Crossett City Council met in regular session June 19, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Crossett Public Library.

Roll call vote was taken as follows:

Present: Mayor Scott McCormick, City Attorney James Hamilton, Clerk/Treasurer Jesse Walthall

Councilmember’s: Valarie Martin, Crystal Marshall, Eddie Rowe, James Knight, CT Foster,

 Lynn Rodgers

Absent: None

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

Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to approve the minutes of the regular 5/15/2017 meeting and the special meeting of 5/16/2017. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Financial reports for May, 2017 were presented to the council. Some mistakes were found on the spreadsheet and notations were made. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilwoman Rodgers to approve the financial reports as amended. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked for an update on the Personnel Committee. Mayor McCormick stated that he has taken no action, but promised to make progress before next month’s meeting.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked for an update on Media 3. They have paid franchise tax through the end of 2016. Taxes for first and second quarter of 2017 are now due. Councilwoman Rodgers asked that City Attorney Hamilton send a letter requesting that a representative from the company be present at the July meeting. She also requested that Mayor McCormick follow up with a call stressing the importance of his attendance.

Mayor McCormick thanked the council for their work on the ½ cent sales tax election which was held on June 13. The issue passed with a 319-112 vote. This reflects only about 13% voter turnout. Mayor McCormick also commended Rosalind Ross for her help with the promotion.

Councilwoman Crystal Marshall expressed pleasure with the opening of the restrooms at the City Park. She added that she feels that locks should be put on the doors. Marshall also stated that Crossett Recreation Commission Chairperson, Justin Reed, is working on getting donations of locking dispensers for toilet paper, paper towels and soap dispensers. Mayor McCormick added that he will make sure that locks are put on doors.

Mr. Wilburn Austin, Austin’s Pest Control, updated the council on mosquito spraying. He stated that by cleaning the alleys, the city has helped with the mosquito population. He is currently fogging weekly and around 200 larvicide tablets are distributed monthly. Mr. Austin added that he is using a different chemical than previously used. Whereas in prior years 30/30 was used, he is using 60/30. Councilwoman Marshall asked that he include the Crossett Swimming Pool in larvicide. Mayor McCormick asked Mr. Austin to spray at the sports complex as there is a tournament scheduled for June 30 – July 5. Mr. Austin agreed to take care of those things.

Ms. Sylvia Harris addressed council on the zoo area. Ms. Harris stated that at a recent civil club meeting a representative from Heifer International, Gensor Hallett, had expressed interest in the zoo area. Council asked Ms. Harris to have Ms. Hallett contact the Mayor and discuss possible arrangements. Mayor McCormick added that Crossett Future Farmers of America (FFA) Club has also expressed interest in the zoo. He would like to talk to both groups and come up with a good plan.

Ms. Harris also stated that the drainage ditch in front of 106 Texas is in desperate need of mowing. Mayor McCormick informed that this is in the state highway right of way and it is their responsibility to have it mowed. He has contacted the representative of the highway department and it will be taken care of.

Ms. Harris requested that the signage for Industrial Park on Texas Street be removed as it is causing trucks unnecessary hardships.

Mayor McCormick informed the council that a traffic study at the light on Millyard/Fairview Road is being conducted by Arkansas State Highway Department. This will help determine whether to remove the traffic signal or set to different rotation.

Councilwoman Rodgers stated that at the recent Arkansas Municipal League Conference she attended a meeting concerning the 2020 Census. This meeting was very educational and stressed how important it is for the city to get a true count during this census. Councilwoman Rodgers suggested that Rebecca Ledbetter participate in workshops available to learn as much as possible concerning the census. Any changes made to the city boundaries must be complete during 2018.

