

City of Harrington
MINUTES
City Council Meeting
May 21, 2012

A meeting of the Harrington City Council was held on May 21, 2012 and was attended by the following: Mayor Robert E. Price, Jr.; Vice Mayor Cheryl Lahman; Council Member Duane E. Bivans; Council Member Fonda Coleman; Council Member Wayne Porter; Council Member Jack Stewart; Council Member Kenneth Stubbs; Norman Barlow, Chief of Police; William Pepper, City Solicitor; Teresa Tieman, City Manager; Faye Smith, Finance Director; and Kelly Blanchies, Clerk of Council.

Also in attendance: Amy Minner; Delbert Ross, Houston Fire Company Chief; Bob Scott, Houston Fire Company Past Chief.

Mayor Price called the meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Minutes

City Council Meeting May 7, 2012

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Council Member Stewart, to accept the May 7, 2012 City Council Meeting Minutes as presented. The MOTION passed unanimously.

City Council Workshop May 9, 2012

Mayor Price stated that the minutes for the May 9, 2012 City Council Workshop are not ready and will be placed on next agenda.

Police Chief's Report

Award for Sgt. Gillespie

Bob Scott from the Houston Fire Company stated that the Houston Fire Company and Sgt. Gillespie responded to a house fire on April 23, 2012. Sgt. Gillespie assisted people out of the smoke filled house. Mr. Scott thanked Sgt. Gillespie for his heroic efforts and presented him with a plaque.

Mayor Price stated that the local fire companies work very well together, and it was very nice for the Houston Fire Company to recognize Sgt. Gillespie for his good work. The City is very proud Sgt. Gillespie.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Council Member Stubbs, to accept the Police Chief's Report as presented. The MOTION passed unanimously.

City Manager's Report

A MOTION was made by Council Member Stubbs, seconded by Vice Mayor Lahman, to accept the City Manager's Report as presented. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Financial Report

The Financial Director stated that the City Manager asked that a bill schedule for Kent County Sewer be included in the monthly report. The Financial Director stated that we have had three dry months. Council Member Stubbs stated that roof drains should be checked to reduce I & I. The City Manager stated that the Public Works Supervisor told her that had been checked with smoke tests and corrected.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Council Member Stubbs, to file the Financial Report for audit. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Departmental Reports

Public Works

Council Member Stubbs asked about the well usage increase. He stated that could indicate a leak. The City Manager stated that she will check on it. The City Solicitor stated that the weather has been warm, so people could be watering lawns and washing cars.

Council Member Bivans asked that the pothole information and project update information be made clearer on the report. He asked if the potholes listed on the report are on the priority list. The City Manager replied that they are, but the State identified potholes are given major priority. Council Member Bivans stated that he is happy to see the street sweeper schedule.

Wastewater Treatment

There were no questions.

Library

Council Member Bivans asked that the library provide the upcoming events in the report.

Parks and Recreation

There were no questions.

Fire and Ambulance

There were no questions.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Stubbs, seconded by Council Member Bivans, to accept the Departmental Reports as presented. The MOTION passed unanimously.

City Planner's Report

Vice Mayor Lahman asked if the dual highway connector streets are still being discussed. The City Manager stated that it has not been decided who is responsible for them yet.

Council Member Porter stated that the City Solicitor will be attending the Comprehensive Plan meeting, and it is an important meeting. Vice Mayor Lahman asked if the rest of City Council should begin attending the Comprehensive Plan meetings. The City Solicitor stated that they can start coming to the meetings.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Vice Mayor Lahman, to accept the City Planner's Report as presented. The MOTION passed unanimously.

City Engineer's Report

Council Member Stubbs asked about the damaged ramp that was part of the Downtown Streetscape Project. The City Manager stated that the contractor has agreed to replace it. Council Member Bivans asked if there is a legal time limit on when the work needs to be completed. The City Solicitor stated he has not seen the bond, but it is his understanding that we are within the time limits.

A MOTION was made by Vice Mayor Lahman, seconded by Council Member Bivans, to accept the City Engineer's Report as presented. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Appeals of Additions to Tax Bills

The Clerk of Council stated that no one filed a Notice to Appeal.

Sale of Police shotguns

A MOTION was made by Vice Mayor Lahman, seconded by Council Member Porter, to approve the request of the Chief of Police to sell the existing shotguns. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Approval of Police Department Contract

The Chief of Police stated that the officers agreed to extend the current contract for another year.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Council Member Stubbs, to accept the Police Department Contract as presented. Vice Mayor Lahman asked about the health insurance. The Chief of Police stated that the officers receive the same benefits that the other employees do. The City Manager asked if there was a reason it was not simply split as 60% and 40%. The Chief of Police stated that the current split was adopted several years ago. The Finance Director stated that the budget was adjusted for a 10% increase overall what the City paid last year. The City Manager stated that they would have to calculate what the change in cost would be to simplify the health insurance line of the contract.

