

CITY OF TARRANT
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 16, 2024
TARRANT CITY HALL

The City Council of the City of Tarrant, Alabama, met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday September 16, 2024, at 7:00 PM at City Hall.

Mayor Wayman A. Newton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM immediately following the council work session that began at 6:00PM to discuss items on the agenda and other matters.

City of Tarrant Fire Chief, Patrick Bennet, lead those in attendance in the invocation. City Attorney Michael Brymer lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Newton asked for a roll call. The following officials were present during the roll call:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews
Mayor Wayman A. Newton

Absent:

Councilor Catherine "Cathy" Anderson
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

A quorum was determined to be present at the meeting.

The minutes from the September 4, 2024 regularly scheduled council meeting were presented for review and approval. Councilor Threadford moved to approve the minutes of the September 4, 2024 meeting. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being three (3) and the nays being zero (0), with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the minutes were adopted, and the minutes for September, 2024 council meeting were approved.

The Mayor reminded all those in attendance of the annual 'Trunk or Treat.' The 2024 'Trunk or Treat' will be scheduled for Thursday October 31st from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Like previous years, the Mayor invited all businesses entities and individuals to participate by providing candy from their open trunks at the City of Tarrant Ford Avenue. The Mayor also announced an upcoming event in partnership with Amazon titled 'Helping Hands Giveaway.' The 'Helping Hands Giveaway' will be on Saturday September 28, 2024 from 11am to 2pm on Ford Avenue. The free giveaway items will include household items, Christmas decors, pet items, prom dresses and much more!

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman entered the meeting chambers during the communications from the Mayors office.

Councilor Threadford provided a thank you and an update on previous Saturday's newly established 'Tarrant Food Hub' by informing all those in attendance that there were over 200 families served and 50 homeless neighbors were provided with hot spaghetti. The 'Tarrant Food Hub' themed 'Spread the Love' was on September 14, 2024 from 9am to 11am at Tarrant Rec Center, and it will be an ongoing event that will occur every second Saturday of every month.

Councilor Freeman informed all those in attendance that the celebration for the installation of the traffic light that was to be held on the previous Saturday was cancelled due to weather, and that the event is forwarded on to September 21, 2024 from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. at Brummitt Heights. A food truck supplied by Renee's Kitchen will be present.

There were no committee reports.

The Mayor and Council moved on to Old Business.

Councilor Threadford introduced and read Resolution No. 9187, A Resolution Authorizing the Payment of the Salary of the City Manager, Reinstatement of all Benefits Previously Provided to the City Manager, and Directing Back Pay of Any Salary and Benefits of the City Manager. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton spoke on unreadiness by summarizing and reminding all those who were present on the last court outcome regarding the hiring of a city manger, and that it was currently being appealed to the Alabama Supreme Court. Councilor Threadford responded by having an opposite interpretation of the original court outcome and referred to the City Attorney Michael Brymer for the interpretation. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

- Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
- Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
- Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
- Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9187 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Mayor Newton introduced and read Resolution No. 9191. A Resolution Removing Chief Wendell Major from the Office of Chief of Police for the City of Tarrant. Mayor Newton moved to approve the Resolution No. 9191. There was no seconder. Motion to adopt did not receive a second.

Next, the Council moved on to New Business.

Mayor Newton stated that the next item on the agenda would be a public hearing for the addresses stated in the following Resolution within the City of Tarrant city limits:

Resolution No. 9209- A Resolution Concerning the Conditions at 1265 Etowah Street and Directing Action with Respect to the Condition of the Property.

Resolution No. 9210 - A Resolution Concerning the Conditions at 1257 Etowah Street and Directing Action with Respect to the Condition of the Property.

Resolution No. 9211 -A Resolution Concerning the Conditions at 2208 Toles Street and Directing Action with Respect to the Condition of the Property.

