

City of Townsend
Commission Meeting Minutes
For
January 19, 2016

Attendance: Those present for the meeting were Mayor Michael Talley, Commissioner Ron Palewski, Commissioner Jackie Suttles, Commissioner Kenny Myers, Recorder Danny Williamson, Police Chief Ron Suttles, Sandy Headrick, Steve and Janice Fillmore, Mark Oldham, Janis Foreman, and Melissa Erickson of the Daily Times. Vice-Mayor Becky Headrick was absent.

Pledge: Mayor Michael Talley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.

Minutes: Commissioner Myers made a motion to approve the December 15, 2015 minutes. Commissioner Palewski seconded and the motion passed with four yea votes.

Finance Report: Recorder Williamson gave the finance report for the month of December, 2015. Commissioner Palewski made a motion to approve the report. Mayor Talley seconded the motion and the report was approved with four yea votes. Recorder Williamson then reported that the FY-2015 audit report had been received earlier that day. He stated the auditors had issued an unqualified opinion, meaning a clean audit was received by the City. He reminded the commissioners that they would need to vote to accept it. Mayor Talley asked that copies be emailed to all the commissioners for review, and that it be added to next month's agenda for vote.

Police Report: Chief Suttles reported that traffic had been fairly light. He stated that the Police Department had been undergoing the annual POST training, with three officers through the course already, and the last officer scheduled the last week of January. Chief Suttles then described the efforts of one local business that had installed new and improved security systems, and how those efforts were already producing results.

Maintenance: Chief Suttles reported that most all necessary work was complete on the recently seized dump truck in preparation to use it for snow removal. Ms. Sandy Headrick asked Chief Suttles about the "City of Townsend City Limits" sign, confirming that it would be put back in place once construction in that area was completed. Chief Suttles indicated that was the plan. Ms. Headrick then presented photos of the Kiwanis sign that is to be placed on the city limits signs.

Fire Report: No representative was present

Recreation: Nothing to report this month.

Unfinished Business

Sevier County (SCEC) In-Lieu of Property Tax Contract – Recorder Williamson included in the agenda packets a spreadsheet received from Sevier County Electric that illustrated why the contract amount was reduced from last year. In summary, the payment is based on SCEC's percent of capital located within a municipality. Commissioner Myers made a motion to accept the contract. Commissioner Suttles seconded, and the motion passed with four yea votes.

Public Hearing for Ordinances: Mayor Talley opened the forum for public hearing at 7:32 PM. He then gave background on the ordinances, and read the ordinance headings. With no input or questions from the public, the public hearing was closed at 7:36 PM.

Stormwater Ordinance from Planning Commission #283-16-1P - This being the first reading, Commissioner Myers made a motion to pass the ordinance. Commissioner Palewski seconded and the motion passed with four yea votes.

Landscaping Ordinance from Planning Commission #284-16-1P - This being the first reading, Mayor Talley made a motion to pass the ordinance. Commissioner Myers seconded and the motion passed with four yea votes.

Fair Housing requirements for Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) recipients #285-16-1C - This being the first reading, Commissioner Myers made a motion to pass the ordinance. Commissioner Suttles seconded and the motion passed with four yea votes.

New Business

Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council (GSMRC) request – Mayor Talley reported that he was asked by GSMRC if the City of Townsend could commit up to \$5,000 toward a feasibility study of funding sources for the greenway trail linking Knoxville to the Great Smoky Mountains. Janice Fillmore also helped explain the request, the plans for the trail, and told of others that had committed funds for the study. Commissioner Myers questioned why Townsend was being asked to contribute as much as cities that are much larger. Upon further explanation and assurance that Townsend would receive adequate representation, Mayor Talley made a motion for the City of Townsend to appropriate \$5,000.00 toward the funding feasibility study as outlined by GSMRC. Commissioner Myers seconded, and the motion passed with three yea votes, the dissenting vote being Commissioner Suttles.

Townsend Together – Local business owners Mark Oldham and Janice Fillmore gave a fact sheet and proposal which is attached with these minutes. Basically, in their presentation, they offered to start a new group called Townsend Together, seeking no funding, just the endorsement of City Council, to act as a catalyst for tourism and event promotion. Ms. Sandy Headrick questioned the need for another group when the Townsend-Walland Business Alliance (TWBA) was in place already. After further discussion, Mayor Talley made a motion to recognize Townsend Together, and allow the group to give periodic reports at City Council meetings. Commissioner Myers seconded, and the motion passed with four yea votes,

OTHER BUSINESS:

Court Fees- Recorder Williamson expressed the request to consider minor adjustment of court fees so that more charges came to an even amount. Commissioners recommended that he prepare a spreadsheet on this and present it at the next Council meeting or municipal code workshop.

There being no further business, Mayor Talley made a motion to adjourn at 8:43 P.M. Commissioner Myers seconded and the motion passed with four yea votes.

City Recorder

Approved: _____
Title: _____
date

1/19/16

Mark Oldham and Janice Filmore conversation and Proposal to the Townsend City Council Facts:

1. There is not a local concerted effort for promoting Townsend as a destination for events, concerts, visitors, etc.
2. The Partnership is a fabulous partner, but their focus is broader than Townsend.
3. At most Partnership funding meetings, there are representatives from Alcoa, and Maryville representing their interests, but there is not anyone from Townsend representing the interests of Townsend.
4. The TVBA does not focus on tourism singularly, however the Snowdown effort is commendable. The TWBA is more of a Chamber of Commerce for Townsend and Walland
5. The City does not have the financial resources to fund any serious effort at bringing in more events to Townsend. But we feel that the City would like to do something.

Therefore, the Proposal:

1. Is to start a new group named **Townsend Together**
2. We seek no funding. The group will self-fund, initially - by Janice Filmore and Mark Oldham. A small group/board of "tourism focused" people will be formed initially.
3. We seek the endorsement of the City Council to act as its "Tourism Arm". This can be taken away at any time, for any reason.
4. We propose that **Townsend Together** have no legal authority to sign or to obligate the city. **Townsend together** only seeks to "represent" the interests of promoting tourism to the city of Townsend, and to report back to the Council from time to time about developments and events. **Townsend Together** wishes to work with the Partnership to develop a better working relationship overall with the Partnership. The Partnership will recognize that Townsend is becoming more organized.
5. The mission of **Townsend Together** is to be the catalyst to bring more tourists, events, and concerts to Townsend.
6. A long-term goal of **Townsend Together** is to hire an Executive Director to be a full time advocate to bring more tourists, events, and concerts to Townsend in addition to the efforts of the Partnership.
7. **Townsend Together** will also advocate for a solution for a recurring funding source in an effort to bring more tourists, events, and concerts to Townsend.

