

MINUTES
EMPORIA CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF EMPORIA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
May 20, 2014

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, May 20, 2014 at 6:30 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 Carolyn Carey, Council Member offering the invocation.

ROLL CALL

The following City Council members were present:

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

Others present:

Mary L. Person, Mayor
C. Butler Barrett, City Attorney
Brian S. Thrower, City Manager
Lori R. Jarratt, Executive Secretary
Don Wyatt, Chief

Absent:

Tessie Wilkins, City Clerk

MINUTES APPROVAL

Councilwoman Temple moved to approve the minutes from the Tuesday, May 6, 2014, City Council Regular meeting and May 6, 2014 and May 14, 2014 Budget Work Sessions as presented, seconded by Councilwoman White, which passed as follows:

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

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A listing of the May 20, 2014 bills was presented to City Council members.

General Fund	\$	1,061,393.85
Utility Fund	\$	339,928.20

Councilwoman Temple moved to approve the May 20, 2014 bills as presented, seconded by Councilman Ewing, which passed as follows:

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

FIRE REPORT

A report was provided by the Emporia Volunteer Fire Department. There were no questions regarding this report.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

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

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilman Ewing moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Temple, which passed as follows:

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

14-13. Southside Virginia Education Center Board of Directors – Unexpired Term (Alton F. Owen, Jr.)

Mr. Thrower stated that this item had been carried over from previous regular meetings of City Council. He reported that Alton F. Owen, Jr. submitted his letter of resignation from the Southside Virginia Education Center Board of Directors effective February 6, 2014 and has an expiration date of July 1, 2015.

Councilwoman Temple nominated Peggy Jones.

Councilman Harris made a motion to appoint Peggy Jones to serve on the Southside Education Center Board of Directors, to fill the unexpired term of Alton F. Owen, Jr., with a term expiration date of July 1, 2015, seconded by Councilwoman Mercer which passed as follows:

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

NEW BUSINESS

14-30. VRS Employer Retirement Contribution Rate Election – Request to Adopt Resolution

Mr. Thrower reported that the language in the 2013 Appropriations Act, Item 468(H), allowed localities to make an election regarding their VRS employer contribution rate every biennium. He also reported that Council must approve one of the following employer contribution rate option for the defined benefit retirement plan in the biennium beginning July 1, 2014:

- 12.27% - This is the rate certified by the VRS Board of Trustees for the FY15-16 biennium; or
- 10.16% - This is the alternate rate, which is the higher of the rate certified by the VRS Board for FY12 or 80% of the VRS Board-certified rate for FY15-16

He recommended Council adopt the resolution approving the 12.27% rate certified by the VRS Board of Trustees for the FY 15-16 biennium.

Councilman Harris stated that the lower percentage rate was not actually a savings in any sense but the short term. Mr. Thrower stated that this was correct.

Councilman Harris made a motion to adopt Resolution **No. 14-03** approving the 12.27% certified by the VRS Board of Trustees for the FY15-16 biennium, seconded by Councilman Ewing which passed as follows:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Ovis Blunt, Jr., 2-28th Street, Newport News, Virginia 23607 addressed Council stated that he was sentenced to three and a half years for distribution of a controlled substance. He also stated that when he returned home he tried to get his life straight but was still facing some issues. He further stated that he was charged again with possession of marijuana while on probation and sentenced to five years in the state penitentiary. He advised that while he was incarcerated his fines accumulated with interest. He also advised that he felt like the punishments for possession should include some type of rehabilitation program as opposed to serving years in a penitentiary.

Mayor Person stated that she appreciated Mr. Blunt expressing his concerns to Council but as expressed to him in a prior conversation, these laws are regulated by the court system and City Council did not have any jurisdiction over these areas. She advised that the information that was provided to him could be helpful. He advised that he was currently exploring those avenues.

Councilman Harris stated that the laws that Mr. Blunt referenced are not municipal infractions but rather state legal violations that Council does not have the authority to control. He also stated that many of the issues that he had mentioned are things that the Department of Corrections and the General Assembly are reviewing. He further stated that it would be helpful to them to hear of his experiences. He advised that it may be helpful to begin with Delegate Tyler as she is representative for this area in Richmond.

He also stated that he hoped things would get better for him in the future.

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

Lori R. Jarratt, Executive Secretary