Resolution No. 9212 - A Resolution Concerning the Conditions at 2052 East Lake Blvd and Directing Action with Respect to the Conditions of the Property.

After reading each property address, Mayor Newton asked if there was anyone present to speak on behalf of each property. No one present spoke on each of the said properties. Upon closing the public hearing for each property, Councilor Bryant moved to approve Resolution No. 9209, Resolution No. 9210, and Resolution No. 9212. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. There was no unreadiness. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9209, Resolution No. 9210 and Resolution No. 9212 was agreed to, and the Resolutions were approved.

Next, Mayor Newton requested a motion to remove Resolution No. 9211 from the agenda. Councilor Bryant moved to approve the removal of Resolution No. 9211 from the agenda based on the issue being resolved. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to remove Resolution No. 9211 was agreed to, and the Resolution was removed.

Councilor Threadford introduced and read Resolution No. 9213, A Resolution Regarding Notice of Claim Dated March 11, 2024. Councilor Threadford moved to approve Resolution No. 9213. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9213 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Threadford introduced and read Resolution No. 9214, A Resolution Authorizing and Directing the Public Works Department of the City of Tarrant to Perform Lawn Care and Maintenance to All City Owned Property and Those Properties Used by the City Under a Written Agreement. Councilor Threadford moved to approve Resolution No. 9214. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton requested on record that the hiring freeze on all non-public safety positions pertaining to Resolution No. 9196 and Council refusal of needed equipment resulted in a re-allocation of labor in the public works department, and that prior to the current administration the Parks and Recreation Department of Tarrant did not use the public works laborers. And, that the hiring freeze over non-public safety positions in Tarrant resulted in the lack of manpower and removal of laborers in the Tarrant Parks and Recreation Department. The Mayor listed City of Tarrant Parks that the City of Tarrant Public Works Department can continue to maintain. Councilor Bryant refrained from seconding the earlier said motion and requested the Resolution be tabled until the next meeting allowing the Mayor and the Parks and Rec. Director to draft up a proposal in resolving the man power issue. The Mayor affirmed that the facilities cannot be maintained until the hiring freeze is removed and the equipment is purchased. Councilor Threadford intervened and questioned the number of laborers in the Public Works Department, and also affirmed that hiring more public works laborers is unnecessary with just 5 districts and 6 laborers for each district leaving 3 for Parks and Recreation. Councilor Threadford also reminded the Mayor that a cost analysis is needed for purchasing more equipment for the Public Works Department. Councilor Bryant recommended a meeting. Mayor Newton agreed to meet with the Public Works committee which includes Council Matthews and Councilor Anderson. The Parks and Recreation Director will also be invited to the meeting. Councilor Freeman requested an updated copy on the list of committees and their members. Mayor Newton agreed to provide an updated copy. Councilor Bryant motioned to table Resolution No. 9214 until next meeting to provide time for the Mayor, the Recreation Director and the two Councilors to resolve the issue. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to table Resolution No. 9214 was agreed to, and the Resolution was tabled.

Councilor Bryant introduced and read Resolution No. 9215, A Resolution Authorizing the Placement of Street Lights at Locations on Evergreen Street within the City of Tarrant. After discussion on stray dogs and lights needed to assist in managing the issue, Councilor Bryant moved to approve Resolution No. 9215. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9215 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

Councilor Threadford introduced and read Resolution No. 9216, A Resolution Authorizing the Chief of Police to Resolve or Otherwise Pursue All Pending Personnel Actions Involving Police Officers with the Personnel Board of Jefferson County. There was suggestion to remove the term 'Officers' and replace with 'Personnel.' Councilor Threadford moved to approve the correction of amending and removing 'Officers' to be replaced with 'Personnel.' Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to amend Resolution No. 9216 was agreed to, and the Resolution was amended.

