

February Minutes
Commerce Civic Center
February 12, 2007
6:30 P.M.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and Council was held on Monday, February 12, 2007 at 6:30 P.M. in the Commerce Civic Center Commerce Room, 110 State Street. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Charles Hardy. City Clerk Shirley Willis, called the roll and those in attendance were Mayor Charles Hardy, Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater, Councilmen Wayne Gholston, Donald Wilson, Mark Fitzpatrick, Bob Sosebee and Richard Massey, City Manager Clarence Bryant, City Attorney John Stell, one member of the press and approximately thirteen (13) citizens.

Councilman Bob Sosebee gave the invocation.

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Gholston to approve the minutes of the regular January 8 meeting with the correction on page 8 to reflect that the low bid was approved from each company of G&L Hauling and also Athens Auto Wrecking. The motion included the approval of the February 5, 2007 work session minutes as presented.

The vote was unanimous with the change.

Citizens or Delegations

Mayor Charles Hardy said there were none scheduled and he welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said if anyone wished to approach the council they could do so at that time. Hearing none he moved on with the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Jackson County Senior Center Request for Funds

Mrs. Shirley Smith, Director of Jackson County Senior Center had requested the annual contribution of \$1,500.00 from the City of Commerce. The contribution helped to cover the transportation costs for the vans to pick up the Commerce citizens and return them to their home.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater to approve the request for the contribution.

The vote was unanimous.

B. Commerce Land Holding, LLC Agreement

Mayor Charles Hardy said Mr. Bryant had discussed the agreement at the work session and everything was in order. Councilman Donald Wilson had missed the work session due to sickness and he asked to be updated on the agreement. The agreement would allow Commerce Land Holdings to recoup some of the funds expensed for the installation of the water and sewer system. Commerce Land Holdings, LLC would install the force main for sewer and the City of Commerce would share in the cost. The same provision would be for the water service. Commerce Land Holdings, LLC would allow the city to come through the property for the installation. The agreement is on file in the clerk's office.

Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater made a motion, seconded by Councilman Richard Massey to approve the agreement as presented.

The vote was unanimous.

C. Solid Waste Contract Renewal

Mayor Charles Hardy said after talking to Ed Gibson, Waste Management Director, and the landfill costs had increased 13%. That would be an additional cost of \$1.06 per month. Instead of doing an RFP the City of Commerce decided to renew for a period of five (5) years with no increase in the pickup cost. The contract is on file in the City Clerk's office.

Councilman Richard Massey made a motion, seconded by Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick to approve the renewal of the contract.

Councilman Donald Wilson asked if the additional cost would be passed on to the customers. Mayor Charles Hardy said not at this time. The City would absorb the remainder of the fiscal year.

The vote was unanimous.

D. Budget Amendment: Force Main Replacement on Andrew Jackson Street - \$90,000

Mayor Charles Hardy said the force main on Andrew Jackson was the old cast iron pipe. Mr. Bryant passed out the bid from Griffin Brothers for the project and the cost was \$83,360.00. Mr. Bryant said the old force main was corroded and the project would require three bores all up Andrew Jackson.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater to approve the amendment not to exceed \$90,000 and get the job done the right way.

The vote was unanimous.

E. MEAG Non-Binding Vogtle Expansion Commitment

Mayor Charles Hardy said several meetings with MEAG had been held and at the last one the City of Commerce requested 10MW of power. He said it did not appear that the City of Commerce would get the full 10MW because the shares had been oversold.

City Manager reported that MEAG had run graphs and the City of Commerce did not know how much they would get. He passed out copies of the graph and went over the paperwork. He said the first page showed the MW cost and the second page reflected the Municipal Competitive Trust Fund and explained the debt. On the last page the generation costs were shown that projected through the year of 2026.

