

**CITY OF CENTERTON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2012**

The city council was called to order by Mayor, Bill Edwards. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the prayer was offered by Keith Higginbotham. Those Present and answering roll call were Mayor Bill Edwards, Robin Reed, Josie Reed, Keith Higginbotham, Tyler Steele, Skye Petty and Tommy Laird. Those present and not answering role call were Todd Wright, Brian Rabal, Andrew Huntsinger, Street Superintendant Rick Hudson, Police Chief Lance Johnson, Animal Control Supervisor Terry Sanchez and Planning Supervisor Lorene Burns. Jennifer Robinson, Robert Coffelt and Jeff Coffelt were not present for the meeting.

- (1) **Council Minutes-** Robin Reed made a motion to adopt the minutes from the January 10th and 30th, 2012 council meetings with a 2nd from Skye Petty. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.
- (2) **Planning, Water & Sewer, Parks and A&P Minutes-** Josie Reed made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the December 20, 2011 Planning and December, 2011 Water & Sewer minutes as well as the January, 2012 Parks & Recreation minutes with a 2nd from Robin Reed. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.
- (3) **City and Court Financials-** Mayor Edwards stated that Jennifer Robinson had to leave unexpectedly and that she was unable to prepare the city financials for January, 2012 for this meeting, but that we would have them for the council members before the next meeting for approval in the March council meeting. Tyler Steele made a motion to accept the January, 2012 Court financials with a 2nd from Keith Higginbotham. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.
- (4) **State of the City Address-** Mayor Edwards address the council and members of the audience and stated:

Ladies and Gentlemen of the City Council and fellow citizens, as Mayor I am to report to you about the state of the city and its future needs. I am grateful for the opportunity that the citizens have given me to serve the City of Centerton and I look forward to the next three years as an opportunity for all of us to make a difference in our community.

The City of Centerton continues to make progress in its infrastructure with many roads this year being repaired and repaved along with several issues with drainage have been addressed. Plans to widen Highway 102 are underway and will be placed out for bid to become a 5-lane road from Greenhouse Road, west to Main Street. Many of our dirt roads are now bladed on a regular basis and this is all due to the hard work of our Street Department.

This year several new businesses will be opening to include Shipley's Donuts and a new Tex-Mex restaurant in the Beckendale Plaza, along with a new animal hospital and a new hair salon located on Highway 102. There have also several new businesses calling here asking about the widening project and I feel when this project gets underway we will see growth in the eastern part of the city.

I would like to talk about improvements in several of our departments in the past year and things we will be working on this year, First the police department, last year we added one additional police officer and was able to add 2 new vehicles, this year we plan on adding 4 new vehicles to replace several aging cars, we also have plans underway to complete a new building for the police department and also will have future plans to add a new city hall and court building at the same location. We also implemented a part time officer program to help in manpower during times when officers were off on vacation and extended leave.

Next I would like to talk about many improvements we have done to the street department, first of all the new building located on Highway 72 has been completed and we have added several new pieces of equipment to include a new dump truck, which also has several attachments to include a snow plow and sand spreader, we actually used this yesterday to pre-treat several roads in the area to help motorists get around. Next we did buy a new tractor to replace a aging tractor we had had in our fleet, we also added a "Gator" which can be used to help in our parks and trails in our city, we also have a snowplow on this and it helped with snow removal at some of our smaller areas.

I would like to thank the volunteers of the Centerton Fire Department for their service last year, they responded to 678 calls for service in 2011, and are on track to have that many calls this year, last year we did upgrade equipment to include new up to date radios to enable us to communicate with Bentonville Fire Department and several new pieces of bunker gear to replace aging gear. We do plan on adding a mini-rescue later this year to help keep the wear and tear off of our equipment, and also plan on hiring some paid personnel to include a part time fire chief, and also rotating some of the volunteers during the day to help with daily maintenance and upkeep of the equipment and also be available for calls.

Next I would like to talk about Animal Control, this year we replaced an aging truck that one of our officers had, and also I was able to obtain a grant from Wal-Mart to replace an aging fence. This year we will be applying for another grant to add some camera equipment to help catch folks, who leave animals at our facility after hours, we also plan on adding some additional lighting in the area. Also on the subject of lighting we added 2 new street lights on Commercial Street, we also added new lights on Greenhouse Road at the Quail Ridge subdivision, and we are also in the process of adding 3 new lights in the Dogwood subdivision that were never installed, we also added one new light that was missed in Sienna Estates.

Code Enforcement and Building Inspection, our inspector has been very flexible with working with builders and contractors to get things inspected in a timely manner, one example is a inspection that was done on Christmas Eve so the residents could have gas, they had a leak and had to be inspected before the gas company would turn the gas on. Also 2 properties were abated and removed to include the old house south of City Hall on Ginn Road, and also an old mobile home and RV that was abandoned on LC Hickman Road. There are also a few properties on Holloway Road that the abatement process has started and the owners have been contacted and are working to clean up the properties.

