

Board of Alderman Minutes
81 S. Orchard Blvd.
May 14, 2024
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OPEN MEETING

Roll Call taken by Mayor Thomas Voorhis
Dennis Roe PRESENT, Jeffrey Danderson PRESENT, Richard Icenhower PRESENT, Mark Stewart PRESENT, Sherry Veach ABSENT, Ben Lord PRESENT

Call to order at: 6:30 p.m.

Approve Agenda. Motion by Danderson to approve agenda. Seconded by Roe
Roe AYE, Danderson AYE, Icenhower AYE, Stewart AYE, Lord AYE

INTRODUCE AND SWEAR IN SGT. DECKARD

Chief Howell introduces Sergeant Billie Deckard. Clerk swears Sgt. Deckard in. Chief presents badge.

Public Forum

Jeff McConnell – North of FG. Not a citizen but owns property in the city. Likes Fair Grove came from a small city. Brings some experience and suggestions to the Board. Why don't we ever say the pledge of allegiance before meetings? Was in government and they always said the Pledge of Allegiance before their meetings. Thanks Sara for swearing in to the side for photographing. Public used to be able to speak after the staff report and suggests that it can be changed. It allows the public to add comments. Might consider putting a small speaker up so people in the back can hear what is being said.

Roe reminds audiences that you can speak on any item at the first meeting of the month and the second meeting is agenda items only.

Icenhower wonders why we don't do the pledge of allegiance himself. Doesn't know why we don't do it but thinks it would be a good idea.

Dayna Ault 133 E Willow. Appreciated McConnell and was just in Memphis and just outside of Memphis went to a meeting and they said the pledge of allegiance and a short prayer.

Old Business

New Business

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE REQUEST BY AMERICAN LEGION (Charles Holt)

Charles Holt and Lisa Ritter – Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board. Although it's May, the fourth season of Fair Grove's Main Street Christmas tradition will be here before we can say Ho Ho Ho.

The Fair Grove Area Chamber of Commerce has formed a Main Street Christmas palling committee composed of several businesses, individuals and organizations. We have been meeting since early February to plan 2024 Main Street Christmas activities. We will give you a broad overview of the festive plans followed by a request from our committee.

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We will continue featuring Thursday nights as we have previously done with extended shopping hours along with free tours of the historic Wommack Mill. The dates are Thursday, December 5th, 12th, and 19th from 5-8pm. In addition to the lights and decorated windows on Main Street, we will encourage businesses along Old Mill Road to also participate in lighting up our town. Something new will be approximately ten trees with commercial lighting located on the Historical Society grounds near the gazebo, Livery Lane and windmill.

Saturday, December 7th follows the tradition of a day of shopping, activities for children held by the Park Board then the evening Christmas Parade sponsored by the Fire Protection District. Lineup is at the high school parking lot at 4:30pm. The parade begins at 5pm followed by the tree lighting, caroling and other activities at the Wommack Mill.

The new exciting addition to this year is special activities on Saturday, December 14th. This day will feature a Christmas Market and live nativity in the evening. The Christmas Market will be filled by holiday vendors set up along Main Street and primarily in the square area. Santa will be present through the connections of Spangle the Clow. The live nativity will take place in the evening at the Historical Society's gazebo area. Local churches will also add to the holiday spirit there with caroling and musical performances.

Now our request: We ask that Main Street be closed on Saturday, December 14th from 7am to 8pm. This closure allows vendors to begin setting up at 7am and be ready to open at 10am. The will operate until 5pm when they close at dusk, although there may be some continuing further into the evening. Visitors will go on foot to see the live nativity which will close at 8pm. Main Street then reopens to traffic at 8pm.

Fair Grove is all about small town charm and the is especially true at Christmas time. Main Street Christmas will provide local businesses the opportunity to garner sales on these dates, generate sales tax revenue for the City and provide exposure to organizations such as The Historical Society, Fair Grove Parks and local churches. Above all, we see our Main Street Christmas activities as a time to put a beautiful spotlight on Fair Grove where citizens and visitors alike come to make holiday memories.

We welcome any questions you may have.

Icenhower asks if they are talking about closing it off like we do for the festival. Ritter – yes. Icenhower has no problem, Lord no Problem. It will be up to them to discuss with the homeowners.

