

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE CITY OF TEXARKANA, ARKANSAS
JULY 16, 2007**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

The Board of Directors of the City of Texarkana, Arkansas, convened in regular session at 7:00 PM on July 16, 2007 with the following members present: Mayor Horace G. Shipp, Assistant Mayor Williams, and Directors Shirley Bradley, Patsy Cornelius, Chad Dowd, Kathy Dunphy, and Sue Johnson. Also present were Interim City Manager Harold E. Boldt, City Attorney Ned Stewart, and City Clerk Patti Scott Grey.

INVOCATION:

The invocation was given by Director Chad Dowd.

CENTERPOINT ENERGY:

Mayor Shipp introduced CenterPoint Area Manager Dennis McBride and District Manager Jay Johnston. Mr. McBride spoke briefly in regard to the gas main project being completed on County Avenue. He said the contractors as well as CenterPoint did not anticipate all the rain, which was causing a delay in completion of the project, creating challenges with completing replacement of the gas main.

Mr. McBride explained how the County Avenue project would be completed in nine phases. He said this project had caused grievances from residents located in this area. Mr. McBride said he felt there had been a breakdown in communication with the residents on replacement of the gas main or a lack of a full explanation of what work would be accomplished. Mr. McBride said he had met with Interim City Manager Harold E. Boldt

and Street Superintendent Gary Jeans over the work being done and what work would be conducted. He went on to say that there were three other projects in process as well as the County Avenue project, which has approximately four weeks left until completion.

Line Ferry Road was one of the three ongoing projects with a completion time of approximately three weeks.

Hickory Street was the third ongoing project and was an extension of the County Avenue project. Mr. McBride said he hoped to have the remaining projects completed by the end of 2007.

Director Dowd commented on receiving many telephone calls, concerning the destruction of the yards, curbs and street along County Avenue. He said there was a safety concern in regard to a lack of barricades along County Avenue. Director Dowd said he did not feel as if repairs to curbs, sidewalks and yards were made up to par. He went on to say there were also some drainage issues in the areas where work had been done – grates had been removed from storm drains.

Mr. McBride said the yards would be repaired as well as the streets, curbs and sidewalks. He said additional work crews had been hired to insure this. As far as the drainage issue, he was in contact with Ron Elkins who was hired, specifically, to look into this matter.

Director Cornelius said she had been told of a car running off into one of the holes on County Avenue.

Mr. McBride said he had not heard about that and assured that all streets affected by the project would be repaired. He stated he would also be following up with touring the areas related to the project to make sure all areas affected were repaired.

Mayor Shipp asked Mr. McBride, if the gas main had to be laid first, and then connected to each resident, individually, by connecting service ties to each home.

Mr. McBride said that was correct. He also commented on this project moving the gas mains from below the streets to behind the curb.

The Mayor expressed his concern over the project destroying Beech Street. He said the street is on the Historic National Register and he would like CenterPoint as well as the contractors to be sensitive to working on Beech Street. Mayor Shipp added the need for good communication between CenterPoint, city staff and the citizens affected by the project. He asked Mr. McBride, when the mains would need to be replaced, once the project was complete.

Mr. McBride said the mains were being replaced with plastic piping and it would be many decades before the project would have to be repeated.

Director Dunphy said she had some concerns with pipes coming out of the ground on Country Club Road. She said this caused her some safety concerns in regard to a car hitting one of these pipes and causing a gas explosion.

Mr. McBride said some meters were placed underground and some had to be placed above ground. He did offer to look at the pipes that were causing Director Dunphy's concerns.

Mayor Shipp thanked Mr. McBride and CenterPoint Energy for their time in giving the project updates.

ASSISTANT MAYOR WILLIAMS COMMENT:

Assistant Mayor Williams commented on rumors regarding street repairs on Texarkana, Arkansas Fire Chief Bobby Honea's street. Assistant Mayor Londell Williams

stated that he had nothing to do with repairs being made. He said he wanted the talk to stop and felt the need to clear the air regarding this matter.

NUSA CONFERENCE:

Mayor Shipp introduced DeAnna O'Malley. Ms. O'Malley spoke briefly while reviewing a PowerPoint which stated NUSA's mission – a non-profit organization since 1975; builds and strengthens neighborhood associations and continues to encourage networking and information sharing to facilitate the development of partnerships between neighborhood organizations, government and the private sector. Ms. O'Malley thanked the City for allowing her to attend the conference the last two years. She said, by attending this conference, it gave her a new passion for her city.

