

CITY OF TARRANT
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 17, 2025
TARRANT CITY HALL

The City Council of the City of Tarrant, Alabama, met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday March 17, 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.

Fire Chief Patrick Bennett lead those in attendance in the invocation. Chief Fields, 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 March 3, 2025 regularly scheduled council meeting were presented for review and approval. Councilor Bryant asked the term *Russian* on page 2 be corrected to *Rushing*. After review, Councilor Threadford moved to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2025 with the amendment of replacing *Russian* to *Rushing* on page 2. 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 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 March 3, 2025 council meeting were approved with the said amendment.

The Mayor announced that the Rushing Springs Baptist Church clean up day event held from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, on Saturday March 8, 2025 was a successful event. The Mayor thanked all citizens for attending the event that was filled with incredible and humbling historical stories.

The Mayor also reminded all those in attendance that on Sunday, April 13, 2025 from 11:00am to 2:00pm at the Tarrant Recreation Center there will be fun filled pre-Easter event. 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. Two hundred easter baskets will be distributed.

On March 28, 2025 there will be the Mayor spring fling event. The week of spring break. Location and time is still being finalized possibly in district 5 with hot dogs and games. More information to be announced on local facebook.

Councilor Freeman provided an update with her attendance at a recent conference. The conference objectives focused on important information on grants and application steps. Conference outcome also suggested that possible stimulus could be distributed. Councilor Freeman announced that she will provide copies for individuals who request conference information. Important and available afterschool activities was also communicated. Councilor Freeman provided details on a positive apprenticeship program hosted by the City of Tarrant local education. Kesslers Pharmacy was also acknowledged in their 101 years of service in the City of Tarrant and their pharmaceutical aid to local residents. Black Lives Matter was addressed as All Lives Matter by Councilor Freeman.

Councilor Threadford 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.

Councilor Threadford also announced that there will be food boxes provided for the public on the 2nd Saturday of April 2025 at the Tarrant Rec Center.

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 Mayor Newton deferred the request of a seconder due to personal prediction of denial; however, Councilor Bryant provided a second for the Resolution. Councilor Bryant provided unreadiness by providing a summary of the rules and regulations on hiring, firing and then Councilor Bryant withdrew his second. Mayor Newton responded by also reviewing the process that was used in the initial firing of the Fire Chief. There was back and forth. Councilor Freeman wanted it on record to pull out the initial agenda and the minutes to check on what was discussed. Mayor Newton asked the City Clerk to add the Resolution No. 9248 to the next City Council regular scheduled meeting since there was no seconder.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9264. A Resolution Removing Chief Wendell Major from the Office of Chief of Police for the City of Tarrant. Mayor Newton made motion to approve Resolution No. 9264. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Councilor Bryant verbally reviewed the investigation and all affiliates involved in the investigation, and found without merit and with all prohibitions restored within thirty days. Councilor Bryant asked the Mayor for any contradictory information. The Mayor referenced past City of Tarrant criminal activities and a Vestavia resident in the allegations against the Chief of Police. For the relativity of time Councilor Bryant withdrew his second. Councilor Freeman asked the Mayor when he was able to retrieve her public records request and then asked the City Clerk if she had access to the documentation requested. The City Clerk replied no. Mayor Newton referenced the death of a three year old and its importance. The Chief of Police provided the courts outcome on the deceased. The Mayor withdrew his motion and asked the City Clerk to ensure the Resolution is added to the next City Council meeting.

Councilor 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 the cost of a newly leased vehicle. Chief Major provided various scenarios on the repairs and costs of various vehicles. Monthly costs were also reviewed. Councilor Bryant introduced Resolution No. 9267. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton wanted it on record that there was an option for repairing the older vehicle to buying a newer vehicle for under \$20k. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:
None

Nays:

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

Not voting:
Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being zero (0) and the nays being five (5), with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9267 was not agreed and the Resolution failed. It was decided a new vehicle for the Tarrant Police Department be ordered.

The Mayor and Council moved on to New Business.

