

**CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS, MISSOURI  
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY-OCTOBER 5, 2023-7:35 P.M.**

**PRESENT** Mayor Dinah Tatman, City Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman, Chief of Police Jeremy Ihler, Public Works Director Jeff Ross, Parks and Recreation Director Jimmy Kirincich, Code Enforcer Felicia Bishop, Treasurer Rick Rognan and City Clerk Semmie Ruffin-Hall.

**Mayor Tatman CALLED MEETING TO ORDER** at 7:35 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderwoman Alicia Smith-**Present**
- Alderwoman Alease Dailes-**Present**
- Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward-**Present**
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-**Present**
- Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern-**Present**
- Alderwoman Peg Warnusz-**Present**
- Alderwoman Theresa Hester-**Present**

**Seven Present** -Quorum was established.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA**

- **Alderwoman Theresa Hester** motioned with an amendment to item #11 to allow 15 minutes for discussion for administrative pay for employees and to add in the vote following the discussion. **Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern** seconded.

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Theresa Hester-**Yes**
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-**Yes**
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern- **Yes**
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-**Abstained**

- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-**No**
- Alderman Alease Dailes-**No**
- Alderman Alicia Smith- **No**

**3-Ayes/3-Nayes/ 1-Abstained Motion passed.**

**President James Thomas, Sr. made a motioned to amend the agenda to end the meeting at 9:15 pm, Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern seconded. All Aldermen present voted "Aye". The vote was unanimous.**

**MOTION PASSED**

**MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT)**

- **Mary Mentzler-13XX Shepley**
  - Thanked Chief Ihler for his 25 years of service to Bellefontaine.
  - Thanked the street department for filling the holes on Shepley.
- **Melvin Williams-99XX Martingale**
  - Commended someone for the idea of little stories posted in the park next to City Hall (St. Louis County Park)
  - Raised concerns of where the firehouse has been built.
  - Mayor stated she would find out and have him to call Mr. Williams
- **Wanda Lane-99XX Martingale Road**
  - Spoke on Behalf of RGSD
  - Citizens were interested in speaking to Superintendent
  - There are repercussions and consequences for the activities that happened up there. It was violent. Serious when we think about expulsions.
  - We will take each case by case
  - District is making every effort to reach out to the Community. Sponsoring Community Volunteer of the month.
  - I do not think anyone loves their children any more than we love ours so we have to step up.
  - Spoke on the Recreation Center-Parks Director why was not the park grant completed that was imitated and your intentions were to upgrade some restrooms in a park;
  - Mayor comment made at town hall meeting regarding city staff we all would be doing better if fully staffed.
  - At the May 4 meeting the board unanimously voted for a hiring freeze until the fiscal year 2021, 22 and 23 audits were completed. That has not happened.

- CPA Firm dismissed us, would like more information on that.
- Last thing from the Missouri Municipal league, page 25 (read this section). This a petty thing, but this is their mandate and you adhere to. In addition, that should be adhered to.
- The citizens would like unity on this board.

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES (08-8-23 THROUGH 09-16-23) \$371,504.38**

**Alderman Lynette VonSeggern** made a motion to approve invoices. **Second made by Alderwoman Peg Warnusz.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Alderwoman Alicia Smith** states total does not add up. **Alderwoman Alease Dailes** stated many do not have line items, what accounts they are coming from. **Alderwoman Lynette VonSeggern** stated can we pay the bills that are not in discrepancy and come back and pay the other bills in question in a special meeting. **Alderwoman Dailes** stated from her understanding the bills have already been paid regardless of what the board has said. **Mayor** stated majority of them have been paid, we have incurred close \$5,000 in late fees. The board has opted not to pay any of the bills and so we have to pay builds for services or incur late fees, credit being denied or downgraded. So yes, some of the builds the decision was made to pay some of them. **Alderman Thomas** stated they did not pay the bills because there are discrepancies on the bills. Two special meetings were called and bills were still not in order. I asked the City Clerk are there bills that can be corrected and then we will call for one more special meeting to pay the bills that have not already been paid. **Mayor Tatman** stated she has asked several times can we pay the ones that are not in question, instead of not paying any. **Alderwoman Smith** question how the board would know what is duplicate or not. Not comfortable agreeing to pay bills that may possibly be a duplicate. **Mayor Tatman** stated look at the ledger and the ones that are not duplicates to go ahead and pay those and we investigate those that have been duplicates. We know that this is an issue we have to deal with and we will deal with it accordingly. **Alderwoman VonSeggern** stated could we get a new ledger where there are no duplicates so we know exactly what we have. **Mayor** stated absolutely you could. **Alderwoman Dailes** stated there is a bill in here to pay for bonding for someone that should not have been hired. **Mayor** asked what the board pleasure on the bills is. **Alderwoman Harmon-Ward** stated the ones that have discrepancies how do we know the ones that have and have not been paid.

