

Russell City Council Meeting  
July 10, 2023

Members present:

Tracy Klotz, Mayor  
Diane Mayfield  
Darrell Kading  
Brenda Poole  
Eugene Webber  
Barbara Parks

Brea Timberlake, IJ & water meter reader

Visitors: None

The meeting was called to order with the pledge of allegiance and a prayer. The minutes were read with motion to approve by Webber and second by Mayfield and 4-0 vote to approve.

Brea Timberlake from IJ: New taps on Horseshoe Lake Road have been installed for new residents.

Timberlake: Proposed an increase in the rate of pay for meter reading services. It is currently \$150 a month. She said that with the use of her personal vehicle, higher gas prices, and the time it takes to properly read the meters and the printout, she feels \$225 a month would be a fair raise. It takes her approximately six (6) hours to read meters and the route is 26 miles to drive. Mayor Klotz suggested using the trip odometer in Brea's vehicle next time to get an accurate mileage reading.

Webber: Asked where is the town truck and why don't we have Brea use it? Poole responded that it's a natural gas truck that has to be filled up in Searcy. It is currently in the garage and has not been working in about two (2) years. Webber proposed we sell it. Poole said we need to check with Tommy about where it was purchased and the protocols for selling it.

Webber: Suggested we take a month to sort everything out before voting on any changes in pay or reimbursement.

**Water Dept Update, Gerry Gibson**

Gibson gave a reporting of the Water Department's accounts, both deposits and expenditures with handouts for the council members and Mayor Klotz to review. Gibson would like to announce that, in keeping with recent tradition, he recommends that Barbara Parks take over for him in the Water Department starting August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Treasurer Update, Barbara Parks**

Parks presented the council with the monthly bank statements and accounting reconciliation reports. She said she is still learning what is expected of her position, but all is going well so far.

## **Old Business**

Mayor Klotz: Tommy at IJ said the water tower indicator is stuck again. He has someone that can go up and fix it, as it's likely the cable that has been damaged or come loose. Approximate cost to have someone climb up and fix it will be \$1,200-1,500. An accurate cost estimate will be given this week.

The new water policy will be drafted for review and approval at the August council meeting. A rate audit will be conducted to determine new water rates as well.

Citizens Susan Sherrill and Helen Lay were present at the June council meeting to address an abandoned house with an active electric box/connection that they feared was a fire hazard. A letter has since been sent to the property owner asking that the electricity to the house be turned off and the meter/box removed.

## **New Business**

Mayor Klotz: Met with the new White County Judge about the speed signs for the town. She informed him that they will be able to provide signs at no cost to the city. She needs to hear back from the White County highway department to see what is available and what needs to be ordered. The city will need to arrange and pay for their installation.

The Judge also told Mayor Klotz that the Russell Volunteer Fire Department will start being charged for 911 services in the future. She was unsure of the effective date and cost.

The playground improvement grant must be used in the next 60 days. Parks reported that there is \$44,000 available and made equipment purchase recommendations from the Burke catalog. It was agreed to move forward with removing and selling the old equipment, as well as, get an estimate on cost for installation of the new equipment along with new mulch for both the young child play area and the main larger play area. A detailed estimate will be available for approval at the August council meeting. Webber made a motion to get started on removal of old equipment right away, it was seconded by Kading. Approved with a 4-0 vote.

Water Department Position: Mayor Klotz read Gerry Gibson's resignation letter and announced Barbara Park's desire to fill the position. Gibson will be available for consultation even after leaving. Webber recommended that Gibson be compensated for his time when he is needed. Poole made a motion to approve Park's appointment to the water position, Webber seconded it. Passed with a 3-0 vote.

Mayor Klotz reported about the complaint by Carletta that there was a hole in the ground next to a sewer access cover in front of her home. Mayor Klotz and Howard Poole brought over dirt to fill in the small in diameter but very deep hole that was found. Webber speculated that fixing this reoccurring issue may be tricky as the home was built within the utility easement boundaries and is only about 5' from area.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned, motion by Webber, seconded by Kading, approved with a 3-0 vote.

*[Approved and Signed Aug 14, 2024]*

Tracy Klotz, Mayor

*[Approved and Signed Aug 14, 2024]*

Barbara Parks, Recorder/Treasurer