



**TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY**  
**Regularly Scheduled Workshop Meeting**  
**May 05, 2020 6:00 PM**  
**Minutes**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor called the meeting to order by stating, "I am Steven Allen, Mayor for the Town of Ashland City, and I hereby call to order the May 5, 2020 Workshop Meeting of the City Council of Ashland City. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, and in accordance with Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order 16, this meeting is being conducted with limited physical public access. The meeting is being made available however to public via live video stream video on the Zoom application. The meeting is being done by electronic means to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the City's citizens in light of the COVID 19 pandemic."

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT

Mayor Steve Allen

Vice Mayor Daniel Anderson

Councilman Tim Adkins

Councilman Gerald Greer

Councilman Roger Jackson

Councilman Chris Kerrigan

Councilwoman Lisa Walker

All members reported by electronic means.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Anderson, seconded by Councilman Greer to approve the agenda. All approved by voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Workshop Meeting Minutes 4-7-2020

A motion was made by Councilman Adkins, seconded by Councilman Kerrigan, to approve the April 7, 2020 Workshop Meeting Minutes. All approved by voice vote.

**REPORTS:**

2. Fire, Codes, and IT

Chief Walker reported with IT there hasn't been a lot going on other than helping with Council, Department Head, and Planning Commission with electronic means meetings. As far as the Codes Department goes both inspectors have been busy with inspections as the construction business has continued going. He mentioned the hotel is going up and the apartment building that caught fire has now been torn down and put back up. On the Fire Department side of things, the day started with a CPR call and ended up with a fire call they were able to stop in the basement.

3. Police Department

Chief Kenny Ray reported they are back to normal with transporting and are picking traffic up. No one is currently sick and he hopes it stays that way. They are down one (1) officer as today was her last day and he hopes to be able to replace this position.

4. Court

Mayor stated Ms. Anita is not on the call tonight as she had to take someone to the hospital.

5. Senior Center

Ms. Melissa Womack reported they are back working out at the center; however, due to the pandemic it will be at least June before the seniors will be able to come back. She further reported they are working on getting everything ready for them to come back.

6. Parks and Recreation

Mr. Scott Sampson reported Riverbluff Park has been extremely busy. After the storm on Sunday night there were about twenty (20) trees down on the trail and they have now been cleaned up. Soccer and baseball have canceled and he is still waiting to hear on softball. He stated he has been in touch with the Tennessee Army National Guard and is waiting to hear back if they can offer some assistance with the extension of the trail behind Boarders Inn. He reported he visited a dual use pickle-ball and tennis court and believes it would work well and one (1) of our courts could be converted to a dual use court.

7. Public Works/Utilities

Mr. Biggers reported everything is good and they are back to full staff. Ms. Vickie's office is currently being remodeled for ADA compliance. The water tank should be painted soon as weather permits. The Water Plant's filter is back up and running. He stated he would like to add for the governor's grant the option of replacing the roof at the Public Works building as there are multiple leaks. Councilman Jackson questioned when it was roofed last. Mr. Biggers stated right before he came they replaced the screws. Vice Mayor Anderson stated he believes this is the original roof. Mr. Biggers added the knee wall that goes all the way around the building is where the problems occur and it needs to be replaced.

8. Financial Manager

Ms. Gayle Bowman stated they can now email out direct deposit slips. Several employees have already signed up. She thanked Jake Greer for his work in making this possible as they have been trying to get this done for two (2) years. There has been a partition put up between the ladies in the front office and she thanked Mr. Biggers' crew for getting that done. She stated she did a summary from March nineteenth (19th) to the day we reopened and overall the city is short eighty three thousand two hundred and eighty nine dollars (\$83,289). Of that seventy two thousand dollars (\$72,000) is from city court being closed, not collecting those fines and costs, and the remaining is gasoline taxes.

9. City Recorder

Ms. Reed stated there was a new employee that started and had orientation this week. Mr. Russell is on the call tonight and will present his findings on the salary study. Planning Commission has made a recommendation for a rezone Monday night that will be for first reading next week. Councilman Jackson questioned the rezone. Mayor stated it is on Highway 12. Chief Walker stated it is on the agenda for tonight as item number twelve (12).

