Crossett City Council met in regular session February 20, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Crossett Library.

Roll call vote was taken as follows:

Present: Mayor Scott McCormick, City Attorney James Hamilton

Councilmember’s: Valerie Martin, Eddie Rowe, James Knight, CT Foster, Lynn Rodgers

Absent: Clerk/Treasurer Jesse Walthall, Councilwoman Crystal Marshall

Mayor McCormick called the meeting to order with prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes from January 18, January 30, February 12 and February 13 council meetings were presented. Councilwoman Rodgers pointed out that the name of Marilyn Harris should be changed to Sylvia Harris on the January 18th meeting report. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve all minutes with the stated correction. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to approve the January financial report. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mayor McCormick presented proposed Ordinance 2018-1 to approve the 2017 final budget. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed ordinance for the first reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilwoman Rodgers to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read the proposal for the second reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to further suspend rules and read for 3rd and final reading, by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion carries and Hamilton read by title only for 3rd reading. Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilman Rowe to adopt Ordinance 2018-1. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2018-1 was adopted.

Mayor McCormick presented proposed Ordinance 2018-2 abolishing 1% sales tax. Motion by Councilwoman Martin to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed ordinance for the first reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the proposal. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read the proposed ordinance for the second reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to further suspend the rules and read for 3rd time by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilman Knight to adopt Ordinance 2018-2. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2018-2 was adopted.

Mayor McCormick presented proposed Ordinance 2018-3 to rezone property from S-1 to C-N. Mayor explained this the property located in the 200 block of Beech Street which the council voted to rezone in order for Mr. Chester Huntsman to remodel and open a restaurant. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed ordinance for the first reading. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and the ordinance was read in its entirety. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Rowe to suspend the rules and have City Attorney Hamilton read for the second reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Foster to further suspend the rules and read for 3rd and final reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to adopt Ordinance 2018-3. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2018-3 was adopted.

Mayor McCormick presented a proposed Resolution 2018-1 setting the 2018 budget. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to have City Attorney Hamilton read proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the resolution. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to adopt Resolution R-2018-1. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and R-2018-1 was adopted.

Councilwoman Martin asked if the city had taken any action on hiring a city planner. Mayor McCormick stated that the planning commission has discussed retaining Jim Vontungelan with Arkansas Municipal League as city planner. Mr. Vontungelan is very familiar with the zoning in the city of Crossett as he has served as city planner in prior years. Mayor McCormick added that he would speak further with Mr. Vontungelan and work out an agreement. Councilwoman Rodgers expressed gratitude for Mr. Vontungelan’s expertise, but asked that more than one quote for service be obtained.

Mayor McCormick asked the council to approve the appointments to the Crossett Fire/Ambulance Committee. Motion by Councilman Knight, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve the appointment of Crystal Marshall (chairperson), Eddie Rowe, Leroy Higginbotham, John Allen, Clark Terrell, Jennifer King, Julie Potts, Val McMillan, Mike Smith, Maurie Malloy, Murlee Carter, Pam Hughes, Lori Walsh and Amanda Friedman to make up the committee. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Mr. Howard Beatty asked what the charge of the committee will be. Mayor McCormick stated that the intention of the committee is to research how to better utilize the resources we have to serve the citizens – to provide the best service possible at the least expense for the city.

Councilwoman Martin asked for update on the highway signs marking the truck route. Mayor McCormick has made contact with Arkansas Highway Department, but no information is available yet. He stated that he will continue to make contact and discuss at next month’s meeting.

Representative from Media 3 was on the agenda to speak to the council, but did not show up.

Councilwoman Rodgers inquired as to the 3rd party billing for ambulance service. Fire Chief Higginbotham presented references, prices and information on 3 proposals, and gave special interest to RAM software. This is the software that is currently being used in-house for billing. Current contract is $300/month. If RAM is chosen as vendor, there will be a $1,000 initial set-up fee and they will charge 6% of collections. A 2-year contract will be proposed. Council asked Chief Higginbotham to meet with City Attorney Hamilton to look over the contract.

