

**REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NASHVILLE
COUNTY OF BERRIEN
JULY 25, 2022
6:00 P.M.**

INVOCATION: Reverend Clarence Luke

PLEDGE: Mayor Travis Brown

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Travis Brown

ROLL CALL: Members of the City Council present included Councilmen Antonio Carter, Eric Gaither, Rodrick Smith, Shane Willis and Councilwoman Amy Garner. Mayor Pro-Tem John Clayton was out of town attending the Police Chiefs Conference.

STAFF PRESENT: Rudolph Smith, Tina Ward, Winshell Preston, Police Major Ronald Knowles, Brandon Rice.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING(s):

July 11, 2022 Public Hearing FY22/23 Budget and July 11, 2022 Regular Meeting: Eric Gaither made a motion to adopt the minutes. Amy Garner seconded the motion, with motion carrying unanimously.

ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA:

Antonio Carter made a motion to adopt the formal agenda. Shane Willis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1- Relocation of Dog Pound: Rudolph Smith

Smith reported that he had been part of a conference call with Georgia Power Company on Friday, July 22, regarding the upcoming construction at their substation on West Washington Avenue which will necessitate the city to vacate its current dog pound. Georgia Power is willing to pay for two relocations of Nashville's dog pound. The first relocation would be to a temporary location, while the second would be the permanent location of the dog pound. Land acquisition was to be discussed during executive session.

2- FY2022/2023 Budget Ordinance: Rudolph Smith

Smith stated that the city had held all necessary meetings required before adopting the budget. He read rounded figures for the audience, stating the general fund would be \$3.8 million, gas fund \$1.5 million, water/sewer fund \$1.5 million, TSPLOST \$110,000, Downtown Development Authority \$150,000, hotel/motel \$16,000, and LMIG \$79,000. The gas fund includes a contingency of \$144,000. Motion to approve was made by Eric Gaither. Rodrick Smith seconded the motion. Budget was approved unanimously.

3- Intergovernmental Agreement between Berrien County Tax Commissioner and the City of Nashville: Rudolph Smith

Smith presented for ratification the intergovernmental agreement whereby city taxes will be collected by the Berrien County Tax Commissioner's office effective with taxes due for 2022. The Tax Commissioner has already signed the agreement.

4- Beer application of Shakarabhai K. Patel for Aaron and OM LLC located at 1001 Dogwood Drive: Rudolph Smith

Smith presented the Council with the application for an existing business having a change of name. Eric Gaither made the motion to approve with 2nd from Antonio Carter. Motion carried unanimously.

5- Removal and replenishment of the trees and vegetation around City Hall: Rudolph Smith

Smith reported that dead, dying, and diseased trees and vegetation had been removed by city employees from the City Hall lot. A quote for \$1,499 had been received from the Cottage Oak Nursery for replacement. Cottage Oak provided computer generated images of various sections of the lot with their proposal and suggested new plants. If approved by council, Cottage Oak would complete the project after the repainting of City Hall has been finished and when the chance of heat stress on the plants has been lessened.

Antonio Carter made a motion to proceed with the project. Rodrick Smith gave the second. Motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Report:

Rudolph Smith reported the following:

- Year-end projections show that most departments have been able to stay within budget.
- The four municipalities in Berrien County held a LOST negotiations meeting on Friday, July 22. Smith was appointed by the municipalities to be their spokesman in their negotiations with the county commission.
- Smith met with members of the Nashville Historic Preservation Commission on Thursday, July 21. The NHPC selected Jessica Willis as their chairman. Smith stated the NHPC still needed to elect a co-chairman who could act in the event of Willis' absence.
- A candidate for the Main Street Director position had been interviewed July 25. Five employment positions are currently open, but no decision has been made on hiring.
- A grant application through USDA for two police cars needs the mayor's signature before the process continues. Once approved it should take approximately three months before the vehicles arrive.
- Meeting protocols for the City Council need to be formalized in writing. Smith can offer advice on best practices, but the actual writing must come from the Council itself.
- In order to keep an accurate count of the number of employment applications coming into the various city departments, Smith stated they need to be centralized through the HR Department. Smith said he would meet with all department heads to explain the change if approved by council. Eric Gaither made a motion for this change to be made immediately. Shane Willis offered the second, and motion carried unanimously.
- The cost of repairing the restroom at the softball field on the Adel Highway outweighs the cost of building a new cinder block building. Antonio Carter made a motion for the

city to seek bids for the construction. Amy Garner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney Report:

None. City attorney not present – out of town with prior commitment.

Department Head's Report:

Winshell Preston reported on behalf of Nashville Main Street that preparations for the Harvest Festival continue and volunteers are needed. Moody Air Force Base families are asking for another event with the Azalea Sprinter train similar to the one held this spring. Main Street is working with NHPC on a downtown cleanup campaign. The Farmer's Market will be the site of a Back to School Bash on August 6.

Major Ronald Knowles of the Nashville Police Department reported that the Faith in Blue event will be held later in the year.

Public Comments:

Aubrey Harper of the Boy Scouts requested and was given permission by the Council to construct benches at Beetree Park as a Scout project. The benches can hold three adults each and are to be made of pressurized wood and staples capable of handling outdoor conditions. The number of benches built will depend on the amount of funds Harper is able to raise.

Barbara May expressed displeasure with the City Marshal being allowed to carry a firearm and repeated her comments from the June 13 meeting regarding the Nashville Police Department. May also questioned why no one had been hired yet for the five open positions and stated she would be willing to volunteer to assist Nashville Main Street. May stated the city does nothing for senior citizens and said Main Street budget should be increased for the purpose of serving senior citizens. May took offense at comments at recent meetings about allowing senior citizens to fish the pond at Tygart Park and criticized the city for the liability it would be taking on. Various city officials addressed each concern as they were presented.

Keith Stone invited mayor and council to participate in historic preservation training which will offered virtually by the state on September 13 – 19.

Wayne May offered appreciation for the job Rudolph Smith has done with the city's finances and asked the audience to give Smith a round of applause.

Julie Griffin asked for assistance with an open records request she had filed with the Nashville Police Department at the beginning of June. Griffin stated she has been waiting for two months for video of an incident involving her father, James L. Griffin, that had occurred at the NPD. Julie Griffin stated she was not casting blame on anyone and only wanted to see the video. Griffin said she had been in contact with both Police Chief Chuck Edwards and Major Ronald Knowles but had still not received the requested video. Council asked Rudolph Smith to meet with Griffin in regards to the situation.

Clarence Luke asked for direction on the procedures to follow in order to use local parks or empty city lots for a monthly outdoors church service as part of Battle Beyond the Doors. Rudolph Smith informed Luke that a hold harmless agreement form would be needed prior to each event. A specific starting date for the services has not been established as of this time.

Council Comments:

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 7:20 PM Antonio made a motion to go into executive session. Eric Gaither seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Council resumed regular session at 9:27 PM.

REGULAR SESSION RESUMES:

When regular session resumed, two motions were made.

Eric Gaither made a motion to move forward with interviews with candidates for the City Manager position. Antonio Carter seconded, with motion carrying unanimously.

Antonio Carter made a motion for the City Manager to contact the owner of property discussed as a possible new location for the city's dog pound and to begin the process of appraisal and assessing potential. Shane Willis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Antonio Carter made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. Shane Willis made the second, with motion carrying unanimously.

July 25, 2022.

Mayor Travis Brown

Councilman John Clayton

Councilman Eric Gaither

Councilman Rodrick Smith

Councilman Antonio Carter

Councilwoman Amy Garner

Councilman Shane Willis

ATTEST:

Tina Ward, City Clerk