**OLD BUSINESS:**

10. Summerfest Discussion

Mr. Sampson stated he would recommend canceling Summerfest this year based on Governor Lee's Executive Order Number 30 prohibiting social gatherings of ten (10) or more people. Councilman Greer stated one thing that concerns him is after being locked up for so long having more people coming from other areas that could infect people here. Councilman Adkins questioned if anything has changed with the vendors and if we can apply the money we paid toward next year. Mr. Sampson replied no change. Councilwoman Walker stated she is for canceling it. Councilman Adkins agreed and stated we need to give adequate notice. After some discussion council decided it would be best to cancel Summerfest.

11. Ordinance: Rezone Map 64 Parcel 11.01- Highway 12 South and Caldwell Road

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY, TENNESSEE, BY REZONING PARCEL 11.01 OF CHEATHAM COUNTY TAX MAP 64, LOCATED ON HIGHWAY 12 SOUTH AND CALDWELL ROAD:** Chief Walker stated this is a residential piece of property facing the highway before the welcome sign of Ashland City and the owner originally took this to the Planning Commission asking for a Commercial Rezone. Further, the Planning Commission wasn't for this idea as they wanted to have a little more guidance as to what they were going to do with the property. As such, the City Planner Rick Gregory suggested zoning this as a PUD, which is a planned unit development, in which

the engineered site plan would have to be approved by the Planning Commission. Further, the owner presented a concept drawing for a professional office building, but will be required to get a engineered site plan if rezoned. He stated the decision was not unanimous, but it did pass and has been recommended by the Planning Commission for the rezone. Ms. Reed stated it takes two (2) readings and it is advertised as well. Chief Walker stated there are some citizen concerns with drainage and such, but those things will need to be addressed in the engineering. The owner of the property however does not want to hire an engineer until he knows he can proceed. This is something that is enforced with codes and the requirements of the city, the ordinances and drainage.

## 12. Salary Study

Mr. Larry Russell asked Ms. Reed to project the document titled Compensation Survey. He explained this document is where the data is compiled for external equity. Further, they have surveyed twenty-eight (28) different job classifications and they ask for minimum and maximum rates of pay for each classification and then they eliminate the bottom and top twenty five percent (25%) and then they are able to calculate an average inner quartile range. These figures give the market range of pay and then compare the data to the current pay rates. He stated they don't survey every position because the return rate of the participants of the surveys drop significantly if they ask for too many positions. Councilman Jackson questioned if the populations of these other towns have been compared to Ashland City. Mr. Russell stated there is a mix of some that are more, less, and around the same. Mr. Russell requested the factor ranking schedule be projected. He stated this document ranks four (4) compensable factors and scores based on these factors: knowledge and skills (what do you have to know to do the job), impact and accountability (responsible decision making), working relationships (nature of the relationships the job entails), and working conditions (how unsafe or unpleasant is the job). Based on the scores the jobs are assigned a rank for the salary schedule. He explained the positions highlighted in blue are non-exempt positions and are entitled to overtime or compensation time. Mr. Russell stated they also look at other towns that the city competes with for this data. This study revealed raises less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to bring employees up to the minimum for the positions. Mr. Russell requested the pay plan be projected. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned how to figure this if the employee is making more than recommended. Mr. Russell stated if their current salary is less than the recommended minimum they are considered within the range and no one gets a pay cut or ever loses. Further, the two (2) biggest pay raises were for the Financial Director and a Fire Captain other than that it is minimal. Vice Mayor Anderson stated he would never recommend anyone get a pay cut, but if you look at the numbers here, they reveal more than what some of the employees currently make. Mr. Russell stated the last document is the actual pay plan and is not a step plan as those tend to confuse employees. It consists of a minimum and maximum range of pay and typically yearly unless merit increases are given the employee receives a cost of living raise. There are fifteen different salary grades and the factor ranking schedule reveals which position falls within which salary range. Mayor Allen questioned cost of living raises. Mr. Russell stated it is a different world now, but he would not recommend anything over a two percent (2%) raise as that is what he believes the governor is recommending as well. Mayor Allen questioned salary studies where the gap is closed from lower level to higher level positions. Mr. Russell stated this is the multiplier effect and it is not unreasonable to look at this, but it is also good to look at tenure and there are ways to deal with this. Mr. Russell stated he enjoyed talking to everyone and we have a great fire department and police department. He stated the city is well ran from the best he can tell. Mayor thanked Mr. Russell for calling in tonight and Mr. Russell disconnected from the call. Councilman Kerrigan stated the council requested this study because last year there was the three percent (3%) cost of living raise given and it took some people out of the range and the other reason was because we were looking at doing different raises for different levels. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned at what point do we say that you are topped out and are not going to make any more money. Mayor Allen responded that although the salary is maxed out, they will still get a longevity