Councilor Bryant re-introduced and re-read Resolution No. 9216, A Resolution Authorizing the Chief of Police to Resolve or Otherwise Pursue All Pending Personnel Actions Involving Police *Personnel* with the Personnel Board of Jefferson County. Councilor Bryant moved to approve Resolution No. 9216. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton requested to go on record by providing the history of the Council approved investigation on Chief Major in the spring of 2024, and that the said Resolution is the stem of the Resolution resulting in the firing of two Officers. Further, that the Officers are currently in the process of filing equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaints and appeals. Councilor Threadford responded by acknowledging a letter from the Jefferson County Personnel affirming the Chief of Police to have full control of the City of Tarrant Police Department and Police Officers. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant
Councilor Tracie B. Threadford
Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman
Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

None

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman Newton

The yeas being four (4) and the nays being zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve Resolution No. 9216 was agreed to, and the Resolution was approved.

The Council reviewed the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant Electric Department ending September 16, 2024. Councilor Bryant moved to approve the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant Electric week ending September 16, 2024. Councilor Threadford seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant

Councilor Tracie B. Threadford

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

The yeas being four (4) and the nays zero (0) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant Electric week ending September 16, 2024 was agreed to, and the vouchers and expenses were approved.

Next, the City Council reviewed the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant for September 16, 2024. Councilor Bryant moved to approve the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant week ending September 16, 2024. Councilor Matthews seconded the motion. Mayor Newton called for a vote.

Yeas:

Councilor John T. "Tommy" Bryant

Councilor Tracie B. Threadford

Councilor Deborah "Debbie" Matthews

Nays:

Councilor Veronica Bandy Freeman

Not voting:

Mayor Wayman A. Newton

The yeas being three (3) and the nays one (1) with one (1) member not voting, the motion to approve the vouchers and expenses for the City of Tarrant for September 16, 2024 was agreed to, and the vouchers and expenses were approved.

Next, the Council moved to Public Comments.

Before Public Comments Mayor Newton asked Pastor Everson to approach the podium to provide his most recent announcement. Pastor Daniel Everson of New Faith Ministries introduced himself and his wife to voice the announcement. Ms. Everson announced a dedication service of church building and ministry at 109 3rd Avenue to be held on Sunday September 22, 2024 at 5:00 pm. Everyone is invited to attend.

First, Chuck Winborn. Chuck Winborn re-introduced and read an article published by AI.com updated May 31, 2023 by Carol Robinson. Mr. Winborn continued to provide past incidents negative performances and verbal remarks made by the Mayor towards Council and City of Tarrant citizens. Mr. Winborn provided a copy to the City Clerk for filing purposes. The Mayor responded by stating he did not like being called a 'n...' and a 'b..' The Mayor also read facebook posts made by Chuck Winborn from 2013 and 2015 that was perceived as a racist post. The Mayor and Mr.

Winborn debated on the validity of the racist post. There was debate, accusations, denials and back and forth between Councilors and the Mayor on what was said in past meetings.

Second, Jim Lowry was not in attendance.

Third, Charlie Williams summarized public works issues with his yard. Mr. Newton assured Mr. Williams that he would speak with Mr. Browder of the Public Works Department in attempts to resolve the issue, most particularly, the unawareness of a second ditch. Councilor Freeman made verbal note to Mr. Williams that she would provide him information regarding the next cookout event.

Fourth, Charlie _____ spoke of higher callings and standards for leaders and colleagues. Mr. _____ acknowledged the continuous need for improved public leaders with higher callings in the City of Tarrant.

There being no further comments from the public, the Mayor entertained a motion to adjourn. Councilor Threadford made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Bryant seconded the motion. A verbal vote was taken. Meeting ended at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Laverne Knight
City Clerk September 16, 2024
City of Tarrant Council Meeting, Alabama

READ AND APPROVED this the 16th day of September, 2024.

The City of Tarrant, Alabama

APPROVED: _____
WAYMAN NEWTON, MAYOR



ATTEST: _____

Dr. Laverne Knight