A few other things that occurred recently is we upgraded the city website to make it easier for citizens to get information and also there is a complete list of businesses in our city on there to include a website if one was located, we also have implemented a Face Book page for the city and also the Animal Shelter and thru these resources we have been able to increase our adoptions and also open the lines of communications up between city hall and our citizens. We also place current events and things happening currently in the city for example if the power goes out, I have a direct contact with the utility companies and I can notify the citizens right away and an estimate on when the situation will be under control. This year we are also part of BC Alert which is a county wide notification system and we will work on getting our citizens signed up, this service will provide life saving information and can also be used to notify citizens in the event of an emergency.

Lastly, no administration is complete without a loyal staff of great employees, and our city has many dedicated and hard working employees from the Department Heads all the way down to the actual troops that carry out the daily activities and duties to help keep our city running smooth and efficiently. Thank you for a Job Well Done.

(5) Approval of Vehicle for Police Department to Replace 2005 Chevrolet

Impala- Mayor Edwards addressed the council asked the council to approve the purchase of two 2012 Chevrolet Tahoe's for \$25,093.00 each on the state contract. He said that price is not equipped. Keith Higginbotham made a motion to approve the purchase of a 2012 Chevrolet Tahoe for Police Department with a 2nd from Robin Reed. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried. The mayor also asked for the council's permission to surplus the two Impalas when the Tahoe's come in as well as the possibility of a Crown Victoria. Tyler Steele made that motion with a 2nd from Skye Petty. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.

(6) Discuss Street Department Pay- Mayor Edwards addressed the council and asked that they raise the pay of the Street Department employees to \$13.00/hr. There was discussion. Street Department Superintendent Rick Hudson addressed the council. There was discussion. Robin Reed made a motion to raise the wage of the Street Department employees to \$13.00/hr. with a 2nd from Josie Reed. All council members voted in favor except for Keith Higginbotham, who abstained, and the motion carried.

(7) Discuss Council and City Clerk Compensation- Mayor Edwards addressed the council and stated that the City Council pay was currently \$50.00 per meeting and for the City Clerk was \$50.00 per meeting and \$75.00 for typing the minutes. He detailed the pay of other local cities and asked the council to raise the council pay to think about raising the council and clerk pay to \$125.00 per meeting and to continue to pay the clerk \$75.00 for typing the minutes. Tommy Laird made a motion to table the discussion until next month with a 2nd from Josie Reed. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.

(8) Update on Highway 102 and Payment- Mayor Edwards addressed the council and pointed out Resolution 06-09 to the council. He stated that we did not have to take any action at this time. He said that he just wanted to bring to the attention of the council that the Highway Department is getting ready to ask us for a \$2,000,000.00 payment for the HWY102 widening. He stated that they are going to put it out for bid March 21st, 2012. Mayor Edwards pointed out what was stated in the resolution in regard to payment to clear up some confusion about payment terms. He stated that \$15,000.00 would be taken off for some easement acquisitions. He stated that he just wanted to get it in the council minutes that we discussed it and so there would be no questions when we wrote the check.

(9) Resolution 2012-03- A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN INTERLOCAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF CENTERTON, ARKANSAS, AND THE CITY OF BENTONVILLE, ARKANSAS, REGARDING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES. Mayor Edwards addressed the council and explained that this resolution was in regard to compensation for ambulance service from the City of Bentonville. He gave details of the process since the first request for compensation from the City of Bentonville, as well as details of payments made for similar services provided in other area cities in our region. Mayor Edwards detailed what the fees will be moving forward and gave statistics for this year so far. He asked Bentonville Fire Chief Dan White to be present at this meeting for any questions and he was present. Chief White detailed how the statistics were generated. There was discussion. Tommy Laird made a motion to read the resolution by title only with a 2nd from Skye Petty. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried. Brian Rabal read the resolution by title only. Robin Reed made a motion to adopt the resolution with a 2nd from Keith Higginbotham. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.

Department Reports- Police- Police Chief Lance Johnson pointed out the stats for the previous month and for the previous 3 years found in the council's packets. He detailed progress on the recent robbery of the First national Bank of Centerton. Lance gave details about the recent driver's training. Lance presented the council and audience with a plan

