Crossett City Council met in regular session July 17, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Crossett Economic Development Foundation Building.

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 June 19, June 22, June 26 and July 7, 2017 council meetings. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight to approve the June, 2017 financial reports. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Councilwoman Rodgers updated the council on the street and sanitation action committee study. This committee was set up to determine the cost savings of going to one garbage pickup per week. Councilwoman Rodgers explained that extensive time and effort went into this study. Mrs. Rodgers asked Brandon Reed, committee member skilled in logistics, to inform council of his study.

Mr. Reed stated that he spent time riding on the truck for garbage pickup. A spreadsheet of his estimates is attached. He stated that the study shows an estimate on savings of $50,000. Mr. Reed added that the current routes are very efficient. He was more concerned over safety issues. Mr. Reed added that there are several streets where the truck has to back up. He recommended that residents be instructed to place trash on the side of the road where they are addressed. This will eliminate some of the cases of backing up into busy streets. Mr. Reed also feels that junk pickups should be scheduled through the street and sanitation department. This will be more efficient and help with enforcing of ordinance already on the books.

Councilwoman Rodgers explained that in 1999, a city-wide cleanup was held and the city stopped charging for extra pickups. The committee feels that the ordinance should be updated and the begin enforcing once again.

Councilwoman Rodgers informed the council that the Ashley County Landfill has stopped accepting limbs and leaves. Once the city picks up this refuse, it becomes solid waste and disposal of the waste is closely monitored by Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality. Currently, there are two huge piles of debris at the street and sanitation barn with nowhere to dispose of it. ADEQ has informed the city that it will consider issuing a special permit for the city to haul the debris if they find somewhere to dispose of it. Director of Public Works, Jeff Harrison, has been in contact with Chicot County Landfill and they will take the refuse. Mr. Harrison is now seeking a special permit and city crews will begin disposing of the waste.

For future disposal, an incinerator with a burn curtain should be considered. The cost of an incinerator and set-up is close to $100,000.00.

Councilwoman Rodgers added that the city is in dire need of an additional leaf vacuum. Current usage is excessive and causes undo wear and tear on the machine and can’t keep up with the amount of debris produced. Estimated cost of a leaf vacuum is $20,000.00. Rodgers added that the city may consider a private company to pick up leaves and limbs for the city.

Councilwoman Rodgers stated that the city has contracted Clayton Hoops to remove dead trees from the city park. The original agreement is for Mr. Hoops to cut trees and city crews to remove. For an additional $4,500, Mr. Hoops will remove the trees and grind the stumps. Motion by Councilman Knight, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to have Mr. Hoops also remove the debris. Roll call vote. All vote yes.

Councilwoman Rodgers requested that a public town meeting be held to inform citizens of the situation with garbage pickup, leaf and limb pickup and disposal. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to schedule a public meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. at the Crossett Economic Development Foundation. Roll call vote. All vote yes.

Proposed Ordinance 2017-7, an ordinance to repeal Ordinance 2013-3 was presented to the council. Motion by Councilman Knight, seconded by Councilman Rowe to have City Attorney Hamilton read proposed ordinance. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read ordinance in its entirety. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight 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 Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to further suspend the rules and read for 3rd and final 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 2017-7. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2017-7 was adopted.

Proposed Ordinance 2017-8, an ordinance authorizing city to do business with Master Technicians and Mechanical was presented for consideration. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to have Hamilton read the proposal for first reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the proposed ordinance. Councilwoman Marshall expressed concerns over the wording of the ordinance. She feels that the ordinance is misleading. City Attorney Hamilton assured that the wording was appropriate for the purpose of the ordinance. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Knight to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read the proposed ordinance for second reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read for second time by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to further suspend the rules and read for third and final reading 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 2017-8. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Ordinance 2017-8 was adopted.

Proposed Ordinance 2017-9, an ordinance to increase the number of positions on the Crossett Recreation Commission, was presented. Motion by Councilman Knight, 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 Hamilton read the proposal in its entirety. Motion by Councilman Rowe, seconded by Councilwoman Rodgers to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read the proposed ordinance for second time by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read by title only. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, 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. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to adopt Ordinance 2017-9. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed. Councilwoman Marshall asked Mayor McCormick if he was prepared to make any appointments to the commission. Mayor McCormick asked the council to allow him time to talk to some interested parties and be ready for approval at next month’s meeting.

