Crossett City Council met in regular session June 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Crossett Public Library

Roll call vote was taken as follows:

Present: Mayor Crystal Marshall, City Attorney James Hamilton

Councilmember’s: Dale Martinie, CT Foster, Cary Carter, and Sheila Phillips were present and James Knight participated via conference call.

Absent: Clerk/Treasurer Jesse Walthall

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

Mayor Marshall reminded everyone that at the special meeting of June 1, the council agreed to appoint Mrs. Kerstin Mondragon to fill the vacant position of Ward 2, Position 1. She asked that the council make this official with a vote and swearing in of Mrs. Mondragon. Motion by Councilman Martinie, seconded by Councilwoman Phillips to appoint Kerstin Mondragon to the position. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed. Mayor Marshall swore Mrs. Mondragon in as councilwoman and asked her to join the council table.

Motion by Councilman Martinie, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve the financial reports for May, 2020. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilwoman Phillips to approve the minutes of the regular May meeting and the special meeting of June 1, 2020. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mayor Marshall updated council on traffic signal at Millyard Road. She stated that she has discussed with Arkansas Highway Department and Lawrence Electric. Lawrence Electric does agree to remove the traffic signals keeping the equipment for payment. However, Arkansas Highway Department expressed concerns over future grants if the city decides to remove these. She added that the city has followed recommendations of the highway department and bagged the lights. The city is in compliance with all requirements for the inoperable traffic signal. Councilman Martinie asked that the traffic lights not be removed. All council agrees.

Mayor Marshall gave an update on the COVID-19 Cares Act. She stated that Arkansas Municipal League has suggested that the city will see around a 30% reduction of finance in state aid and a significant reduction in sales tax revenue over the next few months. Mayor added that when the initial announcement came in, she met with department heads and placed a hold be placed on all capital expenditures (unless emergency) and other money-saving actions be taken. She noted that the city of Crossett has not yet seen the numbers that were mentioned, but is remaining cautiously optimistic. She also stated that the CARES Act will allow for some reimbursements for municipalities. The city is keeping up with expenditures related to COVID-19 and will seek reimbursements once the applications are being accepted.

Mayor Marshall also updated on the zoo clean-up and parking lot progress. She explained that these are projects that are needing attention. However, these are going to have to be temporarily put on hold due to major drainage and sewer issues in the city. Director of Public Works Jeff Harrison added that he is hoping to get back on those projects within the next three weeks providing weather and manpower allows.

A Proposed Resolution R-2020-9, declaring the intent to reimburse expenditures for the sewer improvement project from bond proceeds, was introduced. Councilman Martinie asked that this and all other resolutions be tabled because the council didn’t receive them in time for review. City Attorney Hamilton explained that this is a routine resolution and the intention of it is to allow Crossett Sewer to pay for certain expenses and be reimbursed when the bond revenue is received. He added that this needs to be considered before any money is spent on the project. Motion by Councilman Martinie, seconded by Councilwoman Phillips to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed. Hamilton read the proposal. Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilman Martinie to adopt Resolution R-2020-9. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

City Attorney Hamilton also asked the council to formalize the engagement letter between Crossett Sewer and H&H Law firm. Motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Foster to approve the engagement letter. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mr. Claude Spainhour, chairman of the Crossett Sewer Committee, updated that council on sewer improvement project. He said that the engineering report has been broken into a smaller project in order to apply for the EDF grant. Crossett Sewer Committee has paid over $6.000 extra for this expense. The tax initiative passed, but the project is not likely to start until first quarter of 2021. There is still confusion on the separation of the projects. Mayor Marshall suggested that a conference call with all parties may help clarify some confusion. She will work on coordinating the call and having as many participants as possible.

Mayor Marshall presented proposed Resolution R-2020-8, a resolution proclaiming the city as an essential city in support of fair, direct federal emergency support to reopen and rebuild local American economies. Councilman Martinie asked that this resolution be tabled.

Mayor Marshall presented proposed Resolution R-2020-7, a resolution certifying local government endorsement of Cynergy Cargo2 to participate in the tax back program of the consolidated incentive act of 2003. Councilman Martinie asked that this resolution be tabled. It was explained that this resolution is essential in securing businesses in Crossett and has been discussed at several meetings. Motion by Councilman Martinie, seconded by Councilman Carter to have City Attorney Hamilton read the proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the resolution. Motion by Councilman Martinie, seconded by Councilman Carter to adopt Resolution R-2020-7. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Councilman Martinie recognized several people for helping to clean up places around town, including 307 Main Street and Centennial Park.

Councilman Martinie inquired about starting blocks which need to be installed at the Crossett City Pool in order for CREST to host swim meets. Parks and Recreation Director Larry Cantley stated that these blocks must be able to be moved when not is use. Mr. Cantley also suggested that this job be outsourced as it will require drilling holes into concrete.

Councilman Martinie asked for an update on the Tree City USA program. Mayor Marshall explained that she has been in touch with someone from the Arkansas Forestry Department and is working to get things in motion to declare Crossett as a Tree City USA. She has shared this information with Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Sarah Hollimon.

Councilman Martini asked that the council meet in executive session for personnel issue. Mayor Marshall asked that he speak to her in private about the matter first and if needed, an executive session will be called.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Jesse Walthall, Clerk/Treasurer Crystal Marshall, Mayor