

COUNCIL MEETING

December 14, 2020

The Paragould City Council met in regular session on Monday, December 14, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Room of City Hall with Mayor Gaskill presiding.

The meeting was called to order with prayer led by Councilmember Farrell Gibson.

Those present were Josh Agee, Jeremy Biggs, Jackie Branch, Farrell Gibson, Charles Long, Mark Rowland, Susan Williams and Randy Aden.

City Attorney Allen Warmath and City Clerk Andrea Williams were present.

Councilmember Branch moved minutes from previous council meeting of November 23, 2020 be approved as transcribed; seconded by Councilmember Williams. All in favor.

REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES:

- Public Service - None
- Finance - Councilmember Rowland stated the committee has item number four on tonight’s agenda.
- Parks and Recreation - None
- Police - None
- Public Health and Ordinances - None
- Fire - None
- Sanitation - None
- Street/Cemetery - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM #1

A RESOLUTION TO TERMINATE AGREEMENT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Motion made that the ordinance be offered by Councilmember Agee; seconded by Councilmember Rowland.

Roll Call: Agee, yes; Biggs, yes; Branch, yes; Gibson, yes; Long, yes; Rowland, yes; Williams, yes; and Aden, yes.

This ordinance allows for the termination of an agreement that was signed pursuant to Ordinance 2009-03 that allowed for the rezoning of lands owned by Dickinson & Associates Real Estate from R-2 to R-1 subject to the restriction that no multi-family housing may be constructed on said lands other than such facilities constructed for nursing homes or assisted living purposes.

Keith White was present and addressed the council. Mr. White stated that he is wanting to build single family residences for 55 years of age and older with smaller yards, green spaces, a walking trail and dog park on this property.

Motion made that the resolution be adopted by Councilmember Agee; seconded by Councilmember Williams.

Roll Call: Agee, yes; Biggs, yes; Branch, yes; Gibson, yes; Long, yes; Rowland, yes; Williams, yes; and Aden, yes. Motion carried eight to zero. Resolution adopted. (Resolution No. 2020-35)

ITEM #2

A RESOLUTON AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK OF PARAGOULD, ARKANSAS TO ATTACH LIENS TO CERTAIN PROPERTIES LOCATED AT THE ADDRESSES SPECIFIED IN THIS RESOLUTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTING MONIES WHICH ARE OWED THE CITY OF PARAGOULD FOR ENFORCEMENT OF CHAPTER 18 OF THE CITY'S CODE OF ORDINANCES

Motion made that the resolution be offered by name, address, parcel and amount only by Councilmember Rowland; seconded by Councilmember Aden.

Roll Call: Agee, yes; Biggs, yes; Branch, yes; Gibson, yes; Long, yes; Rowland, yes; Williams, yes; and Aden, yes.

Code Enforcement Officer, J.D. Stephenson, provided the council with photos and documentation of the properties.

Motion made that the resolution be adopted by Councilmember Rowland; seconded by Councilmember Agee.

Roll Call: Agee, yes; Biggs, yes; Branch, yes; Gibson, yes; Long, yes; Rowland, yes; Williams, yes; and Aden, yes. Motion carried eight to zero. Resolution adopted. (Resolution No. 2020-36)

ITEM #3

REMOVAL OF FIXED ASSETS

City Clerk, Andrea Williams, presented the following list of times to the city council that will be deleted off of this year’s fixed assets list as required by state law.

Air107 Unit #163 89357 1990 Ford Crown Victoria Inoperable

Motion made to accept the deleted fixed asset as listed made by Councilmember Biggs; seconded by Councilmember Long.

Roll Call: Agee, yes; Biggs, yes; Branch, yes; Gibson, yes; Long, yes; Rowland, yes; Williams, yes; and Aden, yes. Motion carried eight to zero. Fixed asset removed.

ITEM #4

2021 BUDGET

Councilmember Rowland stated the finance committee met at 7:30 on December 3, 2020 to discuss the budget. Councilmember Rowland stated this budget contains a 2.5% raise for all employees, nine police cars, five police officers, three fire fighters, additional capital improvements/equipment in most departments and complete funding of the walking/hiking trail on Eight Mile Creek. Councilmember Rowland stated the committee recommends adopting the 2021 budget as presented.