A MOTION was made by Vice Mayor Lahman, seconded by Council Member Porter, to table the Police Department Contract. The MOTION passed (5 Yes, 1 No – Bivans).

Approval of Fire Department Agreement

Council Member Porter stated that there is not a representative from the Fire Department present. The Finance Director stated that she called the Fire Department several times to inform them that the agreement was being discussed. The Finance Director stated that the hourly rate was adjusted since there was a year that the Fire Department gave a raise and the City did not and also includes a 2% increase for this year. Vice Mayor Lahman recommended keeping very good notes on the Fire Department Agreement so that it will be more clear in the future why it is written as it is.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked about the total budget for the Fire Department and the amount for fuel. The City Manager stated that the budget is \$112,432 with \$53,400 being the City's portion and with \$3,000 for fuel.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Council Member Stubbs, to accept the Fire Department Agreement. Roll was called: 5 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain (Lahman – Yes, Bivans – Abstain, Coleman – Yes, Porter – Yes, Stewart – Yes, Stubbs – Yes). The MOTION passed. Council Member Bivans stated that he abstained because the Fire Department should have a representative present.

First Reading of Ordinance 12-10 – Amending Chapter 365, Streets and Sidewalks

Council Member Bivans stated that the number of days to correct an issue is not enough. The Clerk of Council stated that the same time frame was used in the Property Maintenance Chapter but can be changed. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that it should be consistent. Council Member Porter asked about the International Property Maintenance Code. The City Solicitor stated that he believes they are consistent.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Vice Mayor Lahman, to accept the first reading of Ordinance 12-10. The MOTION passed (5 Yes, 1 No – Bivans).

First Reading of Ordinance 12-11 – Amending Chapter 180, Municipal Fees

The Clerk of Council stated that as discussed at the workshop, a \$25 minimum was added for the Abatement of Streets and Sidewalks violations, and the \$100 fine is now called an Administrative Fee.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Vice Mayor Lahman, to accept the first reading of Ordinance 12-11. The MOTION passed unanimously.

First Reading of Ordinance 12-12 – Amending Chapter 7, Building Inspection Department

The Clerk of Council stated that the Building Inspection Department is becoming the Planning and Inspections Department as outlined in the budget. Council Member Porter asked what planning services would be included. The City Manager stated that there is no change in the planning that is taking place; it is still contractual. In the past, it was not accounted for in the budget, and this will allow for that. There is no change in

operations, just accounting. The City Solicitor stated that at some point in the future, the City will have an in house planner, because it will be cheaper than the contractual service.

The City Manager stated that none of the other departments are described in the Code, but the Charter states that a new department has to be created by ordinance.

A MOTION was made by Vice Mayor Lahman, seconded by Council Member Stubbs, to accept the first reading of Ordinance 12-12. The MOTION passed (5 Yes, 1 No – Porter).

Reclassifying Clerk of Council to full time position

Council Member Porter asked if the Clerk of Council still reports to the City Council. The City Manager stated that there is not enough work for just minutes and meetings, so will the Clerk of Council be able to work on other things in City Hall. The City Manager stated that she has everyday oversight of the Clerk of Council, and the Council controls evaluations and hiring/firing. The Mayor stated that the priority is Council. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that you cannot have daily oversight of one person by six people, but the City Manager needs to monitor that one person is not taking up too much of the Clerk of Council's time. The City Manager stated that everyone at City Hall works very well together and as a team.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked if there was enough work to warrant full time employment. The City Manager stated yes, and the Clerk of Council has been able to take on responsibilities that previous clerks have not, such as writing ordinances and researching and that will save money. The City Manager stated that there is enough money in the budget for the Clerk of Council to begin full time hours now and start receiving benefits. She recommends a start of June 1, 2012. Vice Mayor Lahman asked if the FY 2013 budget includes a full time position for the Clerk of Council. The City Manager replied yes.

A MOTION was made by Council Member Stewart, seconded by Vice Mayor Lahman, to classify the Clerk of Council position as full time starting June 1, 2012. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

There being no further business, a MOTION was made by Council Member Porter, seconded by Council Member Stewart, to adjourn the City Council Meeting. The MOTION passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Blanchies
Clerk of Council