Next, Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9270. A Resolution Approving Repair Estimate for a 2023 Dodge Charge Police Vehicle. There was discussion on the price to repair the police vehicle versus the cost of the insurance deductible. Mayor Newton suggested the City Clerk review the cost of the insurance deductible. Councilor Bryant moved to make a motion to table Resolution No. 9270 until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. 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 table Resolution No. 9270 until next meeting was approved, and the Resolution was tabled.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9271. A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Declare Tasers and Police Body Cameras as Surplus and Authorizing the Mayor to Sell in Accordance with Resolutions and ordinances Pertaining to Surplus Property. Councilor Bryant moved to approve Resolution No. 9271. Councilor Matthews 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. 9271 was agreed and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton requested an amendment to Resolution No. 9272. City Attorney substitute Chelsea Payne provided legal advice on amending Resolution No. 9272. Mayor Newton withdrew his motion to amend Resolution 9272. Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9272. A Resolution Approving of and Requesting the Personnel Board of Jefferson County to Create the Position of Assistant Fire Chief for the City of Tarrant Fire Department. Mayor Newton moved to approve Resolution No. 927. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor Catherine “Cathy” Anderson
Councilor Deborah “Debbie” Matthews
Mayor Wayman A. Newton

Nays:

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Abstain:

Councilor John T. “Tommy” Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford

Not voting:

None

The yeas being three (3) and the nays being one (1), with two (2) abstains, and zero (0) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9272 was agreed and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9273. A Resolution Directing \$2,500.00 Budgeted for District Four (4) City Councilor Education/Travel Funds to Be Used by Tarrant Fire Department. There was discussion on the limited funding. Mayor Newton requested extra funding be available from the City of Tarrant’s Mayors’ Education/Travel fund if needed. Mayor Newton recommended to amend the Resolution No. 9273 by adding a section *in the event that Councilor Matthews attends an education event that the fees be extracted from the Mayors training allowance of \$2,500.00 for year 2025*. Mayor Newton moved to approve Resolution No. 9273. Councilor Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Newton reminded all those in attendance of the annual training allowance and asked Councilor Freeman if she went to Washington. Councilor Freeman responded that she had spent more than \$2,500.00 in her last training conference. 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 amend Resolution No. 9273 was agreed and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton made a motion to approve No. 9273 as amended. A Resolution Directing \$2,500.00 Budgeted for District Four (4) City Councilor Education/Travel Funds to Be Used by Tarrant Fire Department and that *in the event that Councilor Matthews attends an education event that the fees be extracted from the Mayors training allowance of \$2,500.00 for year 2025*. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton asked 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. 9273 as amended was agreed and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Freeman left the meeting early.

Before moving on to vouchers Mayor Newton distributed the next bond payment of \$553,833.75 as of March 10, 2025 dated from 2019. Mayor Newton reminded all those in attendance that it will be reflected in the next vouchers and expenses.

Next, the City Council reviewed the vouchers and expenses for City of Tarrant, City Hall week ending March 17, 2025. Councilor Threadford moved to approve the vouchers for week ending March 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 Deborah “Debbie” Matthews

Nays:
None

Absent:
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Not voting:
Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4), the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the vouchers and expenses for week ending March 17, 2024 were agreed and the vouchers and expenses were approved.

Councilor Threadford asked Chief Major to summarize City of Tarrant Police Officer employment and certification. Chief Major provided an overview. Mayor Newton asked the Chief of Police to go into the workforce software and update the request of City Police needed. Chief of Police elaborated that the total Police force for the City of Tarrant needed is thirty with an estimate of seven police officers needed. Police employment budget was also discussed.

Next, the City Council moved on to Public Comments.

First, Chuck Winborn. Chuck Winborn listed City of Tarrant trash issues and the Public Works Department role. The ratio of employees in the Public Works Department to other cities was questioned by Mr. Winborn.

Second, Ms. Temple provided an update on her electricity bill. Councilor Threadford recommended Ms. Temple present the electricity bill disputes to the Electric Board. Electric Board meeting dates were provided to Ms. Temple by Councilor Threadford.

After the public comments ended Councilor Threadford moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. There was a verbal vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Laverne Knight
City Clerk April 7, 2025
City of Tarrant Council Meeting, Alabama

READ AND APPROVED this the 7th day of April, 2025.

The City of Tarrant, Alabama

APPROVED: _____
WAYMAN NEWTON, MAYOR