Motion by Icenhower to shut down Main Street on December 14, 2024 from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm
Seconded by Lord

Roe AYE, Danderson AYE, Icenhower AYE, Stewart AYE, Lord AYE

Roe knows that for Heritage Days we have an ordinance to close the street. Danderson says that it is on city property and what is the liability for the city. They take responsibility of the street for whatever day it starts and closes and the city puts up signs showing no liability. Attorney Newell says that we need to look into it a little bit more. Danderson says that they can look at the

ordinance for the festival. Not a big issue. Chief can make it happen. Roe suggests them getting Attorney Newell's contact information.

DISCUSS AND OR APPROVE EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE (Heather DeHart)

Heather DeHart thanks Board for having her. We have represented City for a long time. MEWA insurance is 2% increase. Vision and Dental at a rate hold. Employees would like to stay with the current plan. This plan has been great for the city.

Motion by Danderson to approve employee health insurance renewal effective June 1, 2024.

Seconded Roe

Roe AYE, Danderson AYE, Icenhower AYE, Stewart AYE, Lord AYE

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE WARRANT EXTRADITION AND WARRANT HOLDS (Chief Howell)

Chief Howell recommended only doing surrounding counties. Sometimes getting blood out of a turnip isn't worthwhile. Danderson takes the Chief recommendations, Icenhower and Roe agree. R.O.R. after 24 hours.

Motion by Danderson to accept the Chief's recommendation for warrant holds to the surrounding counties and R.O.R. after 24 hours. Seconded by Icenhower

Roe AYE, Danderson AYE, Icenhower AYE, Stewart AYE, Lord AYE

SCHEDULE BUDGET MEETINGS

Roe visited with Brown (Treasurer) we typically meet the first week of June to do our budget. Suggests Wednesday June 5th and if second meeting is needed June 6th. Danderson is free. Lord asks what time. Clerk says 6. Won't have a full council at the end of June. First meeting set for June 5th at 6:00pm consensus of the Board.

RESOLUTION 24-01 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THOMAS VOORHIS, MAYOR OF FAIR GROVE, MISSOURI TO SIGN 2024 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (IGA) FOR GREENE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Danderson says we don't have a need to sign the IGA this year. It's lengthy and we don't have any paving to do this year. Doesn't see a need to sign this. Sara to call Robin with Greene County to let her know.

DISCUSS WASTEWATER TREATMENT BID

Roe said we have two oxidation ditches and the belt system is notorious for breaking down. Company from AZ came out and looked at it and gave us a bid for bearing for clarifier. \$90,000 for that. After talking to engineer, everything is expensive. Sewer committee decided it should go out to bid, worked on bid specifications. Left it generic. Andy added legal terms, almost ready. Needs permission to move forward and to give the Board awareness. Expects to take out of capital funds and the sewer. Danderson says it will have to be a sealed bid and be posted and published but just wanted to make sure that everyone is aware before it is brought to the board. Consensus from the board to get it in bid form and put in packets to see the bid form and get a motion then to move forward. 8 week lead time to move forward. No one in Springfield does it. Let attorney look at it if everyone agrees. Consensus to move forward.

Mayor Report

Explains that Superintendent requests school accomplishment signs be posted on city limit signs on Highway 65. Spoke to Sara and she said she would contact MoDot. The school will take on the cost. Can we move forward with that? Icenhower says the school asked MoDot about it. They aren't going to do it. Lincoln Hough came in and spoke to Icenhower. Told him that he thinks that he has it done. Lincoln called a while ago and it's just a formality, because it's a city of Fair Grove sign, the city has to give consent. Doesn't see why we can't get it done. Sara directed by Board to contact MoDot.

I am pleased to provide you with an update on recent developments and interactions that have taken place in the interests of our city.

Firstly, I successfully established contact with Total High Speed and I am delighted to report that we have recovered \$2450.00 from Total High Speed that was paid last meeting to LaFollette Excavating. Also, I recently engaged with Chris Gaut from the State of Missouri Department of Public Safety, State Emergency Management Agency. Our discussions centered around emergency preparedness and response strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents. I have pass this information along to Ben Lord as he is the Chairman over Emergency Management.

