

CITY OF TARRANT
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 5, 2024
TARRANT CITY HALL

The City Council of the City of Tarrant, Alabama, met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday February 5, 2024, at 7:00 PM at City Hall.

Mayor Wayman A. Newton called the regular scheduled meeting to order at 8:08 PM following the council work session that began at 6:00PM to discuss items on the agenda and other matters.

Tarrant City Fire Chief Patrick Bennett lead those in attendance in the invocation. Acting Police Chief, Lieutenant Hill lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Newton asked for a roll call. The following officials were present during the roll call:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Catherine "Cathy" Anderson
Mayor Wayman A. Newton
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

A quorum was determined to be present at the meeting.

The minutes from the January 3, 2024 regularly scheduled council meeting were presented for review and approval. After review, Councilor Threadford moved to approve the minutes for the January 3, 2024 meeting. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Catherine "Cathy" Anderson
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being one (1) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the minutes was adopted, and the minutes for January 3, 2024, council meeting were approved.

Next, the Mayor extended communications from the City of Tarrant.

First, the Mayor reminded all in attendance that February is Black History Month and that in partnership with the Birmingham Civil Rights Activist Committee will be a presenting in recognition of the Children's Crusade: When the Youth Marched for Justice. The presentation will be a conversation with foot soldiers on February, 24 at 11am at the Tarrant City Public Library. The event will be open to the public.

Updates on Public Works Department include two Loaders that are down leaving the Department with only one Loader to work the entire city. Public Works started working the allies in Districts 1 through 4, more particularly cutting the brush back, working on the street signs and focusing on the storm water drainages. In addition, the demolition crew has demolished four emergency demolition homes; 1409 Ford Ave., 1150 Hall St., 1920 Hoke Ave., and 1341 Park Ave. There

will be one more demolition left on the emergency list that is 1321 Prosch Ave. which is scheduled for the upcoming Thursday. Currently, there are over 90 more identified properties within the City of Tarrant that are in need of demolition. Paper work is being currently being filled for the said properties. About 3 more properties will be up in the upcoming Council meetings.

In regards to the Police Department update there are five new officers that have been hired since October 2023. Currently, one candidate is pending upon review outcome. Pending the review outcome of the one candidate, then there will be four more vacant police officer positions for the City of Tarrant. Currently on Friday there are four interviews. A list request will continue to come from the Personnel Board until all the vacancies are filled. The goal is to be fully staffed at the City of Tarrant Police Department by the end of summer 2024 or spring 2024.

Councilor Freeman expressed concern on a possible future demolition regarding a City of Tarrant residents property, Ms. Ramsey who lives on Lane Avenue. Councilor Freeman stated that Ms. Ramsey received a letter of demolition.

Next, Councilor Threadford provided a thank you for a resident who appreciated the demolition of the house on Ford Avenue.

Councilor Threadford also acknowledged an individual in her constituency who is requesting possible public safety guard railings to prevent the public from damaging and trespassing into private property. More specifically, on the intersection on East Lake and Woodrow. Previously, a private garage was damaged due to the lack of guard railings.

Councilor Threadford also reminded the Mayor that trash needs to be removed from Damon Street.

Councilor Threadford will also be meeting with the Public Safety Committee starting in March. Meetings will be once a quarter. After the Resolution on the Neighborhood Watch is passed the Councilor would like the Police Chief, Crime Commission, Councilor Freeman and anyone who is interested in being part of the Neighborhood Watch to be present at the Public Safety Committee meetings. A date of the meeting will be provided after the Resolution is passed.

This ended communications from the Mayors Office.

No Committee Reports were made.

The Council next considered old business.

Councilor Freeman introduced and read Resolution No. 9100, A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Neighborhood Watch Signs for the Neighborhood Watch Program Established within Tarrant. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9100 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

The Council next considered items for new business.

Councilor Bryant requested to suspend the agenda rules to acknowledge Ordinance No. 1158, Ordinance 1159 and Ordinance 1160 for meeting consideration. Councilor Bryant moved to adopt the motion to suspend the rules for Ordinance No. 1158, Ordinance 1159 and Ordinance 1160. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to suspend the rules to acknowledge Ordinance No. 1158, Ordinance 1159 and Ordinance 1160 was agreed to, and the motion was adopted.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Ordinance 1158, An Ordinance Declaring Certain Real Property Located Within the City Limits of the City of Tarrant as Not Needed for Public or Municipal Purposes and Declaring the Property Surplus and Authorizing its Disposal Through Conveyance to the Vulcan Train Foundation a 501 (c) (3), non-profit corporation. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Mayor Wayman A. Newton
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

None

The yeas being six (6) and the nays being zero (0) with zero (0) member not voting, the motion to adopt Ordinance 1158 was agreed to, and the Ordinance was approved.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Ordinance 1159, An Ordinance to Alter, Rearrange, and Extend the Corporate Limits of the City of Tarrant 2600 Pinson Valley Parkway, Birmingham, AL 35217. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson

Mayor Wayman A. Newton
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

None

The yeas being six (6) and the nays being zero (0) with zero (0) member not voting, the motion to adopt Ordinance 1159 was agreed to, and the Ordinance was approved.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Ordinance 1160, An Ordinance to Alter, Rearrange, and Extend the Corporate Limits of the City of Tarrant 2660 Pinson Valley Parkway, Birmingham, AL 35217. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Mayor Wayman A. Newton
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