payment. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned how often a salary study needs to be done. Mayor Allen stated he understands this salary study better than any other study that has been completed and he did not like the step raise system. Councilman Kerrigan questioned if we could ask Mr. Russell how often a study needs to be completed. Ms. Reed stated she could email Mr. Russell and ask that question. Councilwoman Walker asked what the purpose of this will be next week. Ms. Reed stated if council chooses to move forward with this the pay table will need to be amended on the wage and salary policy. Councilwoman Walker stated she is not comfortable doing anything at this time. Ms. Reed stated nothing has to be done with this right now and we can revisit it next year if council chooses. Councilman Jackson stated there are a few job classifications that are not listed on the pages and it looks like some of them are made up. There are twenty-four(24) listed, but are more positions listed. Ms. Reed stated she will email Mr. Russell the questions that have been asked and will copy the council in the email so that he can respond to everyone and council can contact him directly with any questions they have.

### 13. Health Insurance Discussion

Ms. Reed stated she sent out the numbers to show the amount if the employee cost is kept the same along with the same HSA and employee out of pocket expense. She also sent the numbers to reflect the maximum member out of pocket for the individual to go from fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) for the individual to two thousand dollars (\$2,000) and from three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for the family to four thousand dollars (\$4,000). She further showed a decrease in the HSA amount from one thousand dollars (\$1,000) to five hundred dollars (\$500). Councilman Jackson stated he thought we voted on this and passed it. Ms. Reed stated her understanding from the motion was to keep the employee deductions the same. Further, during Councilman Adkins' second he asked if some of the numbers can be changed. Councilman Jackson questioned what we are looking at. Mayor Allen stated one thing is reducing the HSA. Councilman Jackson stated if we are going to take away money from them we might as well have raised the insurance. Ms. Bowman stated she ran the numbers based on the number of employees enrolled currently and it would be an increase of ninety-one thousand one hundred and sixty-five dollars (\$91,165). Councilman Jackson stated this has already been voted on and questioned why they are discussing it. Vice Mayor Anderson stated that is lower than the numbers we were told last week. Further, he thought the motion was to keep the company and the insurance he didn't realize. Councilman Kerrigan stated he thought the same thing. Ms. Reed stated she did go back and listen and the motion was to keep the employee deductions the same, but what we are looking at now is reducing the HSA and maximum out of pocket expense. Ms. Reed questioned if the figure Ms. Gayle stated includes any risk. Ms. Bowman clarified the figure she stated is the base increase the city will pay out for the insurance. Ms. Reed showed this year the city is projected to pay out four hundred and fourteen thousand eight hundred and eighty dollars and ninety two cents (\$414,880.92) for everything if everything is kept the same next year that cost will increase to five hundred forty-four thousand five hundred and twenty two dollars and thirty two cents (\$544,522.32) if the HSA amount and maximum out of pocket is changed the city is projected to pay out four hundred ninety seven thousand four hundred fifty two dollars and thirty two cents (\$497,452.32), but that is a lesser benefit for the employees. Vice Mayor questioned the shortage of revenues. Ms. Bowman stated it was eighty-three thousand two hundred and seventy-nine dollars (\$83,279), but the majority of it is court. Vice Mayor Anderson stated you can't have an accurate budget with more money going out than you have coming in and he would like to cut as much fat as we can off the budget. Vice Mayor Anderson stated we have more money going out than we have coming in correct. Ms. Bowman stated with the numbers she has been given this year yes and she had to decrease the revenues because of the virus. She stated we have a good fund balance, savings, but the revenue versus expenses is out of balance. Vice Mayor Anderson stated you aren't going to increase your expenses at home if you can't pay your water bill. Ms. Reed questioned the projections for this year because she was showing there will be money put back into the fund balance this year as we have already collected more revenue than we originally anticipated. Ms. Bowman stated she did not

take into consideration fund balance she is looking at revenue expected to come in versus estimated expenses. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned why the numbers are different. Ms. Bowman stated she is looking at true expenses going to be spent versus true estimated revenues going out not including fund balance. Ms. Reed stated she is talking about this fiscal year not next fiscal year. Mayor Allen stated Ms. Bowman doesn't look at any money left in the general fund. Ms. Bowman stated she is showing this fiscal year we will have money that will go back into the general fund as all the money will not be spent this year. Vice Mayor Anderson stated he feels that we are spending a ton of money this year and if we can get by without spending extra, we need to do that. Councilman Adkins stated he agrees. Councilwoman Walker questioned the number of employees we have. Ms. Bowman stated we have seventy-three (73) in the budget this year and currently there are sixty-three (63) taking insurance. Ms. Bowman then reviewed the employees enrolled in coverage.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

14. STBG Grant Contract

Ms. Reed stated this a contract for the census money the city receives due to the increase in the population. She hopes to have another contract to go along with this next week and hopefully there will be a change there. This will be for the trail connector grant project behind Boarders Inn connecting to Chapmansboro Road.