of the proposed new police department. There was discussion of the process and timeline. He said that he was hoping to be able to put out to bid for architect and site work in April. He detailed future plans for the entire property and then the police department itself. He said we could possibly break ground in May or June and the build out should take 3 months. Lance stated that he would like to start looking for an assistant, so that he has a 2nd in charge. He stated that he would like them to be over patrol and let him get back to his administration duties. He stated that he will have a job description to bring before the council next month. He said that he knows who the person is and should be. He stated that he would like to make it official next month. He stated that the person is on staff and that it would be an in-house promotion. **Street-** Rick Hudson stated that they have been working on drainage. He also mentioned the recent driver's training. Rick stated that we were able to get out and test all of our new equipment with our recent snowfall. Rick presented the council with the city's Street Evaluation statistics that gave them some idea of street conditions in each of the cities subdivisions and other roadways. Rick detailed the report for the council. Rick detailed his request for a pay raise for his 3 full-time employees. Rick detailed the status of the remodel of Hickory Park. **Planning-** Lorene stated that at the January Planning meeting, the First Baptist Church baseball field was approved and gave details. She said that the site plans for the baseball practice fields for the city came to her today, but that she has not had time to look at them yet. She said that they could go ahead and start laying things out. She stated that she was hoping that Andrew was working on an ordinance to adopt the new flood plain map. She said that she received concept plans for the new police department today as well. Lorene stated that Planning Commission training is in Hot Springs on March 14th, 2012, with the Conference on the 15th and 16th. Lorene mentioned that we met with the architects and engineers regarding the new Bentonville High School. She stated that the nursing home that contacted us several years ago has purchased land that will need to be re-zoned. Lorene stated that she keeps getting calls for conditional use requests and gave some details. Robin asked Lorene where she was in regard to a person to help her and she stated that she put together 3 different lists in regard to duties and goals for that person. **Fire-** Mayor Edwards mentioned that the fire chief was not here tonight and pointed out to the council that he put a copy of the January fire runs in their packets, stating that there were 51 total runs. **Water-** Melvin Coffelt touched on the meeting with the School Board as well. He stated that the Bella Vista Bypass change order is complete. He said that the mechanical work is completed for this phase and all that is left is paperwork. He stated that the HWY102 expansion is a little different. He said we are still waiting on a couple of easements that may have to be condemned. Melvin asked for the council's approval to use the CWSD attorney, Howard Slinkard if condemnation is needed. Melvin reminded the council that our current sewer treatment contract with Bentonville is up in 2018 and gave details of his concerns and some of the options they are looking at. Tyler Steele made a motion to allow Howard Slinkard to represent CWSD for any condemnation proceedings in regard to HWY 102 with City Attorney Brian Rabal to review with a 2nd from Tommy Laird. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried. Melvin stated that the opening on the CWSD will be posted next week in the local papers, water magazines and possibly the Municipal League books. He stated that it will run for 2 weeks and that they have already had some interest. **Animal Control-** Terry Sanchez addressed the Animal Control stats for January. He mentioned that the new animal

hospital is getting ready to open soon and that he has been in discussion with them to have all of our dogs spayed and neutered with them at a discount. He said that they proposed \$50.00, which is what our adoption fee is. He said that rabies shots would have to be paid for at the hospital. He stated that 8 dogs were dumped at the shelter. He said that they currently have 14 dogs. **Administration-** Mayor Edwards stated that he talked to the auditor and that it looks like our city audit will be in August.

Other Business- Presentation by the Fire Department - Mayor Edwards stated that he is concerned that there is a lot of frustration in the Fire Department right now and that he hopes we can work those frustrations out. He stated that he comes to the fire meetings once a month in good faith from the city and appreciates all that the fire fighters do. He said that he keeps hearing that we are trying to get rid of the volunteer fire department. He said that this is not the case. He said that his goal since he ran for the office of mayor was to hire a full-time Fire Chief. The mayor detailed some discussions that have been had in filling the needs of the fire department. Mayor Edwards recognized Jeff Coffelt and Jeff Hayre for each having 20 years of service in the fire department. Mayor Edwards read the retirement letter from Jeff Coffelt and stated that Mark will be retiring April 1st, 2012. Mayor Edwards stated that the city is still taking applications for a part-time Fire Chief at this time. Rob Miller addressed the council and gave a report on the current status of the Centerton Fire Department, including staffing, hiring, training, compensation, chain of command, and equipment status, maintenance and needs with commentary and suggestions along the way. Rob was very detailed in regard to current equipment and listed a plan to upgrade. He also discussed ambulance and rescue options. There was discussion between the council members and Rob and Chris with the fire department. Melvin Coffelt and Jimmy Thompson made public comments. Mayor Edwards reminded everyone that the position is posted on-line and encouraged people to apply if interested. Mayor Edwards also mentioned that he has offered space at the Fire Station for an ambulance service.

Announcements- Michael Finke announced the monthly Centerton Area Chamber of Commerce Pancake Breakfast to be held on February 18th, 2012 at 8:00 a.m. at The Bank of Gravette in Centerton. He also mentioned the chamber's "Welcome Bag". He stated that there are now 72 businesses in the chamber. Mayor Edwards reminded everyone about Breakfast with the Mayor also on February 18th at 9:00 a.m. Mayor Edwards stated that he is not putting the planning person off, but is working with the county to get some of the survey and G.I.S. work done and reaching out to some of the resources that we are already paying for to get some of the work done as well as some less expensive options. Chris Benefield also reminded everyone about the new city website updates. Todd Wright gave an update on the board meetings regarding the new High School.

There was no more business or announcements and Tyler Steele made a motion to adjourn with a 2nd from Tommy Laird. All council members voted in favor and the motion carried.

Bill Edwards, Mayor

Todd Wright, City Clerk