**Mayor stated** you would be given a clean ledger. Know that the utilities will be paid services that contractors have given us will be paid the other ones we can go through. **Mayor stated all in favor of paying the bills for \$371,504.38:**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Theresa Hester-**Yes**
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-**Yes**
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-**No**
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-**No**
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-**No**
- Alderman Alease Dailes-**No**
- Alderman Alicia Smith-**No**

**2-Ayes/5-Nays. Nays' have it. Motion Failed.**

**President Thomas** asked the **City Clerk** provide us with the amend bills so that we will know what bills that have already been paid and what bills need to be paid. **City Clerk** responded yes.

#### **PARKS AND RECREATION (DIRECTOR JIMMY KIRINCICH)**

**HVAC Upgrade: The City currently has three units that are not working correctly.**

Gymnasium-Unit needs to be replaced with a unit that can pull the humidity out of the area down to the correct levels of 30-50%. The current unit will only drop the humidity to 78%.

City Hall front office- The unit is broke and needs a full replacement. I had two companies look at it and both recommended a full replacement.

Police Office- Has a 3-ton unit that fails to keep the offices cool during the hot summer months. The unit will short cycle and not lower the temperature. This unit was installed in 1992 and needs a full replacement.

Total Cost Estimated:

Asking for BOA approval to move forward with an RFP to have all three units replaced. We will run the RFP through the Ameren Bizsavers program to receive incentives and money back on purchase.

**Purchase of two 2024 Ford F150, Regular Cab, 4x2 Trucks for Parks Department**

In the current ARPA budget I had \$56,000 for two trucks. The current quote I received with spray in bedliner, running boards and weather floor mats added is \$38,300 per truck. I am requesting \$76,600 in ARPA funds to replace our two

oldest trucks, which are 2000 and 2006. Our oldest truck then will be mine, which is a 2010.

I am requesting the board make a motion to allocate an additional \$20,600 to my ARPA account line for Two Ford F-150 Trucks, which will bring the total to \$76,600. These trucks will be purchased through state bid contract.

**Office Change Order:**

Crallo construction is the general contractor that is overseeing the gymnasium renovation. I am requesting the board extend their contract by \$16,088.46 to approve the change order to build an office for the Director of Parks and Recreation at the Recreation Center. The library area will be converted into an office by installing a door, new lighting, and window looking out into the library. The book library will then be moved to a nook in the hallway. My current office is next door in the building department. This will free up an office for future hires and allow other Director of Parks and Recreation to have an office in the Recreation Center. I have funds in my equipment maintenance and building maintenance account that will be reallocated to complete this project.

**President James Thomas, Sr. mad a motion for Director Jimmy for Parks and Rec to create an RFP for the air conditioner system for the Street Department, Gymnasium and the Police Department. Second by Alderwoman Theresa Hester.**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes

**7-Ayes/0-Nayes-Ayes have it. Motion Passed**

**President James Thomas, Sr. mad a motion for Director Jimmy from Parks and Rec to purchase one truck (F-150) for \$38,300.00. Second by Alderwoman Theresa Hester. Mayor stated purchase from the ARPA Funds-\$38,300.00.**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes

- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes

**7-Ayes/0-Nayes-Ayes have it. Motion Passed**

**President James Thomas, Sr. mad a motion for** Director Jimmy from Parks and Rec to give him \$16,888.44 to take funds from equipment and building maintenance fund (\$8,444.22 from each) to complete his office and the change order. **Second by Alderwoman Theresa Hester. Second by Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward.**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes

**7-Ayes/0-Nayes-Ayes have it. Motion Passed**

#### **PUBLIC WORKS (DIRECTOR JEFF ROSS)**

- 1 residential sewer lateral done. An additional 3 are pending or in progress.
- Cut 41 vacant lots (tall grass violations)
- City Wide Trash pickup on 30<sup>th</sup> the volunteers picked up 94 bags of trash. We thank you.
- 3 trees were taken down and another 3 were contracted out and removed
- 2 vacant homes were cleaned and abated
- Continued preventive maintenance for all city vehicles and equipment.

