Crossett City Council met in regular session January 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Crossett Economic Development Foundation.

Roll call vote was taken as follows:

Present: Mayor Scott McCormick, City Attorney James Hamilton

Councilmember’s: Dale Martinie, CT Foster, Crystal Marshall, James Knight and Sheila Phillips

Absent: Clerk/Treasurer Jesse Walthall, Councilman Cary Carter

Mayor McCormick called the meeting to order with prayer and pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2019 meetings. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve the preliminary financial reports of December. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mayor McCormick presented the council with proposed ordinance to levy a ½ of 1% sales and use tax for the purpose of securing the repayment of bonds issued to finance improvements to the Crossett Sewer System. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to read the proposal for the first public reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed ordinance. Motion 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 Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight 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 to adopt Ordinance 2020-1 by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilman Knight. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2020-1 was adopted.

Mayor McCormick presented a proposed ordinance calling for a special election on the question of levying a ½ on 1% sales and use tax to pay for capital improvement bond for sewer improvement project. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed ordinance for the first public reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the proposed ordinance. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Martinie to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read by title only for second reading. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to further suspend the reading rule 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 Marshall, seconded by Councilman Foster to adopt Ordinance 2020-2. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2020-2 was adopted. Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to adopt the emergency clause attached to this ordinance. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Emergency clause was adopted.

Mr. Mike Smith, Crossett Economic Development Foundation Director, asked council to continue to pursue the EDA grant. A grant application has been on the table for a couple of years in the amount of $2 million. He added that EDA has not denied the grant proposal and has asked for additional information. Mr. Claude Spainhour, Crossett Sewer Committee Chairperson, explained that EDA had requested that the project be separated into phases and the nature of this work is not feasible to that. The estimated cost of additional engineering to cover breaking the project down is around $15,000. Mr. Spainhour added that the sewer committee is hesitant to pay for the extra engineering cost. Council added that this cost will be reimbursable once the bond issue is passed. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to have sewer committee pay up to $15,000 for the engineering cost for the project. Any amount above the $15,000 will be discussed for other funding methods. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mrs. Mary Jo Jones, with the Crossett Water Commission, asked council to approve the appointment of Mr. Greg Sivils to an 8-year term on the commission. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Martinie to approve the appointment. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Appointment was approved.

Sarah Hollimon, Crossett Park and Recreation Assistant Director, asked council to approve setting up and appointing 8 individuals to a Crossett Auditorium Board. Those Ms. Hollimon recommended for the board are Bessie Dawson, Doris Bakke, Wanda McGhee, Tonya Cooper, Lynn Rodgers, Jason Wayne, Lauren Richards and Shawn Carpenter. A copy each one’s qualifications is attached to these minutes. This committee will be responsible for overseeing the refurbishing of the auditorium and all fund-raising events. Motion by Councilman Knight, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to approve the appointments. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mr. Bill Runyun, Friends of the Crossett Community, updated the council on projects they have been working on. He asked for moral support from the council as well as helping to secure any grants available. At this time, they are particularly interested in the Crossett Pool project. They would like to help the city in securing funds to complete the pool area including the tennis courts. Mr. Runyun invited everyone to a public meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 28 at 5:30.

Mr. Mike Smith addressed the council on the Solar Energy plant proposal with RES Renewables. RES Renewables have requested a PILOT agreement with the city until bonds are paid. Bond attorney, Mr. McSpadin, presented a proposed ordinance expressing the intent to issue revenue bonds and to reimburse from the proceeds of those bonds preliminary costs incurred in the acquiring, constructing, equipping and installing certain industrial facilities described as land, buildings, improvements, machinery, equipment and facilities related to the Crossett Solar Energy LLC business of operating a photovoltaic solar energy facility in the City; and approving the execution and delivery of payment in lieu of taxes agreement. Mr. McSpadin added that this shows intent and does not bind the city with any obligations. This will be a revenue bond and will require no financial or liability issues for the city. This project will generate several temporary jobs while construction is going on and only a few permanent jobs. Estimated completion date of the project is 2022. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to have City Attorney Hamilton read proposed ordinance for first public reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and City Attorney Hamilton read the proposal. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to suspend the rules and have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposal for second reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Martinie to have Hamilton read for third and final reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to adopt Ordinance 2020-3. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2020-3 was adopted. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to adopt the emergency clause attached to the ordinance. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Councilman Dale Martinie expressed concern over the Crossett Zoo property. The city has an agreement with Crossett Schools to allow FFA (Future Farmer’s of America) to house farm animals at the location. Several people in the neighborhood are complaining that the property isn’t being kept up. Councilwoman Marshall stated that she has spoken to Crossett School Superintendent Gary Williams and he has promised to have the animals removed from the premises by spring break. Councilman Martinie added that someone needs to oversee the removal and make sure that the property is cleaned up once the animals are removed.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

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