Crossett city council met in special session February 28, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the lobby of the City Hall Annex building.

Present: Mayor McCormick

Council Members: Martin, Knight, Rowe, Marshall, Rodgers and Foster

Absent: Clerk/Treasurer Walthall, City Attorney Hamilton

Mayor McCormick announced the purpose of this meeting is to discuss committee for fire/ambulance study.

Councilwoman Rodgers explained that she asked Mayor to call this meeting to discuss the appointment and task assigned to the fire/ambulance study. She added that at the special meeting when this was discussed, everyone was emotional. This began when Chief Higginbotham was asked to cut $100,000 from his overtime salaries. Her hopes were that this would lead to a working session with the council and the fire department rather than a committee doing research. Councilwoman Rodgers added that she doesn’t understand the processes of the department and would like to have a working session in order to better comprehend their day to day operation. She added that the committee appointed is an exceptional committee with much knowledge and expertise. She is not asking to dissolve the committee, but to put this on hold until more information is gathered.

Mayor McCormick stated that the City of Crossett is blessed to have a top-notch fire department. Georgia-Pacific personnel has expressed concern over what services may be lost. With the current industry and any industry which may locate here, we do not need to discuss any cuts of service. Councilwoman Rodgers stated that cutting services was never an option and she feels that is a misrepresentation. Councilwoman Martin added that every time the council tries to do something to better the city, it seems that the intentions are misconstrued.

Motion by Councilman Knight, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to put the task of the committee on hold. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Councilwoman Marshall stated that she doesn’t want any employee of the fire department or any department of the city to feel unappreciated. She asked if there is any way that the council can assist the department in recruiting. She feels that a strong presence on social media and advertising with other fire departments will help get the word out. She also inquired about department teaching basic EMT classes, having a presence in local schools and trade schools. Everyone was open to the ideas.

Councilman Foster stated that raises for employees will be the best recruitment strategy. Councilwoman Marshall added that even if raises can’t be given, a mid-year bonus should be discussed.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

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