Mayor Shipp commented on Ms. O'Malley organizing National Night Out activities in her neighborhood and the tremendous amount of effort and work she puts into it.

WARD 6 – COMMUNITY MEETING:

Mayor Shipp introduced Ward 6 Director Sue Johnson. Ms. Johnson commented on Texarkana, Arkansas Ward 6 Community Meeting, which was held June 28, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. at Sugar Hill Methodist Church, Wren Hall, 1621 Sugar Hill Road.

WARD 4 – COMMUNITY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT:

Mayor Shipp announced that Ward 4 Director Chad Dowd would hold his community meeting for Ward 4 this Thursday, July 19, at Hickory Street Baptist Church, Fellowship Hall, 2923 Hickory Street.

“TO-DATE” PROCEEDS FROM THE LOCAL TAX ON ELECTRICITY REVIEW:

Mayor Shipp asked Interim City Manager Harold E. Boldt to speak briefly on this item. Mr. Boldt commented the monies taken in and the monies yet received. He gave a brief overview of each.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Assistant Mayor Williams commented on how much he liked Interim City Manager Boldt’s response methods. He said board members, as well as citizens, call about certain issues and Mr. Boldt attends to them in a fastidious manner.

Director Cornelius commented on certain restaurants not paying the “hamburger tax.” She said when Mr. Boldt was made aware of this he took action and contacted each restaurant.

WARD 2 – 1516 PROSPECT STREET:

Mayor Shipp introduced Interim City Manager Harold E. Boldt. Mr. Boldt commented on 1516 Prospect Street, while presenting a Power Point Presentation, stating how the area had been cleaned up. He then read a letter sent by Ms. Carolyn Byers regarding clean up of this property complimenting the City on their efforts in cleaning up the City.

NEW PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR INTRODUCTION:

Mayor Shipp introduced our new Public Works Director Jeff Hill who gave a background of his employment and his decision on becoming Public Works Director for the City.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Director Dowd moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Cornelius and carried unanimously. The items approved by consent were:

MINUTES:

The minutes approved were of the regular meeting of July 2 and the called meeting of July 10, 2007.

RESOLUTION NO. 5436:

Resolution No. 5436 authorizes the city Manager to submit a Preserve America application to the National Park Service (U. S. Department of the Interior).

RESOLUTION NO. 5437:

Resolution No. 5437 Authorizes the City Manager to execute a contract for the Loop 245 and East 19th Street Water and Sewer Relocations Project with Dual Construction, Inc.

I-49 CONSTRUCTION:

Mayor Shipp commented on the water and sewer relocation project was mandated by the state and part of the recent I-49 construction.

REGULAR AGENDA:

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION TIME:

- James Cook, 3002 E. 50th, spoke about his property adjoining 1516 Prospect. He said he bought the property three years ago and had begun recently remodeling the home. Mr. Cook was made aware that his property had been put on the condemnation list and he asked the City to consider giving him an extension on his permit in remodeling the property.

Mr. Boldt asked had he applied for a new permit to which Mr. Cook stated he had not, that he was unaware permits expired and he was unsure that once property was put on the condemnation list if he could re-apply. Mr. Boldt told him to contact Public Works about obtaining a new permit.

- Director Johnson commented on the Code Red system. She said she receive a telephone call from the Code Red system at 11:00 p.m. on July 15, 2007. She felt the information was lacking and there were still some flaws with the system.

Police Chief Bob Harrison said there were definitely some issues but they were being worked out. He explained that was the first time the system was used.

Mayor Shipp asked if Code Red helped in any way locating the citizen who was the subject matter of the call. Chief Harrison replied no.

- Assistant Mayor Williams asked Chief Harrison about surveillance cameras located at red light locations around the City. Chief Harrison said the City did not have any and they were very expensive to install and use.
- Mayor Shipp reminded everyone of the last community ward meeting held at Hickory Street Baptist Church for Ward 4 at 6:00 p.m., Thursday July 19, 2007.
- Mayor Shipp commented on the number of citizens who attended the Ward 3 meeting and some of their complaints. He thanked Assistant Mayor Londell Williams for use of his church for the meeting.
- Director Dunphy asked if her Ward Meeting could be rescheduled due to some confusion with the Texarkana Gazette. Mayor Shipp said yes.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned.

Horace G. Shipp, Mayor

ATTEST:

Patti Scott Grey, City Clerk