

**MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF BELTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 16, 2018
CITY HALL ANNEX, 520 MAIN STREET
BELTON, MISSOURI**

Mayor Davis called the special meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Councilman Newell led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Councilmembers present: Mayor Jeff Davis, Councilmen Jeff Fletcher, Gary Lathrop, Lorrie Peek, Bob Newell, Chet Trutzel, and Dean Van Winkle; Absent: Councilmen Ryan Finn and Tim Savage. Also present: Alexa Barton, City Manager; Megan McGuire, City Attorney; and Patti Ledford, City Clerk.

ORDINANCES:

Patti Ledford, City Clerk, gave the final reading of Bill No. 2018-01: **An ordinance approving a vacation of unimproved Belton Avenue in the Autumn Woods planned unit development, on the north side of Markey Road, just west of Scott Avenue, in the City of Belton, Cass County, Missouri.** Presented by Councilman Newell, seconded by Councilman Peek. Councilman Lathrop asked why the City is abandoning the property. Dave Clements, Planning and Building Director, explained that it was a provision of the PUD (Planned Unit Development) from 2015. It is an existing unimproved right-of-way on the west side of the subdivision on the other side of the floodplain that wasn't necessary so the developer asked that it be vacated. It is never going to be improved so it has been vacated to go into part of the land of the PUD. Councilman Lathrop clarified that it is City land and asked why we are giving it away instead of selling it. Mr. Clements said typically when there is something vacated half of it goes to the existing property owners on each side. The Council was polled and the following vote recorded: Ayes: 7, Mayor Davis, Councilmen Trutzel, Lathrop, Newell, Fletcher, Van Winkle, and Councilwoman Peek; Noes: None; Absent: 2, Councilmen Finn and Savage. Bill No. 2018-01 was declared passed and in full force and effect as Ordinance No. 2018-4404, subject to Mayoral veto.

Ms. Ledford gave the final reading of Bill No. 2018-02: **An ordinance of the City of Belton, Missouri approving a cooperative agreement between the City of Belton, Missouri, and the Mid-America Regional Council for funding operations of operation green light traffic control system in the amount of \$9,600.** Presented by Councilman Lathrop, seconded by Councilwoman Peek. The Council was polled and the following vote recorded; Ayes: 7, Councilwoman Peek, Councilmen VanWinkle, Mayor Davis, Councilmen Newell, Fletcher, Trutzel, and Lathrop; Noes: None; Absent: 2, Councilmen Finn and Savage. Bill No. 2018-02 was declared passed and in full force and effect as Ordinance No. 2018-4405, subject to Mayoral veto.

Ms. Ledford gave the final reading of Bill No. 2018-03: **An ordinance approving the 2018 intergovernmental agreement between the Mid-America Regional Council Solid Waste Management District and the City of Belton, Missouri relating to the Regional Household Hazardous Waste Program.** Presented by Councilman Trutzel, seconded by Councilman

Lathrop. The Council was polled and the following vote recorded: Ayes: 7, Councilwoman Peek, Councilman Lathrop, Mayor Davis, Councilmen Trutzel, Fletcher, VanWinkle, and Newell; Noes: None; Absent: 2, Councilmen Finn and Savage. Bill No. 2018-03 was declared passed and in full force and effect as Ordinance No. 2018-4406, subject to Mayoral veto.

Ms. Ledford gave the final reading of Bill No. 2018-05: **An ordinance calling an election to authorize a Use Tax in the City of Belton, Missouri.** Presented by Councilwoman Peek, seconded by Councilman Newell. Mayor Davis asked what surrounding cities have passed a use tax. Sheila Ernzen, Finance Director, said Cass County and the State of Missouri. He asked about Peculiar. Ms. Barton said she is not sure but will check with other cities and report back. The Council was polled and the following vote recorded; Ayes: 7, Mayor Davis, Councilmen Lathrop, Trutzel, Fletcher, Newell, VanWinkle, and Councilwoman Peek; Noes: None; Absent: 2, Councilmen Finn and Savage. Bill No. 2018-05 was declared passed and in full force and effect as Ordinance No. 2018-4407, subject to Mayoral veto.

RESOLUTIONS:

Ms. Ledford read Resolution R2018-07: **A resolution for the City of Belton to participate in a joint request for proposal to conduct a feasibility study regarding a potential consolidation of City fire services and district fire protection services including emergency medical services with the City of Grandview, Mount Pleasant Fire Protection District, South Metro Fire Protection District, West Peculiar Fire Protection District and Western Cass Fire Protection District, with the City of Belton serving as the coordinating agency for the proposal.** Presented by Councilman Newell, seconded by Councilwoman Peek. Mayor Davis asked that the overhead map of the area be shown so the public can see it. Norman Larkey, Fire Chief, provided an overview stating when he was hired as Fire Chief about 4 years ago, there was talk of merging fire districts. There were several plans but none of them got off the ground. After being here 2-3 years he noticed a large duplication of efforts from fire departments so he started talking with the local fire chiefs and determined the best thing to do is a study to see if there is a need to merge fire districts and cities to try to and save efforts. There is no need for 5-6 fire departments/districts to be doing the same things all of the time. So this is where we are at now and what is in front of the Council tonight to do the study to see if it is feasible. The study may come back fine, it might say a couple of districts need to merge, but won't know until the study is complete. He believes the process is a good thing and believes it will help the citizens and taxpayers as well as response time and ISO ratings, which is the rating we get when we purchase a home. Insurance companies put ratings on cities. Belton is a 3 ISO rating, South Metro is a 2 ISO rating. An ISO rating of 1 is the best and 10 is uninsurable so it will help greatly. There are pluses and minuses to each area on the map and the study will help bring it to light. The map shows stations within the areas. Mount Pleasant does not have any fire stations; they contract with city of Belton and it is on a 5 year contract, that contract is up at the end of the year. We currently have the ambulance service in the area which is Belton, Mt. Pleasant and Western Cass; by state order by Department of EMS that is our ambulance district, which is the whole left side of the map minus Grandview. We are just asking to do the study to see where it takes us.