Mayor Charles Hardy said that hopefully the City of Commerce could stay around 8MW and would have the option to sell any excess energy into the long term market under a multi-year purchase power agreement. In November, based upon what the cities take, the determination can be made as to how much the city can get and how much it can sell.

F. Activity Reports

Mayor Charles recognized Police Chief John Gaissert to report from the Police Department.

Chief Gaissert said the January call volume was robust and over 500 citations had been issued. He stated that the installation had been done and the department was online with the mobile equipment. A point of sale program had also been installed. The department was accepting debit/credit card payments plus a 2% transaction fee.

Chief Gaissert reported that Huber had contributed \$500.00 for the children's ID kits.

The next item was that a felony drug arrest had been made on Monday afternoon and was a well known drug dealer.

Chief Gaissert passed out a 911 Center report for six years of history and covered the report.

The Police Department activity was 2,641 calls from 911, 75 walk-in service calls at the police department and 189 SRO calls. There were 16 accident reports, 135 incident reports and 50 animal control reports. The citations and arrests were 135 speeding, 22 suspended license/no license, 25 no insurance, 2 drunk/disorderly, 1 shoplifting, 6 obstruction, 19 alcohol related, 66 seatbelt/child restraint and 210 other for a total of 505 citations. The arrests were 2 assault/battery, 17 theft, 1 burglary, 2 criminal trespass, 15 misdemeanor and 7 felony drug cases for a total of 44 arrests. The total miles driven were 26,156.

The Fire Department Activity was 29 calls answered. There was 1 chemical release, 2 flammable spills, 3 dispatched and cancelled en route, 6 emergency medical, 3 false alarms, 1 mobile property fire, 3 natural vegetation fires, 1 outside rubbish, 2 smokes, 1 steam, 1 structure, 1 detector malfunction and 1 unintentional system/detector operation. There were 4 fire streams theory training.

The Department of Building Inspection issued 2 building, 12 electrical, 4 grading/plumbing and 14 sign/mechanical permits with permit fees of \$3,547.00. The building valuation fiscal year to date was \$27,305,335.00 and the calendar year to date valuation was \$600,000.00.

The Building & Housing Inspections activity was 88 new, 47 COP and 95 utility inspections. The follow-up inspections were 52, 10 letters written, and 39 other. There were 543 calls, 129 walk-ins and 7 vehicles for a total activity of 1,010. Demolition on 30 Elizabeth Street by G & L Hauling was awaited. The block building on 1368 S. Broad Street had been demolished and removed by Athens Auto Wrecking. On 73 Duncan Circle the unsafe residential dwelling had been removed. Administrative hearings were held on 1834 N. Broad Street and 89 Duncan Circle. 90 and 60 days for removal were given respectively.

The Water and Sewer Distribution Activity was 1 residential and 1 non-residential water services added. There were 5 residential and 1 non-residential water service replaced. The turn-ons were 91 water and 72 sewer and the turn-offs were 71 water and 63 sewer. There was 1 hydrant repaired. The work orders received were 72 and 44 were completed. There had been 324 locates received.

The Natural Gas Activity was 5 meters set, 1 meter changed out, 2 meters removed, 7 service calls, 17 leak calls, 374 locates and 7 inspections. The gas load changes were 480 CFH residential heating, 120 water heating and 60 cooking added. The commercial heating added was 1,200 CFH.

The Electric Department activity was 4 existing residential services and 6 new homes added. The size of load – AMPS added were 1,200 residential. There was 112.5 KVA transformer added, 612.5 KVA transformer replaced, 1 security light added with 400 security light wattage, 7 primary poles added, 52 primary poles replaced, 4,904' of primary added, 10,952' of primary replaced and 340' secondary underground added. The cut-ons were 77 and the cut-offs were 59.

Mayor Charles Hardy asked if there were any questions on other activity reports. City Manager Clarence drew attention to the new format in the Fire Department. The report to the Association had to be in that format so they used it for the city reporting also.

G. Financial Review

Finance Director Steve McKown reported another great month with an ending balance of \$348,000. The Electrical and Gas Capital Improvement had been paid and year-to-date the balance was \$645,000 positive and everything looked good.

Councilman Donald Wilson asked if the property taxes had come in as expected. Steve had not looked at the outstanding balances to be able to answer that question.

6. Report from the City Manager

City Manager Clarence Bryant reported that a CDBG grant application was under consideration. Engineers had been spoken to and there was a problem area on Hill Street drainage. The application would target that area for a grant to improve the drainage on the upper end of Hill Street.

The nuisance abatement period for the property on Bennett Street had a March 15 deadline and the property on North Broad Street had an April 17 deadline.

The house removal on 30 Elizabeth was scheduled during the next week.

The MGAG Natural Gas Program was under consideration for the hot water heater project. Mr. Bryant covered the list and the rebate amounts. Mr. Bryant said the City of Commerce would place a limit as to the number to have so the budget could plan for it.

The bids on the Andrew Jackson improvement will be opened on March 6, 2007 for the third phase of work in that area.

Mr. Bryant said that the City was working on a cell phone policy citywide so that all departments would be standardized. The policy would also implement a personal use policy.

A grease trap management contractor had been discussed and information was being gathered so that a report could possibly be given next month. Several northwest cities were doing that and the City of Commerce had spoken with them.

7. Report from the City Attorney

Attorney John Stell had nothing to report.

8. New Items proposed by the Mayor and Council

Mayor Charles Hardy said the Kiwanis meeting on Thursday would be from 12:00 to 12:30 and a school bus would pick up all those interested and they would tour the Rooker building in the I-85 Industrial Park.

Mayor Charles Hardy said he introduced Adam Tomblin, student at Commerce, who had to complete a 10 hour community project. Mayor Hardy had suggested that Mr. Tomblin hold a "Town Hall Meeting" regarding a Skateboard Park. If there were no other suggestions Mr. Tomblin could begin work on the project.

The only other concern was Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater said someone had asked about a rail at the retaining wall at the funeral home because of the drop off. City Manager Clarence Bryant stated the City had looked at putting a rail but it was very costly. He said he would look at it again.

Citizen Clifford Slater asked to speak and he said that the mayor and council should be concerned with things inside the city and he referred to the building owned by Vans Clinkscales on North Broad Street. Mayor Hardy responded to Mr. Slater that the deadline given to Mrs. Clinkscales to have the building removed was April 17, 2007.

Councilman Richard Massey had nothing to report.

Councilman Bob Sosebee had nothing to report.

Councilman Wayne Gholston had nothing to report.

Councilman Donald Wilson expressed his appreciation for the flowers, cards and phone calls during his hospitalization.

Councilman Donald Wilson reported a water leak across the road on Spring Street. City Manager Clarence Bryant told Councilman Wilson that on Spring Street a 1-1/4" line would supply three or four houses. He said that some streets with old lines would need to be looked at and possibly replace the lines.

Another item of Councilman Wilson was that at the corner of Nunn and Hillcrest a pine tree was dead and endangering service lines. It was adjacent to John Webber's house and in the yard of Steve Cotrell.

The last item of Councilman Wilson was the street light at the railroad track across from Ivie Funeral Home was out. He also said he appreciated the light on the Maysville Road being repaired.

Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick reported a street light out on Sam Brown Boulevard.

Citizen Jeff Daniel asked to speak. He said he had been working with the youth and he had printed out ideas for an indoor park. He stated that there was a building on the lower end of town that could house both a skateboard and bicycle park. His idea was that shirts could be sold and a vending machine put in there to also make money. The children could be issued a pass to use it. Mr. Daniels was advised that the City of Commerce did not own that property. It was privately owned.

Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Gholston to adjourn the meeting.

The vote was unanimous.

Charles L. Hardy, Jr., Mayor

Shirley Willis, City Clerk