- Yard waste materials were removed from street department yard in preparation and anticipation to start and build a recycle program hopefully to start in the fall of 2024 (mulch, firewood, compost)
- We did asphalt patch work on Shepley, Neighbor, Wentworth, Waldorf, Bakewell, Church, Donnell, Gleason, Gardo, Gardo court, Odessa.

Labor Day – yet another storm hit knocking down limbs which are also been picking up.

We are looking into having a job fair on October 28<sup>th</sup> from 10am-1pm for open positions for the City of Bellefontaine Neighbors.

RFQs for road salt for the winter season has been published and the sealed bids are to be opened at the next board meeting October 19<sup>th</sup>.

RFQs for new city signage has also been published and the sealed bids for those are to be opened at the November 16<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

The Public Works Department is in immediate need of a number of things to run efficiently.

Tree removal, there are trees in the city that need to be removed immediately so I'm requesting funds for our department to have these trees removed. \$75,000 I believe would be a good amount to start with.

We all are aware of the property maintenance issues we are having within the city I am suggesting to the board to come up with a fund strictly to deal with vacant and blighted properties, without having funds available it somewhat leaves our hands tied as to the length we can go to correct the issues.

There are a number of ordinances that we feel need to be updated, or new ones established to deal with the current times and issues. Some of the following we feel need updated in the very near future to help us enforce these ordinances more efficiently

1. Sewer Lateral ordinance (Spending Cap)
2. Gaming Machines
3. Update of Permit Fees

4. Redefine Driveways and parking surfaces
5. Establish a new ordinance on Dumpster rental length of time and the fee
6. Ordinance that addresses the number of rental properties the city can allow.
7. Dog registrations, Laws,
8. Privacy Fence Ordinance.

That completes my report.

**Alderwoman Dailes** asked if Director Ross could send a list to the Board of all the ordinances you want updated. **Director Ross** stated I could send that out. Do you need us to make a motion now? **Director Ross** stated a motion would be great on the \$75,000 tree removal. **Alderwoman VonSeggern** had a question for your vacant properties. What are you referring too? **Director Ross** stated we have couple of properties that have been vacant for over ten years. One Nectar that had a tree to come down in the back of house, one on Laire that a tree also came down in the back of the house. With these funds available we can have a contractor come in take care of those issues and we can take care of everything else, and assessed that to the property owner's real estate taxes. **Alderwoman Dailes** asked would it be more beneficial to let it go repurchase it through St. Louis County then tear it down. **Director Ross** stated that is a decision that would have to be made as a whole. St. Louis County from what I understand offer Bellefontaine first dibs on homes like that.

**Director Ross** is asking for \$75,000 to take care of the important tree removal right now and to also to establish an amount that all agree upon to take care of the vacant and blighted properties. **Alderwoman Dailes** asked would that come out of ARPA Funds or General Funds. **Treasurer Rick Rogan** stated it would come out of ARPA or Capital Improvement. Since ARPA Funds have to be spent by December 31 of next year (and this is safety issue) here is an opportunity that is being presented by Jeff.

**Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward** motion to give Director Ross, \$75,000.00 for tree removal from the ARPA Funds, **Second by Alderwoman Alicia Smith.**



**Alderman Smith** asked, **Rick** can you tell us what is left in the ARPA Funds after. **Rick** stated could do that the next meeting. **Alderman Alicia Smith** is money available, **Rick** said yes. **President Thomas** stated there was \$220,000.00 listed in the veto budget (2023/24) then you would not have to stand before us asking for money. **Alderman Dailes** stated if the budget had not been vetoed this is probably going to subtract from that line item.

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes

**7-Ayes/0-Nayes-Ayes have it. Motion Passed**

**President James Thomas, Sr.** made a motioned to extend the time to 9:25 pm., **Alderman Lynette VonSeggern** seconded. **All Aldermen present voted "Aye"**. The vote was unanimous.