**City of Paragould
2021 Budget**

	2021 Budget
<u>Revenues and Bank Balances:</u>	
<u>Revenues & Transfers In:</u>	
General Fund	16,721,938.95
Act 988 Emergency Vehicle Fund	67,400.00
ACEDP Grant #790-08905-15 Fund	-
Advertising and Promotion Fund	102,400.00
Airport Grant Fund	471,528.00

City Beautiful Fund	5,120.00
Court Automation Fund	40,000.00
Economic Development Fund	1,304,000.00
Landfill Account	700.00
Linwood Cemetery Trust Fund	9,000.00
Mission Outreach Grant #790-09042-19 Fund	218,500.00
Street Crimes Unit/Police Drug Fund	5,175.00
Street Fund	2,986,401.00
Subtotal	<u>21,932,162.95</u>
Available Bank Balances:	
General Fund	10,226,919.56
Act 988 Emergency Vehicle Fund	68,266.75
ACEDP Grant #790-08905-15 Fund	-
Advertising and Promotion Fund	129,668.13
Airport Grant Fund	1.00
City Beautiful Fund	12,851.67
Court Automation Fund	130,419.33
Economic Development Fund	669,057.20
Landfill Account	15,701.73
Linwood Cemetery Trust Fund	339,444.53
Mission Outreach Grant # Fund	0.01
Street Crimes Unit/Police Drug Fund	13,305.63
Street Fund	11,098,985.37
Subtotal	<u>22,704,620.91</u>
Total Estimated Revenues & Bank Balances	<u>44,636,783.86</u>

Appropriation- Expenditures & Transfers Out:

General Fund:	
Administration & Miscellaneous	1,553,628.09
Fire Department	3,095,078.01
District Court	172,112.10
Police Department	4,841,445.47
Police Department (Jail Expenditures)	21,000.00
Animal Control	127,944.70
Cemetery	85,310.77
Mosquito Control	166,875.00
Sanitation Department	2,043,422.94
Parks Department	1,899,513.32

Airport Department	761,334.85
Emergency 911 Department	1,142,242.93
Emergency Dispatch Center	-

Appropriation- Expenditures & Transfers Out (cont'd):

Transfer OUT	-
Subtotal- General Fund	<u>15,909,908.18</u>
Act 988 Emergency Vehicle Fund	130,000.00
ACEDP Grant #790-08905-15 Fund	-
Advertising and Promotion Fund	100,000.00
Airport Grant Fund	471,528.00
City Beautiful Fund	2,000.00
Court Automation Fund	46,000.00
Economic Development Fund	1,034,500.00
Landfill Account	-
Linwood Cemetery Trust Fund	4,200.00
Mission Outreach Grant #790-09042-19 Fund	218,500.00
Street Crimes Unit/Police Drug Fund	5,175.00
Street Fund	<u>5,015,474.84</u>
<u>Total Appropriations</u>	<u>22,937,286.02</u>

Unappropriated Funds:

General Fund	11,038,950.33
Act 988 Emergency Vehicle Fund	5,666.75
ACEDP Grant #790-08905-15 Fund	-
Advertising and Promotion Fund	132,068.13
Airport Grant Fund	1.00
City Beautiful Fund	15,971.67
Court Automation Fund	124,419.33
Economic Development Fund	938,557.20
Landfill Account	16,401.73
Linwood Cemetery Trust Fund	344,244.53
Mission Outreach Grant #790-09042-19 Fund	0.01
Street Crimes Unit/Police Drug Fund	13,305.63
Street Fund	<u>9,069,911.53</u>
<u>Total Unappropriated Funds</u>	<u>21,699,497.84</u>

Motion made to approve the 2021 budget made by Councilmember Branch; seconded by Councilmember Biggs.

Roll Call: Agee, yes; Biggs, yes; Branch, yes; Gibson, yes; Long, yes; Rowland, yes; Williams, yes; and Aden, yes. Motion carried eight to zero. Budget adopted.

ITEM #5

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

State of the City 2020 Paragould, Arkansas December 21, 2020

The City of Paragould has had good revenue this year. All of the departments are under budget this year. The Fire Department was under budget until the council passed the request of a Pierce Enforcer 75" Aerial Ladder. As always, the department heads work very well to keep the budget they create in place.

This year the new number one Fire Department was beginning in 2019 and finished this year and the department has moved in November of this year. The former number one Fire Department will be used by Public Works and the Police Department.

The 911 Dispatch has been working for an emergency system in case something will happen to the Dispatch. This to make sure if anything happens to the building, they will be able to dispatch with the emergency system they have created. We have approved a truck for them to be able to pull that emergency dispatch center. The 911 Dispatch was built new and now they dispatch the City, the entire County, and the Hospital.

Everyone is familiar with the COVID this year. The City of Paragould has continued to work. The Police and the Fire Department is protecting the citizens of Paragould as always. The Public Works department has continued to upgrade the City by picking up trash, having streets paved and cleaned and continuing taking care of dogs and the Linwood Cemetery. The Community Center was closed in the beginning and has been opened. All other parks are still closed but are available outside. The Airport still allows airplanes to land and use the office. The Airport got a new lawn mower this year to be able to take care of the entire Airport property.