Mayor Davis asked on the ISO rating, how many miles away is it from a fire station? Chief Larkey said currently it is figured on how close you live to a fire station. If you are 3-5 road miles of either one of the stations you get an ISO rating of three; more than 5 road miles, you will get a 10. There is a new caveat, if you live past 7 road miles and have credible water, like a fire hydrant within a 1,000 feet of your home, you get a 10W- and you can get insurance with a

10W, because they are looking at the water aspect. Mayor Davis said there are lots of houses outside that 5 mile area. How much are people paying for insurance? Chief Larkey said we get, on average, a call once a week from an insurance agent requesting a rating. He drives it to get the road miles, he also google maps it and gives them the report. We have had some people when they build their house that are told they are a 3 and then find out they are a 10 or a 10W. He had one individual that had their rates go from \$9,000-\$25,000 because he went from an ISO 3 to an ISO 10W. There is a huge increase in premiums. This would help 90-95 % of that, although there are some pockets you can't get to.

Mayor Davis said in the resolution it states there are many potential benefits to the consolidation of resources and assets among multiple fire protection services including access to trained staff, regional service planning and delivery, reduction of duplicate expenditures and costs savings. What would be the advantage of consolidation when we talk about the assets? Chief Larkey said a good advantage is that South Metro has a large training tower that everybody could use. Not that we can't beg and borrow to use it now, but it would make it seamless. You would have a cost advantage for purchasing for 6 entities instead of one. You would save some management positions through attrition so you could look at savings there. Mayor Davis said this it is kind of like partnerships we have been trying to do with Raymore and Peculiar by being regional, which saves taxpayers lots of money. Chief Larkey said this would be a huge step towards regionalization which is a way of the future, and it would be a cost savings and thinks this would be one step in that direction.

Councilman Lathrop asked if any of the fire districts are volunteer. Chief Larkey said yes, Western Cass is volunteer. Chief Larkey said we do spend time going to Western Cass when they don't have anyone to respond, and it is getting more and more because it is hard to get volunteers in this day and age. We are spending our city resources to go there because of our mutual aid contract and the state says we have to go down there with our ambulances. But we don't want to just send an ambulance down there when they don't have anyone to respond so we have to send a fire truck as well.

Mayor Davis said what did we say about EMTs – who doesn't have their own EMTs? Chief Larkey said each entity does except Western Cass and Mt. Pleasant, but we cover Mt. Pleasant. It is an everyday occurrence to do mutual aid.

Councilman Trutzel asked if we contract with Loch Lloyd. Chief Larkey said we contract with Mt. Pleasant and Loch Lloyd is part of Mt. Pleasant. Councilman Trutzel said he assumes if this goes through it would make a difference on how to determine a fire station and location. Chief Larkey said he thinks that would be part of the plan because there are a lot of ISO issues out west. He believes to fix those you would need a fire station and assumes it would call for a new fire station to the west.

Councilman Newell asked how dispatching would change. Chief Larkey said currently Belton and Mt. Pleasant are dispatched by Belton police department; South Metro by Raymore police department; Western Cass and West Peculiar by Lee's Summit police department and Grandview by Kansas City fire. That is a big unknown, but believes it would all be dispatched by one. Councilman Newell said that would make it more efficient.

Councilman VanWinkle said as far as the running of the fire department today compared to moving on to a fire district like this, how would that effect the City of Belton ordinances and council involvement, if any? Megan McGuire, City Attorney, said in general a fire protection

district would be its own political subdivision. There are a number of issues that would have to be evaluated if you get some kind of reasonable response with a feasibility study. That is probably why the feasibility study costs what it does because they look at those types of questions, concerns and organizational options.

Mayor Davis asked Police Chief James Person if he has any concerns. Chief Person said they would not be wrestling for the same dollars. Chief Larkey said that is correct. That is another thing this could do is it could make funding fire and ambulance service a more stable funding source for both of those. There is a definite need for that. Chief Person said as their own taxing entity they no longer would be part of the general fund. They would be funded either through the property tax or the ¼ cent tax that is already on there or some other means, but they would not be part of the general fund as it is today. The City might make some contribution or payment as part of being part of the fire protection district but it would not be funded as far as line item budgeting.

Mayor Davis said his concern is when is it going to be a cost savings and when are there going to be hidden costs? Chief Larkey said the study should lay this all out. He doesn't know how detailed it will be.

Councilman Trutzel asked if we are we the first one to see this. Chief Larkey said so far, everyone has agreed to do this except Belton and Mt. Pleasant. Mt. Pleasant will decide at their meeting February 13th. Mt. Pleasant wanted some questions answered before they voted.

Councilman Lathrop asked how the district will be financed. Chief Larkey said currently state statute says if you form a fire district everyone in that fire district will have to pay the same levy. Currently, we are all paying differently. South Metro has an operating levy, ambulance levy, communications levy, debt levy and they also have a ½ cent sales tax. All the fire districts have that levy. South Metro is the only one that has a sales tax. Under a consolidation, state statute says that everyone will have the same levy and a study will lay that out as well as what that levy would be.

Being no further discussion, vote on the resolution was recorded with all present voting in favor. Councilmen Finn and Savage absent. Resolution passed.

Being no further business, Councilman Lathrop moved to adjourn at 7:23 P.M. Councilman Trutzel seconded. All present voted in favor. Councilmen Finn and Lathrop absent. Meeting adjourned.

Patti Ledford, City Clerk

Jeff Davis, Mayor