#### **CODE ENFORCER (FELICIA BISHOP)**

- ✓ Assisted DCFS in un-fitting a residence (Ashbrook).
- ✓ Meet with investor who agreed to sale (two) nuisance properties.
- ✓ Issued 24-hour notice for board up painting (Surrey Lane).
- ✓ Removed one illegally occupied squatter.
- ✓ Made Landlord of property (Chambers) that was conducting fraudulent activities, informed him of the consequences. Regarding our criminal activity ordinance; owner agreed to serve tenant with 30 day vacate notice.
- ✓ Communicated with property owner of property (Fontaine pl.) regarding criminal activity ordinance.
- ✓ Issued fifteen (15) nuisance letters for no occupancy permit with 72 hours required response time.
- ✓ Issued (10) nuisance letter for dogs not registered and /or not leashed
- ✓ Issued an addition 166-nuisance letters for property maintenance issues.

- ✓ Meet with Traverse Logistics owner has been given deadline of 10/30/23 to comply with all city request, and rectify nuisances are face license revocation.
- ✓ Notified Section 8 of tenants that are non-compliant.
- ✓ Meet with Tonya Patton of Riverview Gardens school district to explain the process on us working together to stop the use of unoccupied addresses for school registration.
- ✓ Meet with homeowner and new contractor regarding corrections required for the residence on Running brook.
- ✓ Meet with Ruler foods property manager to discuss property maintenance and develop a plan to move forward with complying with the necessary repairs.

**Alderman Dailes stated** can you send us a list and then can you be more specific in what you would like to do with the properties; you are asking us for \$100,000.00. As well as the sending us the ordinance numbers that you need us to change. **President Thomas stated** would you send that to the City Clerk so that she may disperse it to the board. **Felicia replied** yes.

**Alderman Theresa Hester made a motion** to extend the time to 9:30 pm., **Alderman Lynette VonSeggern seconded.**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Alicia Smith-Yes
- Alderman Alease Dailes-Yes
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-Yes
- Alderman (Board President) James Thomas, Sr.-Yes
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-Yes
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-Yes
- Alderman Theresa Hester-Yes

**7-Ayes/0-Nayes-Ayes have it. Motion Passed**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT (CHIEF JEREMY IHLER)**

-Previous twelve months looking at crime overall crime dropped 12%.

- Homicide, robbery, larceny and motor vehicle theft dropped somewhere between 19% and 83%.
- However our motor vehicle theft up 44%.
- I have two thirds of the staff actually two thirds of an excellent staff,

- The years of experience I have per officer now averages out to 10-15 years.
- Calls for service up 10%, that is 27,000 per year previously has gone up to 30,000.
- Just a reminder 10 years ago we moved our National Night out from first Tuesday night to the second Tuesday.
- As of this coming Thursday, I will be retiring from the Police Department.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PAY FOR EMPLOYEES-DISCUSSION**

**Mayor Tatman stated** we would take fifteen minutes to discuss then vote.

**President Thomas** excused himself due to a conflict of interest. **Alderswoman Hester made motion** to discuss. **Second by Alderswoman VonSeggern.**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Theresa Hester-**Yes**
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-**Yes**
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-**Yes**
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-**Yes**
- Alderman Alease Dailes-**Yes**
- Alderman Alicia Smith-**Yes**

**6-Ayes/0-Nayes-Ayes have it. Motion Passed**

### **DISCUSSION:**

**Alderswoman Dailes states** the attorney put in here and we did not vote on it and I think we should vote on it. Based on email one-person put in which shall not include an employee on probationary period for a promotion and that was not voted on. **Attorney Dorothy White-Coleman stated** the original resolution is actually before you, not the one that **Alderswoman Hester. City Clerk had to** excuse herself to get the correct resolution. **Alderswoman Hester stated** she noticed that the original resolution was broad in probationary period and so to make sure we do not leave anyone out that has been with the city for ten, twelve years and moving from part time to full time. We want to recognize those people in their new position. Section 3 says the board hereby authorizes municipal administrative pay as follows: for all active full time employees of the city who worked 32 to 40 hours per week and have completed their new hire probationary period which shall not include any employee on a probationary period of promotion at the time of this resolution is passed. The board authorizes one time sum of \$3,000.00 of municipal administrative assistant pay less taxes; for all active