Proposed Resolution 2017-4, a resolution supporting taxation on internet purchases, was presented to the council. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to have City Attorney read the proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the proposal. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to adopt Resolution 2017-4. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Resolution 2017-4 was adopted.

Mayor McCormick reminded council that the Arkansas State Highway Department has been conducting a study concerning the traffic signal at Fairview Road and Millyard Road. The study has determined that there is not enough traffic on Millyard Road to continue operating the traffic signal. ASHD has given the city permission to remove the structure. No estimates were available for cost of removing the traffic signal. Police Chief JW Cruce stated that he would contact Lawrence Electric to get a cost estimate. Councilwoman Rodgers inquired as to the city’s liability if the light was changed to a caution light. This is also something that will be considered.

Mr. Justin Reed, Crossett Recreation Commission Chairman, addressed the council. Mr. Reed stated that a proposal has been presented to the commission for a disc golf course around Lucas Pond. The Commission is very excited and supportive of this proposal and is asking the council to consider. Mr. Reed introduced Mr. Tony Orrick. Mr. Orrick explained the proposal and the sites which have been considered. The group is very excited and feel that the Lucas Pond area would be the best site. Mr. Orrick explained that the course will not make money for the city, but that disc golf enthusiast will come from surrounding area to play the course hence spending money in our city. The estimated cost for constructing the course is $9,800. Mr. Orrick added that sponsorships could be sold to regenerate some of the initial cost. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilwoman Rodgers to proceed with this and have expenses paid out of city’s capital account. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed. Councilwoman Marshall added that this will also increase the expense of maintenance and upkeep around the pond and park area.

Councilwoman Martin asked Mayor McCormick if an employee had been hired to keep the park area clean. Mayor McCormick answered that a part-time employee of Crossett Recreation has been working in the park for the past week. Councilwoman Martin expressed concern that the park and other parts of the city are looking trashy. She asked that Crossett Recreation Director be made to answer to the Crossett Recreation Commission and a list of job duties be prepared for all city employees. City Councilmember added that they feel like they have lost effectiveness and asked Mayor McCormick to work with the Crossett Recreation Commission and Crossett Public Works Officer Jeff Harrison to clean up the city.

Mayor McCormick mentioned that the Crossett Recreation Commission is working on by-laws.

Councilwoman Martin asked for a list of city properties and who is responsible for taking care of each property. She also asked for job descriptions for each city employee. Mayor McCormick requested that Councilwoman Marshall set up a meeting with him on the following day.

Councilwoman Marshall informed the council that Forward Arkansas is planning a “back to school” block party for the Crossett School District on August 19, 2017. They are asking for use of Crossett Sports Complex to hold the event. Motion by Councilman Knight, seconded by Councilwoman Martin to allow the event to be held at the sports complex. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed. Councilwoman Marshall added that they are looking for volunteers to help with the event.

Mayor McCormick reminded council of “Cool Kids” event scheduled for July 22 at Crossett Fire Station #1. The Crossett Fire Department will set up ladder truck as a make shift splash pad for the public.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked for an update on 3rd party billing for the ambulance service. Fire Chief Bo Higginbotham stated that he has received some bids and will present the proposals at the next regular council meeting.

Proposed Resolution 2017-5, a resolution directing the Ashley County Quorum Court to levy 2.40 mills for the purpose of maintaining the Crossett Library, was presented to the council. Motion by Councilwoman Marshall, seconded by Councilman Knight to have City Attorney James Hamilton read the proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Mr. Hamilton read the resolution. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to adopt Resolution 2017-5. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Resolution was adopted.

Proposed Resolution 2017-6, a resolution directing ACQC to levy 5.0 mills for the city of Crossett operations, was presented to the council. Motion by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Knight to have city attorney read the proposed resolution. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Hamilton read the resolution. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilwoman Marshall to adopt Resolution 2017-6. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Resolution 2017-6 was adopted.

Mayor McCormick opened the floor for questions or discussion. Mr. John Hollimon asked the city to consider removing the 4-way stop signs at 3rd Avenue and Elm Street. Mr. Hollimon also requested that the council consider banning residents from burning leaves and other debris inside the city limits.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

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