In the last 23 years I would like to share with the citizens of Paragould about the things that have been completed. As I started, we were finishing all of the streets that we being paved in a 1995 temporary tax. The citizens later passed a temporary ½ cent sales tax for the Community Center and a permanent ½ cent sales tax to hire 10 police officers and 3 fire fighters and to allow us to keep everything we were building to keep all things upgraded. We began with widening the eight-mile creek to keep flooding from happening. The creek started out in the County all the way to another ditch east and it was widened all the way to the west side of Paragould. This is mowed every year to keep it in good shape.

Next that needed was a tornado warning in the City for people. If people are outside, they will hear the warning as a tornado was coming to Paragould. We built 12 of those to make sure the entire City will be in good shape.

The buildings that we built was for the Public Works, Fire Station and Police substation, the Community Center and 911 Dispatch Center. These were new buildings. The Fire Station had 3 buildings in the beginning and we built the first new one out by the Community Centers new location because there was not a Fire Station south and we have replaced the 3 stations and have moved them farther away from each one.

The Police Department got a substation built on the eastside of town and we have bought vehicles for every police officer so that they will be able to be all over town.

We built the new Community Center with new pools inside and out and softball. By building the new park we allowed the former one to be the Senior Citizens. We have over the years to upgrade all parks, Reynolds, Harmon, Labor, Rotary Softball, Bland/Threlkeld Baseball Complex, Woodside Glen, and upgraded buildings and for people to walk, kids to play outside and inside, and a new dog park. If you go to any of the parks you will see a lot of projects outside for all people to play, walk and even fishing.

I was told by the police chief, Dennis Hyde, when I first got elected, that we needed a 911 dispatch center. Dispatching started in 1988 also with Mayor Charlie Partlow, and was in the Police building. The former Sheriff, Dan Langston, came to me and wanted the 911 in the County. We waited 18 years and it was not built there and in 2017 was when we started building the 911 Dispatch Center in the City of Paragould. We built it a mile away from the train for the protection of the people.

I spoke about the streets that have been widened in areas and widened the streets where the schools are now so that traffic will be better. Along some of the streets we built new sidewalks starting on the east side and going down several streets on the west side. We began the first new sidewalks on East Court and East Lake Street. You can walk from Reynolds park all the way down town. After we built new sidewalks, we then upgraded all of the sidewalks that had been here for many years before the new ones were built. The sidewalks down town were different and were upgraded for all the businesses. We also built a sidewalk that people were walking to the Health Department and Human Service from the eight-mile creek on the east side of town. The Public Works will continue to keep the sidewalks in good condition.

The ARDOT is upgrading the State Highways here and you will see two new ones. One four lanes are going on 412 to WALNUT RIDGE and another four lanes is going on 49 to Utility Trailer. They also finished the complete bypass this year. The State Aid Street paved two streets for the city of Paragould, McDaniel road and Oak Dr. All of this will make traffic a little easier.

PLWC, our partner, are upgrading waste water treatment plants and in course rehabbing downtown. They will be installing a 1.5-megawatt solar power plant, that will go on line in July 2021. They will take over and serve water (by August 1, 2021) to the western Greene Water District territory customers (in the city limits) that the city purchased in 2018. When completed the project will include a new water tank, booster station and approximately 2 miles of water line. The water line will run from Academy Drive (under the current water tank) to

the new water tank west of CRC college. They will begin a \$20 million dollar upgrade to the sewer system. The projects include a \$5 million update to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Headworks, \$5 million dollar rework of the Purcell Road and Reynolds Park Road lift stations and approximately \$10 million dollars in rehabilitation work to the downtown sewer system to repair Inflow and Infiltration I/I problems. The projects will be completed in the 2021-2023-time frame. They will complete the cable system upgrade in 2021. They started 3 years ago converting our old cable system to a state-of-the-art Fiber to The Home (FTTH) system. When completed all residents of Paragould will have fiber to their home allowing them to receive up to Gig service if they so desire.

Once again, as I do every year, I would like to thank all of the employees and their commitment to take care of the City of Paragould. This is also a time to commend the City Council for being progressive and conservative for all things that have come to them. I appreciate their efforts to help take care of the City and maintain funding for all departments. We also have many volunteers that are also committed to this City. I have been very proud to work for, and support, the citizens of Paragould. It is an ongoing goal to maintain the City of Paragould during its growth.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mike Gaskill
Mayor-City of Paragould*

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Gaskill presented the following outgoing councilmember with a plaque to recognize their years of service to the City of Paragould: Councilmember Josh Agee, eight years; Councilmember Jackie Branch, 18 years; Councilmember Charles Long, 18 years; and Councilmember Farrell Gibson, 20 years.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the council, Councilmember Branch moved the meeting be adjourned; seconded by Councilmember Gibson. All in favor. Meeting adjourned 6:48 p.m.

Mike Gaskill, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrea Williams, City Clerk