

CITY OF TARRANT
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 3, 2025
TARRANT CITY HALL

The City Council of the City of Tarrant, Alabama, met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday March 3, 2025, at 7:00 PM at City Hall.

Mayor Newton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM immediately following the council work session that began at 6:00PM to discuss items on the agenda and other matters.

Reverend Webb lead those in attendance in the invocation. Fire Chief Patrick Bennett, lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Next, 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
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews
Mayor Wayman A. Newton

Absent:

none

A quorum was determined to be present at the meeting.

The minutes from February 17, 2025 regularly scheduled council meeting were presented for review and approval. For the record, Councilor Freeman asked the City Clerk if the City of Tarrant extra seal was returned. The City Clerk provided a no answer. Councilor Freeman also asked the Mayor why she cannot go into the City of Tarrant information page with the Mayor responding that he did not know why. The Mayor also wanted it to go on record that his office ordered a City of Tarrant seal after the City Clerk refused to provide him the seal after he asked for it. The City Clerk interceded and reminded the Mayor of the oath he had taken and directed the Mayor to stop the false accusations. Councilor Freeman asked the City Clerk why she cannot produce the public records request sent over six weeks. The Clerk affirmed that she cannot have any access to financial records as per the Mayors direct order. For the record, Councilor Freeman asked the Mayor why he can have access to financial information that she's been entitled to for the past few years. Again, the Mayor stated he could not have the City of Tarrant Seal because the Clerk refused him. The Clerk again referenced honesty, manipulation of videos and reminded the Mayor that the City of Tarrant Ordinances are Law in which an extra seal cannot be ordered. Councilor Threadford moved to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2025. 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 Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

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 approve the minutes for February 17, 2025 council meeting were approved.

The Mayor moved on to communications by announcing that on Friday March 7, 2025 from 10:00am to 3:00 pm at City Hall there will be a power bill assistance clinic in conjunction between the Mayors Office and the Community Action Agency of Northeast Alabama. Qualifications include low income, sixty or over, disability. Applicants will need picture identification cards, social security cards, current electric bills, pay stubs, lease agreements or deeds and statement of earnings. Applications process will take 15 to 20 minutes. The Mayor provided his office number with the assistance information at extension 1024. The Mayor asked all those in attendance to verbally provide information to all City of Tarrant residents who might fit the said criteria.

The Mayors Office also in conjunction with Dr. Daniel Cason will be hosting an Easter Egg event to be held on Sunday, April 13, 2025 from 11:00am to 2:00pm at the Tarrant Recreation Center. Again, the Mayor provided the City of Tarrant City Hall number 205.849.2800 with the assistant extension number at 1024. Easter egg baskets, groceries, clothing and haircuts will be some of the offered services and items provided. The first 200 kids will receive an Easter Egg basket. The Mayor asked the public to bring their children and that this event is the week before the official Easter Sunday.

The Mayor also announced that the *Rushing* Springs Baptist Church will have their annual clean up day from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, Saturday March 8, 2025. The Mayor reminded *all those in attendance* of the historical African American cemetery located in District 5. The cemetery is with the Russian Springs Baptist Church that goes back to the 1830's, and that the last individual buried in the cemetery was in 1963. The 2024 clean up project made the cemetery accessible and the cemetery now holds an annual cemetery to ensure the continued access. The Church is located at 550 Rushing Springs Rd., Birmingham, Alabama. The Mayor reminded all those in attendance to bring their own tools including rakes, gloves, shovels, etc. No small children will be allowed. The annual maintenance of the cemetery will aid in the perseverance of African American history and the City of Tarrant history.

Councilor Threadford also provided an invitation for the City of Tarrant annual Easter Egg hunt to be held on Saturday, April 5, 2025 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at the Tarrant Athletic Complex. Food, games and golden eggs will be some of the surprises.

There were no committee reports.

The Mayor and Council moved on to Old Business.

Mayor Wayman Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9248. A Resolution Affirming the Termination of the Employment of Jason Rickels from the Office of Fire Chief for the City of Tarrant. For the interest of time and for personal prediction of no seconder; however, Councilor Bryant provided a second for the Resolution. Councilor Bryant provided history on hiring, firing and outcome recommendations of the Jefferson County Personnel Board. Councilor Bryant stated there was not reason enough to terminate Fire Chief Jason Rickels. Councilor Bryant also reminded the Mayor of the current financial relationship between the City of Tarrant and the Fire Chief. Councilor Bryant withdrew his motion to second. Mayor Newton asked each Council member for another second. There was no seconder. Mayor Newton asked the City Clerk to add the Resolution No. 9248 to the next City Council regular scheduled meeting.

Mayor Newton introduced Resolution No. 9263. A Resolution Approving of and Adopting the City of Tarrant Employee Handbook. Councilor Bryant moved to approve Resolution No. 9263. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Catherine "Cathy" Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

Councilor Tracie B. Threadford

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0), with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9263 was agreed and the Resolution was approved

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Ordinance 1155, An Ordinance Repealing Ordinance No. 1155 and Adopting Replacement Ordinance No. 1155-A Establishing Requirements for the Management and Retention of Security Surveillance Information and Video. The second reading was read and addressed. Councilor Bryant moved to adopt Ordinance 1155. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

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

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 approve Ordinance 1155 was agreed and the Ordinance was approved.

