

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Water Bill Ordinance – Request to Approve Amendments

Emporia's City Council held a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 15, 2013, at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, located at 201 South Main Street, Emporia, Virginia. Mayor Mary L. Person presided over the session.

The following City Council members were present:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris
Councilman James E. Ewing, III
Councilwoman Doris T. White
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey
Councilwoman Carol Mercer

Others present: C. Butler Barrett, City Attorney
Steven B. Hall, Assistant City Manager
Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk
Don Wyatt, Chief of Police
W. S. Harris, Jr., Treasurer
Joyce E. Prince, Commissioner of the Revenue
Royal Jones, Public Works Director
Sam Brown, City Sheriff

Absent:

Councilwoman L. Dale Temple
Brian S. Thrower, City Manger

1. Water Bill Ordinance – Request to Approve Amendments

Mr. Hall stated that the proposed amendments to City Code Section 78-95 clarify that when the City offices are closed the entire day on the 25th of the month, water service shall be disconnected the next business day. He also stated that the proposed amendments give residents an additional day to pay their water bill without disconnection of service when the City offices are closed (weekend, holiday, inclement weather, etc.) a portion of or the entire day on the 24th of the month.

Mr. Hall stated that the City received a letter from Gatten Behavioral Health stating that as one of the ninety who had their water disconnected on November 24, 2012 I would like to thank you for advocating for our cause. He also stated that although I was unaware of the significant number of disconnections, I must admit that I was dismayed when the water at my office was disconnected. He further stated that as a business owner with six employees in the City of Emporia, I pay my water/sewage bill regularly and frankly was highly irritated that my

water was shut off. He stated that I feel that it would not be unreasonable to expect a courtesy reminder call on the rare occasion payment was not received in a timely manner.

Mr. Hall stated that as I spoke with fellow citizens in the community regarding my irritation at being disconnected, I was informed that there are businesses/organizations and individuals/families who do receive telephone calls from the City when their water bill is late. He also stated that these individuals do not suffer disconnections. He further stated that I would appreciate that the procedure to be added to the call list be made public as I would like to be afforded the same courtesy.

Mr. Hall stated that I appreciate Councilman Harris effort in dealing with this issue and would like to go one step further and request that my reconnection fee be returned to me. He also stated that additionally, I would like to see it specified that the water would be disconnected only after four business days and one late payment in a twelve month period.

Mayor Person asked if there was anyone who wished to make any comments regarding this matter.

With there being no further comments to come before City Council, Mayor Person declared the public hearing closed.

Mary L. Person, Mayor

Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk

MINUTES
EMPORIA CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF EMPORIA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
January 15, 2013

Note to Reader: Although the printed agenda document for this City Council meeting is not part of these minutes, the agenda document provides background information on the items discussed by City Council during the meeting. A copy of the agenda document for this meeting may be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk.

Emporia City Council held a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, located at 201 South Main Street, Emporia, Virginia. Mayor Mary L. Person presided over the meeting with Bishop Vincent Lowery offering the invocation.

ROLL CALL

The following City Council members were present:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris
Councilman James E. Ewing, III
Councilwoman Doris T. White
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey
Councilwoman Carol Mercer

Others present: C. Butler Barrett, City Attorney
Steven B. Hall, Assistant City Manager
Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk
Don Wyatt, Chief of Police
W. S. Harris, Jr., Treasurer
Joyce E. Prince, Commissioner of the Revenue
Royal Jones, Public Works Director
Sam Brown, City Sheriff

Absent:

Councilwoman L. Dale Temple
Brian S. Thrower, City Manger

Mayor Person presented Debra Brown with a proclamation for the Centennial of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

Mayor Person presented a resolution to Councilwoman Beverly White for her service to the City of Emporia.

Whereas, Beverly White was first appointed to Emporia City Council in 2011 and has represented the citizens of her district in an efficient and effective manner for one year; and

Whereas, Beverly White has diligently and industriously worked on behalf of the interests of the entire City, most especially in the areas of City beautification and improvement, code enforcement, and fiscal strengthening of the City's budget and fund balance; and

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that this resolution of commendation be presented to Beverly White in appreciation of her dedication and for her effort in making our community a better place in which to live.

Be It Further Resolved, that the Council of the City of Emporia, Virginia meeting in Regular Session this 18th day of December, 2012, that it expresses its deepest appreciation to Beverly White for her loyalty, industry, and dedication to the City of Emporia. Her professionalism and commitment to the responsibilities of this important office will remain the defining impression of her tenure.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Councilwoman White moved to approve the minutes from the Tuesday, December 18, 2012, City Council Regular meeting and Thursday, December 27, 2012, Special meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Lynch, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	aye
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A listing of the January 15, 2013 bills was presented to City Council members.

