Town of Hot Springs
Board of Alderman Meeting
January 2, 2024

Present:

Mayor Abigail Norton
Alderman Jeanne Gentry
Alderman Wendy Stancil
Alderman Dan Myers

Fire Department – Chief Josh Norton
Maintenance – Bryan Raines
Tax Department – Laura Holloway

Mayor Norton called the Town meeting to order at 6:00pm

Mayor Norton asked everyone to mute their phones, not to carry on side conversations or speak when someone else is speaking.

Mayor Norton asked for a motion to approve the December 4, 2023, Board meeting minutes. Alderman Myers made a motion to approve; Alderman Gentry seconded the motion; all were in favor.

Via Zoom, Carol Avery, with Loudermilk, Church & Co., LLP, presented the audit to the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Graham
Mr. Graham said he has some ideas for local projects at the Community Center and the Fire Building. He also has a parking solution he'd like to share. Mr. Graham requested to be on the February 2024 Board of Aldermen's meeting agenda.

Mayor Norton

Loudermilk, Church & Co, LLP 2024 Contract
Mayor Norton asked the Board to review a contract from Loudermilk, Church & Co, LLP to allow to audit our accounts in 2024. The mayor asked the Board for a motion to approve Loudermilk, Church & Co, LLP for the next audit. Alderman Gentry made a motion to approve; Alderman Stancil seconded the motion; all were in favor.

McGill
The Board had sent out a Request for Qualification (RFQ) for Engineering Services on the sewer plant upgrade. McGill is the only Engineering firm that responded with the Statement of Qualifications. Mayor Norton requested a motion to award McGill with the contract for their professional engineering services; Alderman Myers made a motion to approve. Alderman Stancil asked if McGill was the group who held up a grant process and the distribution of funds. Alderman Gentry responded that McGill is our engineering firm. Alderman Stancil said there was a grant in which something hadn't been handled timely. Alderman Gentry said, at one time,

a contract administration piece had been delayed within the same company, but we would be working with a different person on the sewer plant upgrade project. Alderman Stancil asked if we renewed the contact, could we have things moved forward. She said there had been a process that had been held up; Alderman Gentry said it was a requisition process. Alderman Stancil asked if we could hold McGill accountable; Mayor Norton advised that we could negotiate the contract.

Alderman Stancil then seconded the motion to award McGill with the professional engineering service contract; all were in favor.

120 Water – Rules and Compliance
To provide assistance and software solution for the lead service line inventory that must be turned into the state by October 2024. The information indicates their proposal and the services to be performed. The services and software fee is $6,500.00 for 1 year. The service and software will save the Maintenance Team a lot of time in completing the project timely and accurately. The funds for this will come out of the Water & Sewer budget, the contingency line item. Alderman Gentry made a motion to approve the contract; Alderman Stancil seconded the motion; all were in favor.

Aqua & 15A NCAC 18C.0406 Distribution Services
The handout,15A NCAC 18C.0406, is the backflow regulations from the state. The Aqua NC Cross Connection Control Program & Appendix A handouts are examples of a backflow policy from Raleigh. These are examples which may help the Board create a backflow policy for the Town. Mayor Norton asked for a volunteer to take a lead on this project. Alderman Myers will be the project lead for creating a backflow policy for Hot Springs.

Utility Truck Update
The First Horizon loan will close the week of January 8th.

Budget Amendment for 120 Water Fee
Mayor Norton asked for a motion to approve reallocation of $6,500.00 from Water & Sewer Contingency fund to Water & Sewer Professional Services. Alderman Gentry made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment; Alderman Myers seconded the motion; all were in favor.

Alderman Stancil

Iron Horse Email Exchange with the Railroad
Alderman Stancil received a copy of and email exchange, from Gary Goss [with the Iron Horse], between Mr. Goss and the Railroad. Mr. Goss has requested that the Railroad allow the Town parking on Andrews. Alderman Stancil asked the Board if Mr. Goss should be placed on a meeting agenda to discuss Town parking in Railroad parking/property. Mayor Norton asked if the Railroad replied to Mr. Goss that they would be okay with letting people use their parking, but only in the street – not on the grass or graveled property. Alderman Stancil said the communication she has is pretty vague; nothing mentioned about 'where' the Railroad would allow people to park. She said the email was from 2023. Alderman Gentry feels this is the same information Mr. Goss previously presented to the Board. Mayor Norton advised that if the parking was on the public road, the Railroad had no objections. However, the road is not wide enough to have parking and emergency access; no one is permitted to park along the narrow sections of the street.

Alderman Stancil notified the Board that SaraJo Litwack has been in touch with Ricker's Trucking requesting their assistance in taking the Christmas decorations down from the tree. Ricker's advised that the equipment used in this project has been rented and they will not be able to assist until the equipment has been returned. Alderman Gentry asks that the Christmas decorations be unplugged.

DEPARTMENETS

Fire and Rescue – Alderman Myers

The 2023 call volume was 237. This is the highest volume of calls ever. Fire Chief Josh Norton sends appreciation to all who have responded and helped with the calls.

Fire and Rescue will be selling a couple of vehicles. The department would like to put the monies received towards dependable radios. The current radios are older and don't hold charges very well. Mayor Norton said she will need to know the value of the trucks before putting them out to bid – she also asked about the minimum bid. Alderman Myers will research the numbers.

The ESO software that the Department has been paying for and using, for years, can be canceled. The state has put together a free reporting program. Alderman Gentry asked when ESO can be canceled; Alderman Myers reported cancelation can be done now. He said Chief Norton is working on getting all the information set up on the new reporting system.

Alderman Myers told the Board that he is having issue locating grants for a new trash truck. Mayor Norton asked that a date be set for a planning meeting for the coming year. She suggests that one goal could be to set a capital outlay to purchase a trash truck. She asked the Board when a good date and time to meet. The date/time of January 13, 2024 at 8:30am was set.

Since there is no other business to discuss, Alderman Myers made a motion to adjourn, Alderman Stancil seconded the motion; all were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:29pm.

3-3

Approved

Abigail Norton

Mayor Abigail Norton

2-5-2024

Date

Other