the legislation. It was agreed Ms. Fields will work on the amendments and share them with the applicant. (*applicant: Clifton Family LLLP*)

CONSENT AGENDA

By voice vote and all members present having voted "aye", consent agenda items R-25-23 and R-25-24 were adopted (8/0).

R-25-23 (RESOLUTION NO. 11016 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK FIRE DEPARTMENT TO DONATE A VEHICLE TO THE EAST PULASKI FIRE DEPARTMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (8/0). 0(1996 Freightliner Pumper)

R-25-24 (RESOLUTION NO. 11017 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION WAIVING FORMAL BIDDING REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORIZING PAYMENT TO MCLARTY FORD LINCOLN FOR THE PURCHASE OF ONE VEHICLE FOR THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (8/0). (\$45,235.00)

NEW BUSINESS

R-25-25 (RESOLUTION NO. 11018 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING THE AMOUNTS OF CLEAN UP LIENS TO BE FILED WITH THE PULASKI COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR AGAINST CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5821 ALTA VISTA DRIVE IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. Mayor Hartwick convened a public hearing. There being no one present wishing to be heard, the public hearing was adjourned. On the motion of Council Member Baxter and seconded by Council Member Ross, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was unanimously adopted (8/0). (\$6,068.18)

O-25-09 (ORDINANCE NO. 9743 – COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING STREETS AND DRAINAGE FACILITIES WITHIN CYPRESS TRAIL IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Hamilton, the readings were suspended (8/0). On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Baxter, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was unanimously adopted (8/0). Emergency clause unanimously adopted (8/0). (*requested by Dustin Welch of Holloway Engineering*)

O-25-10 (ORDINANCE NO. 9744 – COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING STREETS AND DRAINAGE FACILITIES WITHIN PHASE 25B OF COUNTRY CLUB OF ARKANSAS IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (8/0). On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Ross, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution was unanimously adopted (8/0). Emergency clause unanimously adopted (8/0). (*requested by Dustin Welch of Holloway Engineering*)

O-25-11 (ORDINANCE NO. 9745 - COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING STREETS AND DRAINAGE FACILITIES WITHIN PHASE 25C OF COUNTRY CLUB OF ARKANSAS IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (8/0). On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was unanimously adopted

(8/0). Emergency clause unanimously adopted (8/0). (*requested by Dustin Welch of Holloway Engineering*)

O-25-12 (ORDINANCE NO. 9746 – COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING STREETS AND DRAINAGE FACILITIES WITHIN PHASE 25D OF COUNTRY CLUB OF ARKANSAS IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read.

On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (8/0). On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Ross, and the roll having been called and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was unanimously adopted (8/0). Emergency clause unanimously adopted (8/0). (*requested by Dustin Welch of Holloway Engineering*)

O-25-13 (ORDINANCE NO. 9747 – COUNCIL MEMBER ROBINSON)

AN ORDINANCE WAIVING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF ARTICLE 9 AND ARTICLE 15 OF THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 7946) FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1001 NORTH HEMLOCK STREET IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, TO WAIVE HALF STREET REQUIREMENTS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council

Member Robinson and seconded by Council Member Ross, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (8/0). On the motion of Council Member Ross and seconded by Council Member Hamilton, and the roll having been called, and all members present, having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was unanimously adopted (8/0). Emergency clause unanimously adopted (8/0). (*applicant: Nick Tucker of Tucker Land Surveying*)

O-25-14 (ORDINANCE NO. 9748 – MAYOR HARTWICK *for consideration only*)

AN ORDINANCE WAIVING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF ARTICLE 9 AND ARTICLE 15 OF THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 7946) FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 6220 MACARTHUR DRIVE WITHIN THE PLANNING JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, TO WAIVE HALF STREET REQUIREMENTS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Ross, and seconded by Council

Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (8/0). Council Member Robinson asked why the legislation was filed for consideration only. Mr. Spencer advised the property is outside the city limits in the extra-territorial jurisdiction. On the motion of Council Member Ross and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and the roll having been called, and all members present, having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was unanimously adopted (8/0). Emergency clause unanimously adopted (8/0). (*applicant: Jim Dobry of Ozark Nut Roasters*)

O-25-15 (ORDINANCE NO. 9749 – COUNCIL MEMBER BAXTER)
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 9660, WHICH GRANTED A
CONDITIONAL USE TO ALLOW MINOR AUTO REPAIRS IN A C3 ZONE FOR CERTAIN
REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 12601 MAUMELLE BOULEVARD IN THE CITY OF
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS; AMENDING THE SUBJECT CONDITIONAL USE
TO ALLOW FOR A TIRE SHOP ON THE SUBJECT PROPERTY; DECLARING AN
EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Baxter and seconded by Council Member Ross, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (8/0). Mayor Hartwick convened a public hearing. There being no one present wishing to be heard, the public hearing was adjourned. Council Member Baxter said the company does tire work in addition to minor auto repair. On the motion of Council Member Baxter and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was unanimously adopted (8/0).
(applicant: Thomas Pownall of Thomas Engineering Company)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council Member Robinson asked North Little Rock Police Chief Patrick Thessing if it was unreasonable to request two (2) licensed security officers at an event center where there could be 350 to 700+ guests and alcohol served. Chief Thessing said it was not. If the number gets up to 700 four (4) would be recommended due to the parking lot. Council Member Ross referenced an event center that was located on Main Street. There was an event which required (North Little Rock) Police Officers along with outside agencies to respond. Council Member Hamilton asked if there were current ABC (Alcohol Beverage Control) requirements for licensed security based on the number of people. Chief Thessing said he does not work for ABC, but is aware of what can happen. Mayor Hartwick said city offices will be closed Monday, February 17, 2025, in observance of Presidents' Day. Trash and garbage routes will run as scheduled.

There being no further business to come before the Council, and on the motion of Council Member Ross and seconded by Council Member Hamilton and by consent of all members present, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. (8/0), until the next regularly scheduled meeting scheduled for Monday, February 24, 2025, at six o'clock p.m. in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, located at 300 Main Street, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

APPROVED: _____
MAYOR TERRY C. HARTWICK

ATTEST: _____
DIANE WHITBEY, CITY CLERK