Mayor McCormick asked the council to approve the appointment of Mr. Jimmy Jeffress and Mr. Gary Williams to the Crossett Library Board. He added that Mr. Jimmy Jeffress will serve as chairperson. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight to approve the appointments. Voice vote was taken. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Councilwoman Rodgers presented stats on services provided by street and sanitation department. She added that the committee has discussed implementing a charge for extra pickups, but there are still some issues that need to be worked out.

Councilwoman Marshall informed council that playground equipment for Crossett Youth Center has been ordered.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked if contract with Volunteers of Crossett Pound has been signed. Police Chief Cruce stated that there were some concerns with the original contract presented by the volunteers. He has forwarded the concerns with a copy of the contract to city attorney for review.

Advertisement for bids for Request for Qualifications for energy service has been submitted and will be opened on February 22.

Councilwoman Rodgers inquired about non-CDL drug testing for city employees. An ordinance will need to be reviewed to see if our current resolution covers all the legal issues with random testing.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked that the city become more active on social media. She asked that Mayor McCormick have his secretary, Araceli Mondragon, learn more on the issue and ramp up the social media presence. Mayor added that there may be some classed available for Ms. Mondragon that could assist her in knowledge concerning this matter.

Councilwoman Rodgers inquired as to the status on an updated personnel manual. Mayor would like to have department heads and others involved in updating the material.

Councilwoman Martin asked about burned out properties on Main Street and West 8th Avenue. These properties are in process.

Mayor McCormick presented proposed Resolution R-2018-2 allowing for bond proceeds to reimburse out of pocket expenses incurred on the project. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read. Councilwoman Rodgers expressed concern since the resolution only mentions bond issues. She stated that the committee is also researching grants, rate increases and other payment options. Councilman Hamilton explained that this is a very generic resolution with will allow reimbursements by what ever means the funding is from. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve the resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Resolution R-2018-2 was adopted.

Councilwoman Martin stated that she has been asked to address residents putting trash out before scheduled pickup days. She added that this is an eyesore and there should be some way to address this situation. Councilwoman Marshall asked about trash on and around Lucas Pond.

Mayor McCormick asked council to approve reappointment of Mrs. Beverly Gammel to the Crossett Water Commission. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve the reappointment.

Mayor McCormick opened the floor to the audience for discussion. Mrs. Charlotte Hollimon asked if there was a limit to the number of metal storage buildings that could be put on Main Street. Code Enforcement Officer Tony Jones will look into the current ordinances and see what it stipulates.

Mayor McCormick presented his **STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS.**

**Mayor noted that the past year has brought changes to sanitation department. A knuckle boom truck, chipper and an additional leaf vacuum have been put into service for the city. A code enforcement officer has been hired to help with enforcement of Ordinance 535 and to assist in helping to make our city more attractive. The repeaters at 307 Main Street have been moved and are safely covered. A drainage department was added in 2017 and has done an exceptional job in clearing alleyways and drainage ditches throughout the city. All in all, 2017 was a good year. Mayor added that new projects are planned for 2018 including a major sewer project. Details will be worked on and hopefully by the end of 2018 or early 2019 project will be approved. The city will continue to work with Crossett Economic Development Foundation in hopes of bringing new business and industry into our city. Mayor stated that the municipal building at 307 Main will need to be addressed in the very near future. Mayor McCormick added that he and the council will continue to work diligently to improve all aspects of service to the community. He invited all residents to bring concerns and desires before the council and him and work together to get things accomplished for the city of Crossett.**

Mayor informed the council that a contract for the Crossett Boys & Girls Club is prepared and awaiting signatures.

Mayor stated that the contract with Crossett High School FFA is still being addressed. He is waiting to hear back from Crossett Public School attorney.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

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Jesse Walthall, Clerk/Treasurer Marshall S. McCormick, Mayor