

City of Townsend
Commission Meeting Minutes
For
October 16, 2015

Attendance: Those present for the meeting were Mayor Michael Talley, Vice-Mayor Becky Headrick, Commissioner Ron Palewski, Commissioner Jackie Suttles, Commissioner Kenny Myers, Recorder Danny Williamson, Police Chief Ron Suttles, Fire Chief Don Stallions, Andy Morton, Rick Russell, Stephen Karp, and Lesli Bales-Sherrod.

Pledge: Mayor Michael Talley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:02 pm.

Minutes: Commissioner Palewski made a motion to approve the September 15, 2015 minutes. Vice-Mayor Headrick seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

Finance Report: Recorder Williamson gave the finance report for the month of September, 2015. Mayor Talley made a motion to approve the report. Commissioner Suttles seconded the motion and the report was approved with five yea votes.

Police Report: Chief Suttles reported that the new Townsend Police Department truck was now being utilized, and that the white pickup was also back in use. He stated that Officer Rayburn had just had new tires put on his service cruiser. Chief Suttles reported that traffic was still very heavy.

Maintenance: Chief Suttles conveyed that the maintenance workers had spent some time working on the Chestnut Hill entrance area and back field behind City Hall and had both of those sections looking really good. He then shared that a cylinder on the backhoe had been rebuilt. Chief Suttles reported that the seasonal maintenance employee's budgeted time had expired the week before, but he would like approval from the Commission to continue his employment through the end of October. After some discussion, Commissioner Myers made the motion to allow the seasonal maintenance employee, Matt Smiley, to continue employment until the end of October. Commissioner Palewski seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

Fire Report: Fire Chief Don Stallions reported that things were going well. EVO, emergency vehicle operation, training will be taking place very soon. Mayor Talley asked about the status of the ambulance station. Chief Stallions indicated that his primary contact had been on vacation but should be in touch with him sometime the following week.

Recreation: Commissioner Suttles announced the theme for the 2015 Christmas parade, "A Very Beary Christmas".

Unfinished Business

Old Highway 73: Mayor Talley read bids that had been received and kept in the City Recorder's office safe until the meeting. The two bids for repair were as follows: Charles Ingle Construction - \$2,900.00, and East Tennessee Pavement Services - \$7,559.00. Discussion ensued concerning Blount County Highway Department's proposal of \$50,068 for relocation of the road. Their offer was to be done on a 'cost-only' basis and include scrap asphalt removal. At discussion's end, Commissioner Suttles made a motion to allow Blount County Highway Department to relocate the road. Commissioner Palewski seconded. The motion passed with three yea votes, those being Mayor Talley and Commissioners Suttles and Palewski. Vice-Mayor Headrick voted nay, and Commissioner Myers abstained. Audience member Stephen Karp asked about the road being shut down during the relocation. He was told that the road would be closed completely during construction, but that it should be a quick project and the road would be kept open as much as possible. Mayor Talley made a motion to appropriate funds as needed for the project to be utilized from the City of Townsend State Street Aid

Fund. . Commissioner Palewski seconded. The motion passed with three yea votes, those being Mayor Talley and Commissioners Suttles and Palewski. Vice-Mayor Headrick voted nay, and Commissioner Myers abstained.

Townsend City Hall Building Committee: Andy Morton went over the preliminary drawings for the Commissioners, showing the intended use for each space. A period of questions, answers, comments, and discussion took place, including, but not limited to: question as to how the new building would look from Highway 321, concern over lack of room for a city manager, the appeal of a new building that could possibly house the library and truly be for numerous community uses. Rick Russell then gave a recap of the meeting attended by representatives from the Rural Development Agency on 08/27/15, reiterating that there was no grant money available through their support, just plenty of loan money. He gave rough cost figures based on 11,300 square feet, based on \$130/sq. ft. with a 15% contingency yielding a total price of about \$1.87 million. Russell indicated that \$300,000 of Community Development Block Grant would probably be available by fall of 2017 for usage on the fire hall. Mayor Talley asked what kind of timeline the City of Townsend would be looking at for this project. Mr. Russell answered that refinement of the drawings must occur, and soil testing may be done now. He also talked of how the project could be done in phases, such as the City Hall building first and the fire hall later.

City of Townsend Employee Insurance: Recorder Williamson recapped the details of the employee insurance meeting held September 29, 2015, led by the City of Townsend's insurance agent of record, Gary Lawson. The three main points were: 1) Lawson's suggestion that the City of Townsend begin charging a minimal fee of employees to be in compliance with insurance industry guidelines, thus allowing employees the choice of opting out of coverage under the City of Townsend's sanctioned plan, 2) the City of Townsend offer two plans, or offer to pay coverage for another plan of those employees that opt out of the City's plan, and 3) if offer additional benefits if the budget allows. After discussion, Mayor Talley made a motion for the City of Townsend to start charging \$1.00 per pay period for those employees who receive insurance coverage on the insurance plan provided by the City of Townsend, and further, that the City of Townsend pay coverage for another plan of those employees that opt out of the City's plan and that those costs be reviewed annually. Commissioner Myers seconded and the motion passed with four yea votes.

Review of City of Townsend logo submissions – Commissioner Myers made a motion to allow Recorder Williamson to spend up to \$350 to advertise the contest in order to solicit more submissions. Vice-Mayor Headrick seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes

New Business

OTHER BUSINESS:

There being no further business, Mayor Talley made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 P.M. Commissioner Myers seconded and the motion passed with five yea votes.

City Recorder

Approved: _____ date _____
Title: _____