15. Sewer Treatment Plant Property Purchase Agreement

Ms. Reed stated Ms. Jennifer Noe requested this be added to the agenda as she has been in touch with the county's attorney and they hope to have an agreement for council's approval next week. Mayor Allen questioned the acreage for the parcel. Mr. Biggers responded it is a little over ten (10) acres.

16. Fire Contract

Chief Walker stated this is the rural fire contract with the county where they protect the homes outside the city. Further, they have a meeting regarding this tomorrow night and he believes they will request to go one (1) more year with a status quo contract, but he will know more about this tomorrow night and have better answers next Tuesday. Mayor questioned if it is alright with Chief Walker for the year extension. Chief Walker stated it is up to Council, but we have cost increases

17. Part-time Staffing Fire Contract

Chief Walker stated this one was passed already, but the county changed some verbiage when they passed it. Further, this will add sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000) until the end of July for staffing.

18. Resolution: Families First Coronavirus Response Act

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY, TENNESSEE IMPLEMENTING A POLICY TO ENSURE THE TOWN'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT WITH RESPECT TO EXPANSION OF THE FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT AND THE EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE ACT.** Ms. Reed stated there were some changes federally to FMLA and this will amend the policy to reflect these changes. Further, it will expire in December.

19. Ordinance: Amend Title 18; Chapter 1 of the Municipal Code: Water Rates

**AN ORDINANCE BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY, TENNESSEE TO AMEND TITLE 18, CHAPTER 1, SECTION 18-107(1) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATING WATER AND SEWER RATES FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY AND ALL AREAS SURROUNDING THE CITY THAT RECEIVE WATER AND/OR SEWER SERVICE FROM THE ASHLAND CITY WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT.** Ms. Reed stated this is the annual three percent (3%) increase in water rates. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned if this is every year. Ms. Reed responded yes. Ms. Bowman stated she gave in some of the paperwork what the figures would be if they increased this amount to five percent (5%) increase instead. Further, adding this additional would increase this by seventy eight thousand six hundred and thirty dollars (\$78,630).