Furthermore, I had the honor of being the guest speaker at a recent Chamber of Commerce meeting, where Sara and Chandra also attended. During the event, I had the pleasure of meeting Jake Phillips from SMCOG. Jake expressed great enthusiasm with progress they are making in updating Fair Grove's comprehensive plan and has offered his assistance in securing funding and grants to propel our city forward when the time comes.

Moreover, I had a productive conversation with Tucker Jones, the District Director for Senator Eric Schmitt. Tucker has valuable contacts that could aid us in obtaining grants to support our community that he said he is willing to help get us in touch with when it comes to our water treatment facility/ sewer system and streets.

In light of these engagements and networking opportunities, I kindly request the council's approval to order business cards for me. Having business cards would facilitate networking and communication with individuals and organizations that can contribute to the growth and betterment of our city. Roe and Icenhower are okay with it.

Icenhower – I've got a question for you Mayor. What's the job description of the Mayor?

Mayor – I can read it from the book Mr. Icenhower.

Icenhower – Have you overstepped your boundaries?

Mayor – With what, sir?

Icenhower – Did you go up to the school?

Mayor – Go up to the school and what, sir?

Icenhower – And visit Mr. Bell about the SRO?

Mayor – I did not go up to the school.

Icenhower – Oh really?

Mayor – That is correct, I did not step a foot up there.

Icenhower – Well, either I've been misinformed by Mr. Bell or you're misinforming me now.

Mayor – I talked to Mr. Bell on the phone but I never went up to the school.

Icenhower – About the S.R.O.?

Mayor – I have talked to him about the S.R.O.

Icenhower – At that point and time, you weren't even Mayor, right?

Mayor – I didn't ask him any questions, Mr. Icenhower that would have referred to me being the Mayor. I asked general knowledge questions.

Icenhower – Well that is not what I understood. Also, we have hired a police chief to hire police officers and we went down this road. What caused all of the big uproar before, to be honest about it, the council didn't do their jobs and we got some officers in here that created problems. And I respect Chief Roy that he's got a good enough judgment to hire officers and we need to worry about quality not quantity. We don't need to worry about numbers, we would love to have them but if they don't pass the background check or whatever. If it doesn't work out, it's going to be his face on the wall. Not mine, not yours, none of us. The third thing is, you stood in front of this council and you went on TV bad mouthing this council and you're going to have a hard time getting respect out of this council for what you did. I know that you had a letter of apology the other night but an apology doesn't mean anything to me. Actions speak louder than words and I know what your actions were prior and I hope you're smart enough to stay out of trouble but if your not careful, you're going to get in trouble.

Mayor – I guess my question to you Mr. Icenhower, thank you for that. What do you mean by that as I uh, that I'm going to get in trouble because I don't feel like I've overstepped any boundaries. Uh, uh, you know, I apologized to the city council. You said I went and bad mouthed the city council, uh amongst what they did. You just admitted to yourself that the city council messed up and that's what I did. You said the city council made poor decisions and that is what I iterated. I stood up...

Icenhower – We made a poor decision to the fact that we let the police chief hire people and didn't bring them before this council, okay.

Mayor – And if you recall, what have I said about this council that was formally in office, that's what I said.

Icenhower – No, you asked that man right over there how you feel working for a council that's gonna have to fire you.

Mayor – I didn't say that.

Icenhower – Yes, you did.

Mayor – No I didn't, sir. I would love to see that. I'm sure Miss Sara...

Icenhower – You said that to that man sitting right over there.

Mayor – I didn't. I know exactly what I asked him, Mr. Icenhower. I asked him, how would he feel...

Danderson – Actually it was Chris.

Icenhower – It was actually Chris that he asked?

Danderson – It was.

Mayor – Okay, so I know what I said and I know what I said and I know what I've done since I became Mayor and I know what I've done since after mayor. And I apologize to the council if that is how he felt and if that is what upset you. I want the best for the city of Fair Grove and I've made that clear. I've also made it clear several times to the constituents of our community and to

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this board that I will not put the city of Fair Grove at risk for a lawsuit. The city of Fair Grove and the people within this community are my number one priority.
Icenhower – You need to let the people that's hired do their job.
Mayor – Alright, with that, we will move to adjournment.

Adjournment

Motion by Danderson to Adjourn at 7:15 p.m. Second Roe
Roe AYE, Danderson AYE, Icenhower AYE, Stewart AYE, Lord AYE

Adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Sara Davis, City Clerk