None

The yeas being six (6) and the nays being zero (0) with zero (0) member not voting, the motion to adopt Ordinance 1160 was agreed to, and the Ordinance was approved.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9105, A Resolution Authorizing the Speaking Order of the City of Tarrant Regularly Scheduled Meetings. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9105 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Anderson introduced and read Resolution No. 9106, A Resolution Authorizing Repairs to Public Works Equipment. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9106 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9107, A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Engage Vendors Associated with Hosting the City of Tarrant’s 2024 Easter Egg Hunt. Councilor Bryant corrected the Resolution to add year 2024 rather than year 2025. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9107 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9108, A Resolution to Establish an Annual Subscription to Products Offered by Flock Safety to Institute Cameras with Audio Detection. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9108 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9109, A Resolution Authorizing the Acquisition of a JBC Backhoe for Public Works Department. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9109 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9110, A Resolution Authorizing and Approving an Investigation of Classification Police Chief I Within the City of Tarrant Police Department Effective Immediately. There was great discussion on the Resolution and readiness by Councilor Bryant. The Council concluded an amendment to Resolution 9110 by including a the City Attorney to engage a third party to investigate all of the allegations made concerning the Chief of Police to section 2. The Mayor asked if there was anything on readiness. Councilor Bryant responded to readiness by requesting the deletion of the phrase after administrative leave detailing the type of evidence on the Resolution. Councilor Freeman seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote on readiness to Resolution 9110.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9110 as amended to include the authorization of the City Attorney to engage a third party to investigate and for the phrase detailing the type of evidence and specific accusations to be removed. The motion on Readiness was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Next Mayor Newton called for a vote on Resolution No. 9110 to approve as amended. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9110 as amended was agreed to and the resolution was approved and amended.

Councilor Bryant requested to suspend the rules to add Resolution No. 9111, Resolution No. 9112, Resolution No. 9113 and Resolution No. 9114 to the agenda. Councilor Freeman seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to suspend the rules to add Resolution No. 9111, Resolution No. 9112, Resolution No. 9113 and Resolution 9114 was agreed to, and the motion was adopted.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9111, A Resolution to Hire Part-Time Detectives to Properly Close Uninvestigated Crimes. There was readiness and discussion on the hiring process and hiring policies surrounding Police Officers for the City of Tarrant. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9111 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9112, A Resolution reserving the City Council the management and control of the real property of the City of Tarrant. There was discussion and debate on the policies and procedures of the City of Tarrant employees and various laws. Councilor Freeman seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

Not voting:

None

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being one (1) with zero (0) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9112 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9113, A Resolution to Not Sustain Mayor Wayman Newtons Personnel Action Regarding Police Chief Wendell Major. A correction by the City Clerk was made for the minutes due to the verbal error referred to as Resolution No. 1114 by Councilor Bryant rather than Resolution No. 9113. There was discussion and debate on the policies and procedures of City employees. Councilor Freeman seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote. Councilor Anderson passed the first round and then voted yea.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9113 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9114, A Resolution to Not Sustain Mayor Wayman Newtons Personnel Action Regarding Detective Cynthia Morrow. A correction by the City Clerk was made for the minutes due to the verbal error referred to as Resolution No. 1115 by

Councilor Bryant rather than Resolution No. 9114. Councilor Matthews asked attorney Scott Morro of Morrow Law Center to the podium to speak on behalf of Detective Morro. There was discussion and debate on the policies and procedures of City employees. Councilor Freeman seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 9114 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Next, the Mayor and Council moved to presentations of petitions and other communications.

There were no presentations of petitions and other communications.

Next, the City Council reviewed the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant and Tarrant Electric Department for February 5, 2024. Councilor Threadford moved to approve the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant and Tarrant Electric Department for February 5, 2024. Councilor Freeman seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Cathy Anderson
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Mathews

Nays:

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being five (5) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant and Tarrant Electric Department for February 5, 2024 was agreed to, and the vouchers and expenses were approved.

Next, the City Council heard from members of the public who had signed up to speak prior to the meeting.

First, Chuck Winborn was called for public speaking. Mr. Winborn asked City Attorney about video controversy. City Attorney acknowledged Mr. Winborn by confirming the video access was denied and that detailed information would be provided on its denial. Mr. Winborn also requested information on Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) complaints. Mr. Winborn called the Police Chief to the podium and asked him various question regarding his background as a police officer.

Second, Chris Beck verbally provided the Police Chief positive character reference.

Third, Kevin Slaughter played cell phone video verbal recording for public to hear. Mr. Slaughter explained what was said in the video. Accusations were made to the Mayor by Mr. Slaughter. Mr. Slaughter outlined his intentions on his future actions regarding the accusations.

Fourth, the Mayor called Jennifer Crawford. Jennifer Crawford was absent.

Fifth, the Mayor called Sandra Mathews. Sandra Mathews was absent.

Sixth, Winifred Dill expressed ethics violations regarding past comments. The Mayor apologized for past comments.

This concluded public comments.

There being no further business to be brought before the council the meeting was adjourned. A voice vote was taken with all present being in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Laverne Knight
City Clerk February 19, 2024
City of Tarrant Council Meeting, Alabama

READ AND APPROVED this the 19th day of February, 2024.

The City of Tarrant, Alabama

APPROVED: _____
WAYMAN NEWTON, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Dr. Laverne Knight