Justin Reed, Crossett Recreation Commission Chairman, updated council on activity. Mr. Reed stated that the commission is in the process of developing by-laws for the commission. He has asked the council to approve enlarging the commission from 5 to 7 members. An Ordinance must be prepared to enable this change. Mr. Reed informed the council that the commission is currently working with Crossett Economic Development Foundation on an outdoor grant for the purpose of renovating and improving the Crossett Swimming Pool. This grant will be a $250,000 matching grant. Plans include 3 phases of the improvements which also takes in tennis courts and installing a full-length basketball court on one of the tennis court pads. As required to be eligible for the grant, two minority meetings have been conducted. A public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, June 20 at 5:00 p.m. at the Crossett Economic Development Foundation.

Mr. Reed stated that the commission is working on a 5-10 year plan. He also asked for a list of the properties the commission is responsible for. He also informed the council that Crossett Babe Ruth will hold a 7-8 year old state tournament at the sports complex from June 30-July 5. There is also a regional tournament scheduled for August 2018.

Motion by Councilwoman Crystal Marshall to have City Attorney Hamilton draft an ordinance, in compliance with Arkansas State Statute, allowing up to 15 members for the Crossett Parks and Recreation Commission and to stipulate that members of the commission do not have to reside in the Crossett city limits. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Rodgers. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mayor McCormick presented 2 ordinances for the council’s approval. Mayor explained that during the state legislative audit of the 2015 year, there were a couple of things out of compliance. These ordinances will clear up the discrepancies and keep us from having future audit findings.

Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Foster to have Hamilton read a proposed ordinance authorizing the Crossett Port Authority to pay Terry Montgomery $25.00 per hour for tractor use and mowing from January 1, 2016 through May 26, 2017. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read Proposed Ordinance 2017-5 in its entirety. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read proposed ordinance for 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 proposed ordinance by title only for 3rd and final reading. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilwoman Rodgers to adopt Ordinance 2017-5. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2017-5 was adopted.

Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Rowe to have City Attorney Hamilton read proposed ordinance authorizing the Crossett Airport Commission to pay Pioneer Civil Construction $2,500 per month to furnish an airport manager for the Crossett Municipal Airport from January 1, 2016 through May 31, 2017. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read proposed Ordinance 2017-6. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read proposed ordinance for 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 reading rule and read by title only for third and final reading. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Foster to adopt ordinance. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2017-6 was adopted.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked council to consider a resolution supporting federal and state legislation to ensure proper assessment of sales tax collections. This resolution will enable taxes be charged on sales including internet orders. State Representative Leann Burch added that this bill was held up in the state house because the tax is currently a use tax. Individuals are expected to file non-taxed purchases on a state use tax form to pay the local taxes. Most people do not do this, so this resolution will ensure that the tax is collected and paid to proper agencies. All council members agree that this issue should be supported.

Councilwoman Valerie Martin asked for an update of dead trees. Mayor McCormick stated that Clayton Hoops has agreed to cut down the dead trees, but the city would be required to remove them. Mayor added that the trees are dead and a safety concern. The problem is that once the trees are down, the city cannot haul them because the county landfill will not take them. Mayor will speak with Mr. Hoops and have him cut the trees and the city will address the removal issue later.

Councilwoman Marshall asked Mayor McCormick to consider hiring a part-time employee to attend the restrooms and keep the park area clean. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to hire a part-time employee to work no more than 20 hours per week. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.’

Councilman Rowe presented a copy of the Emergency Disaster Plan for the city of Crossett.

Councilwoman Marshall expressed appreciation to the Crossett Police Department mentioning that the death of the officer in Newport Arkansas brought it home.

Mr. Charlie Smith spoke to the council on the long-range plan for the City of Crossett. Mr. Smith reminded council members that a Project Fact Sheet has been sent to each of them. This sheet is to gather information on what the council, department head or commission would like to have addressed within the next ten years. Mr. Smith asked that the sheets been completed and returned to him as soon as possible. Councilwoman Marshall stated that she would like to have a working session to discuss among the group what projects are important. A working session was scheduled for Thursday, June 22 at the lobby of City Hall.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

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