

Russell City Council Meeting
July 8th, 2024

Members present:

Tracy Klotz, Mayor
Barbara Parks, Treasurer/Recorder
Brenda Poole, Secretary

Darrel Kading
Renee Garr

Robert Seigriest, Fire Chief

Public Visitors: None

The meeting was called to order with the pledge of allegiance and a prayer.

Council Member Update: Diane Mayfield submitted her resignation from the City Council on June 11th, 2024. Renee Garr has accepted the mayor's invitation to fill the vacated seat until the end of the calendar year, December 31st, 2024. Renee was sworn in before the start of this council meeting.

The minutes were read with motion to approve with corrections by Poole and seconded by Garr. 3-0 vote to approve.

Council Comment: Brenda Poole: The 4th street fire hydrant was leaking and it was pulled. There is now no way to flush the end of that line to her knowledge. Tommy needs to check the line and report on how it will be maintained.

Fire Dept Update, Rober Seigriest

1. Gear Turn-Outs: One set of turnouts is now out of date. A new set needs to be ordered to ensure all volunteers have turn-out gear. The cost is approximately \$2,800. Motion to approve the purchase made by Garr, seconded by Kading, approved with a 3-0 vote.
2. The light bar on the new truck is the old-style swivel halogen. It is not very bright and recommendations now are to use brighter LED light bars for safety reasons. A new light bar will cost approximately \$3,200. Motion to approve the purchase made by Kading, seconded by Garr, approved with a 3-0 vote.
3. The tanker truck and a portable tank are in need of welding repair. The cost is approximately \$6,000. Motion to approve the purchase made by Poole, seconded by Kading, approved with a 3-0 vote.
4. A flow test was done on the area hydrants for the ISO ratings. Two hydrants were not working at all. Tommy will be informed to make repairs or adjustments. The hydrants need to have their tops repainted to match the pressure levels as per regulations. Motion to approve the repair/repaint made by Kading, seconded by Garr, approved with a 3-0 vote.
5. New Station Building Proposal: Seigriest provided drawings of the proposed new station to be built on to the current building on the corner of 2nd and Elm streets. He would like to go forward in getting quotes for the new 100x60' structure.
 - a. The current training room is too small. Having a larger building will better suit our training needs and expand opportunities to invite other fire departments for larger group training events. Travel costs for outside training will also be reduced.
 - b. The mayor will contact the Municipal League to get the details on what is needed for a bidding process and cost or size thresholds for engineering requirements.
 - c. The building cost can be covered by a loan, based on expected county and state fire tax revenue.
6. A larger command vehicle would be useful for training travel as well as call. The current brush trucks have limited space.
 - a. A motion to approve the building bid process and quote for a command truck was made by Poole, seconded by Garr, approved with a 3-0 vote.

Water Dept Finance Update, Barbara Parks

Parks gave a reporting of the Water Department's accounts, both deposits and expenditures with bank statements for the council members and Mayor Klotz to review. The online billing option has been a great success, steadily increasing every month. For the month of June 2024, 51 bills were paid online.

Treasurer Update, Barbara Parks

Parks presented the council with the monthly bank statements and a verbal report of expenditures and revenue.

Old Business

Dumpster: A locking dumpster will be delivered in the next week for use by the city, water department, and fire department. The fee is \$115 a month for a 4-yard dumpster picked up every two weeks. The fire department will cover half of the monthly fee.

New Business

Town Audit: The final meeting with the Auditor with results took place in June. There were minor issues that are easily resolved for future audits. These included a missing invoice and the wrong receipt for a reimbursement. The corrective action that will be implemented for these errors will be a review of all payments and invoices received on a quarterly basis to ensure nothing is missed.

The only notable infraction that will be reported to the state was that the last audit performed in 2022 was not discussed in the council meeting minutes. The corrective action for this infraction is taking place now, in discussing the audit results and recording the discussion in the minutes.

Attorney: The attorney that previously serviced the town has shown interest in working with Russell again. The mayor will get the rates and fee schedule to present to the council for approval.

Water Rate Increase: The water department is still waiting on the rate study to be completed by Arkansas Rural Water Association. They have a huge backlog to get through and only five people currently working on them. We know a rate increase is in our future and a few smaller increases may be helpful so citizens can more easily adjust to their new bills.

- Poole made a motion to increase all water and sewer rates by 15%, seconded by Garr.
Defeated with a 2-0 vote.
- Kading made a motion to increase all water and sewer rates by 10%, seconded by Garr.
Approved with a 3-0 vote.

The rate increase will take effect for the water bills due in September 2024. A notice will be posted on the website and the post office. August bills will have a notice of the increase in the bill notes section.

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

[Approved and Signed Aug 12, 2024]

Tracy Klotz, Mayor

Date

[Approved and Signed Aug 12, 2024]

Barbara Parks, Recorder/Treasurer

Date