The Mayor and Council moved on to New Business

Mayor Newton did not introduce and read Resolution No. 9264. A Resolution Removing Chief Wendell Major from the Office of Chief of Police for the City of Tarrant. The Mayor asked the City Clerk to ensure the Resolution is added to the next City Council meeting, and instead, the Mayor introduced an issue via letter regarding the Birmingham Humane Society and compared it to a City of Tarrant Police Chief and Police Department occurrence in July 2023. The Mayor read a letter from the Birmingham Human Society regarding a feline. The letter, on behalf of the Animal Care and Control Division of the Birmingham Humane Society recommended an independent investigation regarding a feline that lost its life on or about Sunday, February 2, 2025. According to an autopsy the feline died of starvation and dehydration. The Mayor recommended an independent investigation and reminded the Council of a previous dog that was saved. The Mayor reminded that the Council is the appointing authority over the Chief of Police and recommended the City hire an independent investigator. Councilor Bryant reminded all those in attendance that the City Attorneys need input and that there are City of Tarrant Animal Ordinances. The Chief of Police explained the current laws regarding animals. There was continued discussion around the incident described in the letter read by the Mayor. The Mayor stated the CEO will be in attendance at the next meeting.

Councilor Threadford introduced and read Resolution No. 9265. A Resolution Recognizing March 2025 as National Women's History Month. There was an applause for all the women throughout the Nation. Councilor Freeman moved to approve Resolution No. 9265. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

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

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 approve Resolution No. 9265 was agreed and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9266. A Resolution Approving of and Granting a Right of Way Easement from the City of Tarrant to Jefferson County and Authorizing the Execution of a Right of Way Deed. Mayor Newton moved to approve Resolution No. 9266. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

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

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 approve Resolution No. 9266 was agreed and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced Resolution No. 9267. A Resolution Approving a Repair Estimate for a 2020 Chevrolet Tahoe Police 4 Door Wagon (Unit 13). There was discussion on the repair estimate and insurance policy. It was recommended that the Resolution be tabled until the repair estimate and insurance policy is affirmed. Mayor Newton moved to table Resolution No. 9267. 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 Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

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 table Resolution No. 9267 was agreed and the Resolution was tabled.

Next, Councilor Bryant requested to suspend the rules in order to add Resolution No. 9268 and Resolution No. 9269 to the Agenda. Councilor Bryant moved to make a motion to suspend the rules for the said request. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

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

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 for Resolution No. 9268 and Resolution No. 9269 was agreed and rules were suspended.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9268 and Resolution No. 9269. Resolution No. 9268, A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Dell Desktops for the City of Tarrant City Hall, and Resolution No. 9269, A Resolution Ordering the Demolition of Building or Structure Located at 1212 Wharton Ave., Birmingham, Alabama 35217, Parcel ID 23 00 05 3 012 004.000. Mayor Newton addressed the public hearing for Resolution No. 9269 by publicly reading the address and asking if anyone was present to speak on behalf of the property. No one present spoke on the said property. Upon closing the public hearing for the property, Councilor Bryant moved to approve Resolution No. 9268 and Resolution No. 9269. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant

Councilor Tracie B. Threadford

Councilor Catherine "Cathy" Anderson

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

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 approve Resolution No. 9268 and Resolution No. 9269 was agreed and the Resolutions were approved.

Next, the City Council reviewed the vouchers and expenses for City of Tarrant, City Hall week ending March 3, 2025. Councilor Threadford moved to approve the vouchers for week ending March 3, 2025. Councilor Bryant 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:

None

Abstain:

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4), the nays being zero (0) and the abstains being one (1), with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the vouchers and expenses for week ending March 3, 2024 were agreed and the vouchers and expenses were approved.

Next, the City Council moved on to Public Comments.

First, Chuck Winborn. Chuck Winborn thanked Building Inspector David Casian, Chirs Muir, the Police Department and Chris Smoke for their duties with the City of Tarrant. Mr. Winborn updated the Council as a Crime Commission member by informing them of the hiring of two police

officers. Mr. Winborn also addressed a concerning social media post, and other recent criminal activities. Councilor Threadford asked the Chief of Police to provide accurate details regarding a social media post made by the Tarrant Tatter.

Second, Ms. Temple distributed handouts regarding a detailed history on her power bill for the past year. Ms. Temple elaborated on the conflict of square foot per electricity of her home and the watts used. Ms. Temple noted that she has been keeping accurate records on her electricity bill for the past seven years. A comparison of the similar trends, irregular trends and power surges was provided to the Council. Councilor Threadford assured Ms. Temple that the handouts will be forwarded to the Tarrant Electric Board.

Third, Reverend Webb. Reverend Webb asked for an update on the electric surplus. Councilor Threadford addressed Reverend Webb by explaining that the Council no longer holds the Electric portfolio and that it is now administered by an independent Electric Board. Reverend Webb also expressed concerns on past City of Tarrant Council issues.

After the public comments ended Mayor Newton moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. There was a verbal vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Laverne Knight
City Clerk March 17, 2025
City of Tarrant Council Meeting, Alabama

READ AND APPROVED this 17th day of March 2025



The City of Tarrant, Alabama

APPROVED: _____
WAYMAN NEWTON, MAYOR

ATTEST:



Dr. Laverne Knight