20. Ordinance: Adopt 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget

Ms. Reed there have been several different proposals with the packet, and they will need direction as to where everyone wants to go with raises and such. Ms. Reed displayed a budget summary and explained this fiscal year projections show there will be money added to the fund balance, but next fiscal year there is a lesser collection of revenues around one million dollars (\$1,000,000). She further explained the columns and various options on the spreadsheet. Mayor questioned if the anticipated payments are included in the budget. Ms. Bowman replied yes, the interest amount only. Councilman Adkins questioned if direction is needed for raises. Ms. Bowman stated she would like to nothing is written in stone, but she would like direction as to what will need to be included and what they would like to do with property taxes. Mayor stated he does not care to raise water rates or property taxes. Further, he would propose a two percent (2%) raise. Councilman Adkins stated he is leaning toward most of that except maybe a one percent (1%) or no raise. Ms. Bowman stated they could further change the longevity if they choose to do so. Councilwoman Walker stated her thoughts are during this time employees have been able to receive a paycheck, have had insurance, and a job to come back to. Further, next year she is for no merit raises, no cost of living raises, but is for the bonus pay. She further stated she would like to freeze the new positions of court officer, seasonal parks, mayor's assistant, and the police reserve pay, but would like to fill the open positions and would not like to approve the salary study. Councilman Adkins state he agrees with Ms. Lisa specifically on the no new positions this year. Mayor stated he would really like to keep the reserve pay in there as they put in a lot of hours, but do not get paid for it. Councilman Adkins questioned the amount. Ms. Bowman stated it is twelve thousand (\$12,000). Ms. Bowman stated this is a good time to ask department heads about changes or cuts. Councilman Kerrigan questioned if the cuts have been made by department heads. Ms. Bowman stated she has not cut anything just yet as she didn't want to make someone cut their budget then the council decide to do a percentage cut and have the department head have to cut double. Councilman Jackson stated if we are hurting this bad we need to put the city hall and fire hall on hold. Ms. Bowman stated you have never looked at it as expenses versus revenue further we have always given money back the last several years. Councilman Jackson stated he doesn't know why we are going to such extremes if we can't do anything for the employees we need to stop city hall and fire hall. Councilwoman Walker questioned about if city hall and fire hall were being driven by the county purchasing the building. Councilman Adkins stated he would like to see where corners can be cut, but would like to proceed with the construction of the city hall and fire hall. Ms. Womack stated with the things we can cut the event committee met and they have an idea to propose where we could cut ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) out of that budget if the city still wants to have an event they can do an alternative to Music on Main titled Community Together on the Cumberland. This would reduce the budget to five thousand (\$5,000) from fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000). Further, they would ask local musicians to offer their services instead of having to pay for the music. They would be able to utilize the stage, disc golf course, and could even allow the Farmer's Market to do something the same day. Mayor stated he would like to have something, and he thinks it would work well. Ms. Womack stated this would be a community event and they would not charge the vendors. Councilman Kerrigan stated it is a really good idea and way to showcase the park. Ms. Bowman stated she can cut the ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) out of the budget for this. Councilwoman Walker questioned the shotgun purchase. Chief Ray stated this is for purchasing the shotguns to make them uniform for everyone and replace the old ones. Ms. Bowman reviewed the changes council has recommended so far and questioned the direction of cuts from the department heads. Mayor stated he doesn't want to do a percentage cut, but would like to see what cuts can be made. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned how much money the council decides to keep in fund balance. Ms. Bowman the state requires two (2) months, but the council decides three (3) months. She stated we have more than that. Councilman Jackson stated we always said we want three and a half million dollars (\$3,500,000). Ms. Reed stated the fund balance going into next fiscal year is six million eight hundred and fifty thousand eight dollars (\$6,850,008). She explained that the city will have to dip into fund balance to balance the budget and we do have an excess in fund balance based on the requirement of the

Comptroller. Councilman Jackson stated to answer Daniel's question six (6) months is four million, but we have way more than that. Ms. Reed explained that in the past we have tried to under project revenues a little and to over project expenditures. Councilman Kerrigan stated the burden does not need to be put on the taxpayers when we are sitting in a good position already. Ms. Reed reviewed the street aid, drug fund, and water fund summaries. Further, stating the cash balance will not have to be dipped into at all with the water fund. If the council chooses not to do a water rate increase the revenues will have to be adjusted as it currently shows a three percent (3%) increase.

21. Appoint City Attorney

Mayor stated next week they will appoint the city attorney and asked if there are any questions or comments on this.

22. Appoint City Recorder

Mayor stated next week they will appoint the City Recorder and asked if there are any questions or comments on this. Councilwoman Walker stated on the document that was sent out there is a change to the heading to take out the word "clerk" but it is not marked out in the subsections. Ms. Reed stated she will fix this.

**EXPENDITURE REQUESTS:**

23. Bank Rates Bid Approval

Ms. Reed stated the Comptroller's Office requires us to check our bank rates every year and they will be included in the packet. She stated she believes Ms. Gayle will agree to recommend keeping everything the same. Ms. Reed stated we use the investment pool for the savings and we are not required to check their rates. Ms. Bowman stated if they are in line she would recommend staying where we are.

24. Permission to bid red light construction

Chief Walker stated they have been in contact with A.O. Smith and they have ninety-five percent (95%) complete drawings on the red light. Further, they are anticipating going to construction in the Fall on the berm project. We would need the light in place for the construction. This is a pass through except for the additional cost of the crosswalk. Ms. Biggers stated the crosswalk is around seventy five hundred dollars (\$7,500).

**OTHER.**

Mayor reported we had a department head meeting at the public works conference room this morning following six (6) foot guidelines and utilizing face masks. Mayor stated the employees seem to be happy to be back at work and are busy. Mr. Bigger's crew put a partition between the desks at City Hall.

Vice Mayor Anderson questioned if Mayor Allen could reach out to Mayor McCarver about the purchase of city hall for the jail construction project. Mayor stated he would do that.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilman Greer, seconded by Councilman Kerrigan, to adjourn. All approved by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.



MAYOR STEVE ALLEN



CITY RECORDER KELLIE REED, CMFO, CMC