regularly scheduled weekly part time employees of the city who work an average of 20 hours a week or more and have completed their required new hire probationary period which shall not include any employee on a probationary period for promotion at the time of this resolution is passed, the board authorizes the one time sum of \$1,000.00 of municipal administrative assistant pay less taxes; for all active regularly schedule weekly part time employees who work for the city who work less than 20 hours a week and who have completed their required probationary period at the time this resolution is passed authorizes one-time payment of \$750.00 of municipal administrative assistant pay less taxes. Temporary and seasonal employees are not eligible for municipal administrative assistant pay. I added that new hire probationary period so that we do not get confused when we are talking about promotions and recognizing some one that has been with the city for ten, twelve years. If you move from part time to full time that does not make you a new employee, that just means you moved within the company. **Mayor called for any other questions and is everybody clear on what resolution we are voting. Alderwoman Dailes stated** we are voting on if we want to add this to it. **Mayor Tatman stated** the motion we made earlier was to discuss and then to vote on. **Alderwoman Smith stated** section three is still not correct. Go to the bottom it states "twenty hour a week and who have completed their regular probationary period at the time of this resolution is passed". It is missing the part that says the same thing that the person that is receiving \$3,000.00 and \$1,000.00. What about those people who have completed their new hire probationary period. Still missing the verbiage of promotion probationary period. All three of those lines are not identical. The \$3,000.00 and \$1,000.00 would receive it but the person who is \$750.00 who may have a new hire probationary period, the verbiage is not there. Semmie just provided that one. We are voting on the original, one **Alderwoman Dailes stated** and if we want to add the probationary. **Alderwoman Smith stated** she was just reading it to point out that part is missing so if this part that you were looking at and voting on it still not correct. The point that I am making is if you are going to give it to someone that is receiving \$3,000.00 and if I am the person receiving \$750.00 I am suing the City. **Attorney White Coleman stated** Alderwoman Smith if that what this board decides it wants we can make that consistent, if that what the board decides. **Alderwoman Smith stated** she was just pointing out it is not consistent. **Attorney White Coleman stated** we are not voting on that you are voting on if you want to accept that language.

**Mayor Tatman stated she is putting forth the motion that the resolution be adopted as it is adding the verbiage that was inserted by Alderwoman Hester. Mayor called for a motion that the resolution be passed with verbiage added by Alderwoman Hester.**

**Alderwoman Hester made motioned to accept the resolution adding resolution for municipal; administrative pay adding the verbiage that I added in and be consistent with each three amounts. Second, Alderwoman VonSeggern. Mayor called for any more discussion.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Alderwoman Hester-Ward had a question** the person who was promoted did the years but they did not do the man-hours that the full time employees did so how is that fair to the employees that put in the 80 hours all those years. I cannot see that. **Alderwoman Hester stated** so really with this pay nothing is being fair, right, because we missed the deadline to pay this money out for what it should have been ARPA pay but it is not. But when you talk about adding the man hours as a full time person because they were a part time, I think they did do the man hours they been with the City twelve years.

They have proven themselves worthy. **Alderwoman Dailes stated** these funds are coming from the ARPA pay and I cannot see someone working 40 hours for twelve years and then someone working 2 hours, 3 hours we do not know and get the same amount of money. Trying to be fair.

**Mayor Tatman stated we are voting on accepting this resolution adding in and adopting verbiage that Alderwoman Hester inserted.**

**ROLL CALL:** City Clerk Semmie Ruffin Hall called the roll:

- Alderman Alicia Smith-**No**
- Alderman Alease Dailes-**No**
- Alderman Regina Harmon-Ward-**No**
- Alderman Lynette VonSeggern-**Yes**
- Alderman Peg Warnusz-**Yes**
- Alderman Theresa Hester-**Yes**

**3-Nays/3-Yays. Mayor broke the tie and voted Yes. Motion passed**

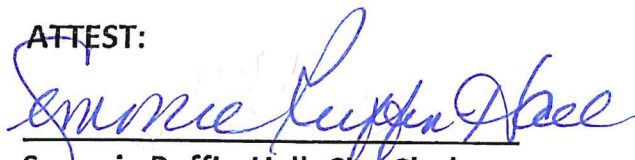
Mayor called for a motion to adjourn-Alderman Alicia Smith made the motion to adjourn at 9:30 pm Second made by Alderwoman Theresa Hester/Alderwoman Alease Dailes.

Mayor called for an all-in favor: All Aldermen present voted "Aye". The vote was unanimous.

Ayes have it and motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

ATTEST:



Semmie Ruffin-Hall  
Semmie Ruffin-Hall, City Clerk

Approved by the Board of Aldermen on 12-07-23