General Fund	\$	884,843.67
Utility Fund	\$	347,155.27

Councilwoman Mercer moved to approve the January 15, 2013 bills as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Lynch, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	aye
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

FINANCIAL AND TAX REPORTS

Honorable W. S. Harris, Jr., City Treasurer provided his report to City Council members. There were no questions regarding his report.

COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE REPORT

Honorable Joyce E. Prince, Commissioner of the Revenue provided her report to City Council members. There were no questions regarding her report.

PERMIT AND INSPECTION REPORT

Randy C. Pearce, Building/Fire Official provided his report to City Council members. There were no questions concerning his report.

POLICE REPORT

Don Wyatt, Chief of Police provided his report to City Council members. There were no questions concerning his report.

CITY SHERIFF REPORT

Sam C. Brown, Sheriff provided his report to City Council members. There were no questions concerning his report.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

C. Butler Barrett, City Attorney had no matters to report to City Council members.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilwoman Lynch moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Councilwoman White, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	aye
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12-110. Water Bill Ordinance – Request to Approve Amendments

Mr. Hall stated that the recommended amendments to City Code Section 78-95 clarify that when the City offices are closed the entire day on the 25th of the month, water service shall be disconnected the next business day. He also stated that the proposed amendments give residents an additional day to pay their water bill without disconnection of service when the City offices are closed (weekend, holiday, inclement weather, etc.) a portion of or the entire day on the 24th of the month.

He recommended that Council approve the ordinance.

Councilman Harris made a motion to adopt **Ordinance No. 13-01** to amend Chapter 78, Article II, Division 3, Sec. 78-95, of the City Code of Ordinances of the City of Emporia, Virginia, seconded by Councilwoman Mercer, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	aye
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

Councilman Harris inquired if Council could get a report from the Treasurer or the Administration for the cost to the Utility Department if Council chose to reimburse the fees to the citizens that were disconnected the Monday after Thanksgiving.

NEW BUSINESS

13-01. President of Council Election

Mr. Hall stated that per the City Charter, Council will need to elect a President of Council at tonight's meeting.

Councilman Harris moved to nominate Councilwoman Carey to serve as President of Council.

Councilman Harris moved to appoint Councilwoman Carey to serve as President of Council, seconded by Councilwoman Lynch, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	nay
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	aye
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	abstained

13-02. District 19 Community Service Board – Request to Adopt Medicaid Expansion Resolution

Mr. Hall stated that Joseph E. Hubbard, Executive Director of the District 19 Community Services Board, has requested that City Council adopt a resolution requesting the General Assembly and Governor to fully accept, implement, and enact the Medicaid Expansion of the Affordable Care Act and to make this item part of the City's legislative agenda.

He recommended that Council approve the resolution.

Councilwoman Mercer made a motion to adopt **Resolution No. 13-01** requesting that the General Assembly and Governor of Virginia accept and implements the full expansion of

Medicaid as provided by the Affordable Care Act, seconded by Councilwoman Carey, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	nay
Councilman James E. Ewing	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Lynch	nay
Councilwoman Carol Mercer	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

Councilman Harris stated that this is a very complicated issue one that's had a lot of discussion nationally and in the General Assembly. He also stated that one question that every level of government is going to have deal with is whether the federal government will be able to actually fund 100 percent of the cost of Medicaid Expansion for the first three years, and then ninety percent thereafter that is called for in the change. He further stated that in Virginia alone Medicaid has grown 1,600 percent in thirty years, and now accounts for twenty-one percent of Virginia's budget, and up to twenty-eight percent in the budgets of some of the other states in the U.S., and these figures are before the full implementation of Obama Care. He stated that from a local government perspective we have seen reductions in shared services to localities, including Emporia, number of times in the past. He also stated that if Medicaid expansion grows to take up more and more of the state budget, what will be cut by the state to pay for it. He further stated that the expansion of the program at this time make it less likely down the road that Medicaid will be there for the even more needy as times progress. He stated that he is not at all comfortable asking the state government to encourage the federal government to undertake even more spending.

Councilwoman Carey stated that she supported the resolution for Medicaid Expansion Plan, as it would allow more people medical coverage.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Person asked if anyone wished to bring a matter before City Council members adhering to the three minute time limitation.

Debra Brown, 604 Temple Avenue, addressed Council stating that she supported the Medicaid Expansion Plan. She stated that we have people in our community who desperately need health care assistance, and if we have to pay a little more that is good, because when they become terminally ill, we are going to have to pay for it anyway.

Sam Brown, 605 Cleveland Ave, addressed Council with concerns about moving the Sheriff office on the second floor of the new location.

With there being no further comments to come before City Council, Mayor Person closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before City Council, Mayor Person adjourned the meeting.

Mary L. Person, Mayor

Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk