

City of Mansfield

Council Meeting Minutes

City Council Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.
Mansfield Community House
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PRESENT: GW Davis Jr, Blair Northen, Marty Smallwood, Helen Robertson

OTHERS: Walter Tuggle, Elsie Smith, Crystal Smallwood, Mr. Colyn, Scott & Vicki Cowan, John Napoli

Mayor GW Davis Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. During the moment of reflection, Mayor Davis asked everyone to remember the families of the recent deaths affecting Mansfield; Jerry Prosser, Claude Morgan and Earl. Also, past Mayor Riley was diagnosed with Covid-19 and asked for prayers for a speedy recovery. Mayor Davis then led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman Marty Smallwood made the motion to approve the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen second the motion. No discussion. All in favor.

Mr. Colyn commented on the water rate increase under new business. He was concerned as to how much this would affect citizens that were filling their pool. He also stated his meter may or may not be operating effectively and would call to have it checked. Mayor Davis advised he would discuss the increase a little further on the agenda.

New business discussed are as follows:

Water rate increase: Mayor GW Davis presented the water increase that was received from Newton County. In budget summary, the water rate will increase by \$.05 per thousand/gallons annually over the 3 years. Primarily due to Covind-19 related impact on chemical and material supply. Effective July 1,2022 the wholesale water rate will be \$2.29 per thousand gallons. Mayor Davis checked with Porterdale, City of Covington and Oxford. City of Mansfield rates are slightly lower and stated he didn't want to make money off of the citizens but did not want to lose money as well. Currently the multiplier is 3.10 and he stated he would like to lower the multiplier to 3.06 to recover the increase imposed by Newton County. Mayor Davis also stated he would like to keep the 2000 minimum gallon. The increase would be .015 cent over the next 3 years. Mayor Davis presented his current bill that he used to figure the current rate. Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen stated your bill will average a .25 cent increase. Mr. Northen also asked to present a template at the next meeting of a generic bill to show the increase. The council members took no action at this time and will vote on this matter next meeting.

Pole Bids: Mayor GW Davis presented the low bid offer from Deep South. Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen made motion to accept the low bid; Councilman, Marty Smallwood second the motion. NO discussion and all in favor.

Audit Bids: Mayor Davis stated 6 bids went out to possible auditors. After work Session, the council instructed Ms. Crystal Smallwood to call another office that was recommended. After several attempt to

make contact, they called on Monday morning and advised they were not interested. Mauldin and Jenkins had submitted a bid but failed to submit the charge. After calling, Mayor Davis received an email stating the charge would be \$18,000.00 and would increase each year. Mayor Davis expressed the urgency on voting on this matter as it was the law to have the annual audit and no other bids had been received or an auditor in place. The previous auditor no longer audits municipalities. Councilman, Marty Smallwood asked a few questions, have we exhausted all resources, are we obligated to them for more than a year, should we try another month to find someone, what is the time frame? Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen asked who Newborn hires for this service. Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen made a motion to authorize the Mayor to seek others but not to exceed the \$18,000.00 charge for the 2021-2022 audit year. Councilman, Marty Smallwood second the motion. With no further discussion, all were in favor. Mayor Davis will call Newborn to confirm the firm they hire.

City improvement grant: Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen presented the Ga Department of Community Affairs Rural Downtown Redevelopment Grant that he has been working on. He also stated he has been working with GWES, the local engineering firm pro bono on securing the proper paperwork to submit. The grant will be improving sidewalks, water drainage, an alley/road for trucks to turn right properly. street paving to include Ed Needham, Kellogg St, the alleys near city center, Poplar St. and trail parking on First Ave. and possibly a retention pond. The grant is for cities that have a plan for downtown areas. Max grant will be 5 million. \$160,000.00 is already budgeted to pave Ed Needham but the grant would give 1.6 million for the entire project. Mayor Davis stated the money from the mural building wasn't completely invested and did they want to take \$50,000 from that account to increase the grant. \$50,000 would turn into \$500,000 with the grant. The engineer company would use contacts and arrange work as needed. Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen made a motion to use funds of the recent building sale to increase project to \$200,000.00 which would City of Mansfield 2 Million grant to fund the projects discussed. Councilman, Marty Smallwood second the motion. The only discussion was there would be ZERO cost to the citizens for this grant. All in favor

Pedestrian crossing: Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen also spoke about the importance and dire need of pedestrian crossings for patrons visiting downtown as well as local restaurants. These are needed if the grant doesn't get approved but are included in the grant. An alert system to ensure safety while crossing the state highway. Some discussion included speed limit decrease. Councilman, Marty Smallwood advised there was a formula the DOT uses to determine this and it had been done in 2013. Mayor Davis stated they could change speed limit on city roads but not State Highway. No action taken on this matter until the fate of the grant is determined.

Security Camera: Mayor Davis stated he was hesitant in purchasing the cheaper camera option due to them not being secure and would rather get a better system. Discussion included cost and Councilman, Marty Smallwood wanted to know what we wanted to accomplish with the cameras? Was it security issues, etc? Mayor Davis asked Mr. Smallwood to contact the company he was familiar with and get a price. No action taken on this matter

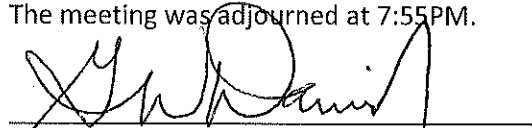
Electric Line trimming: Mayor Davis stated he met with Murrell Tree Service from Monticello GA in reference to the line trimming. They toured Woodlawn, Poplar St, pump station, etc. The exact places the previous company was given. They agreed to do the work for \$10,000.00 to establish a relationship. They typically charge \$2200.00 per day and this would take 7 days. No action taken as this was a previous budgeted item.

Change in Governmental Service Agreement: Mayor Davis presented the proposal map for the Water districts in Newton County. This change does not affect Mansfield, however Newton County must have 50% of municipalities vote and agree to the changes proposed by Newton County Sewer and Water and City of Covington. No further discussion. Councilman, Marty Smallwood made motion to accept the change. Mayor Pro Tem, Blair Northen second the motion and all were in favor.

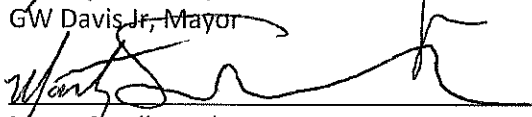
No citizen comments

Mayor Davis advised everyone he would be out of town for the next 48 hours attending his 50th reunion.


The meeting was adjourned at 7:55PM.



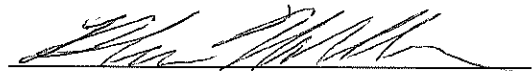
GW Davis Jr, Mayor



Marty Smallwood, Post 1



Helen Robertson, Post 2



Blair Northen, Post 3, Mayor Pro Tempore

Austin Mitchell, Post 4

Vacant, Post 5