

City of Mansfield

MINUTES

City Council Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2016 – 6:30 p.m.
Mansfield Community Center
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PRESENT: Jefferson Riley, Chris Fulmer, Perry Lunsford, Lisa Dunn, Helen Robertson,
Scott Cole (City Attorney)

VACANT: Post #5

The honorable-mayor Jefferson R. Riley called the meeting to order and welcomed our City attorney, Scott Cole.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley then immediately asked everyone to revise the agenda to reflect the following changes: under item X. New Business change sub-item b. to Noise Ordinance and change sub-item c. to House at Oak St & Third Ave. All subsequent sub-items will become; d., e., and f. Councilman Perry Lunsford then made a Motion to approved the Agenda as revised and Councilwoman Lisa Dunn gave the Second. All Council voted “aye”. The Motion passed.

Mr. Willie J. Belcher gave the evenings invocation and lead everyone in the pledge of allegiance.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley announced that the story of the reveal of who Mr. Mansfield was and the reception for his family appeared on the front page of the Friday, July 8, 2016 Newton Citizen as “Revelation of History: Descendants tell about Mansfield’s namesake”. (A similar article appeared in The Covington News, Sunday, July 10, 2016 on page 2A as; “Town’s Namesake Mystery Solved”.) He also expressed how very nice the Mansfield family is. The honorable-mayor’s last announcement was to tell everyone that the 2015 Audit was complete and had been completed on time.

There was no Newton County Sheriff present to give the Mansfield report.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley opened the podium for citizen’s comments at this time. Mr. Willie J. Belcher addressed the mayor and council. Mr. Belcher began by saying he was a member of Mount Zion A.M.E. Church located at 119 E. Fifth Ave. The church was built in 1909 and he is 73 years old. Mr. Belcher shared that “having a church cemetery is something that has been on his mind down through the years”. Mr. Belcher also shared that he wanted to set this up for the younger generation who does not think about the importance of these things. He continued by saying that the church has approximately 2 acres of land that they would like to use for a church cemetery.

Mr. Belcher said that he followed the advice of mayor and council by going the State (of Georgia) first to find out what type of regulations might exist for establishing a church cemetery. The State pointed him to the County (Newton), who in turn pointed Mr. Belcher back to the City. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley said that the only stipulation the City had for the cemetery was that it had to be surveyed down to the actual plots and that a record would be provided to City Hall as well. Councilman Perry Lunsford expressed the importance of the City having a copy of the plat and records of burials. He also reminded everyone that Carmel Church has records kept at City Hall, as well. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley said that the property lies in a perfect location. City Attorney, Mr. Scott Cole, commented that the only issues the State has with cemeteries is roads and right-of-ways but that church cemeteries have an exception. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley commented that this location is far away from roads and power poles. Mr. Belcher thanked the mayor and council and returned to his chair.

Approval of Minutes being the next item on the Agenda, the honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley asked everyone if they had the opportunity to review the Minutes. All council had reviewed the June 2016 Minutes. Councilwoman Lisa Dunn made the Motion to approve the June 2016 Minutes and Councilwoman Helen Robertson gave the Second. All Council voted “aye” and the Motion passed.

At this time Newton County Sheriff Deputies Cox and Young entered the Mansfield Community House and the honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley yielded the meeting to them. Deputy Cox stated that there was nothing to report for Mansfield at this time and then asked if there were any concerns that she and Deputy Young could take back to the Sheriff. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley commented the usual complaint of speeding on Highway 11 and County Road 213 but said there were “no other complaints in general”. Deputy Cox responded that they “can get traffic out here but they will not be writing warnings”. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley also commented that he has seen a police presence in and around the City lately. Councilwoman Lisa Dunn made the distinction that a Mansfield address doesn’t necessarily mean they are a City resident. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley encouraged the deputies by saying “we appreciate what you all do”.

Awarding the garbage contract being the next item, the honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley began by saying that the City requested 4 bids and only one company submitted a bid. Burgess Hauling gave the City a price of \$14 per month per household and this includes the trash cans. The City would collect \$16 per month for residents inside the City limits and \$18 per month for customers outside the City limits. Councilwoman Lisa Dunn asked how this process will be set into motion. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley responded by saying that it is still a couple of months out. He said that Burgess needs

time to get the cans and that the City will include a Notice in this month's and next month's utility billings for an anticipated start for the first Wednesday of September 2016. The notices will also be posted on the City's webpage, on the City's Face Book page, at City Hall and a phone Blast will be put out as well. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley also shared with everyone that about 2 weeks ago the garbage truck broke down and was left overnight at the landfill until John and Sam could get back to the landfill to repair it. The honorable-mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer asked about an "opt-out" choice and also asked if the service was not mandatory did Burgess say it was a "no go". The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley responded that no other city has an "opt-out" choice and that Burgess pretty much implied that. Councilman Perry Lunsford said the City has an option, however, to discount the service to citizen's over 65. He suggested the City could give retirees a discount of \$2. Councilwoman Lisa Dunn suggested that in order to be eligible for the discount the utility bill would have to be in the retiree's name. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley also pointed the Council's attention to the copy of the draft Garbage Ordinance prepared by the City Attorney, Mr. Scott Cole. He asked the Council to go over the ordinance and send an email if they have any questions or suggestions about it. Councilman Perry Lunsford said that in just his quick review he would suggest the removal of the recycle bins and yard waste sections.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley asked if there is a Motion for the City to contract a private garbage collection service that will cost the City \$14 per month per household. The City will charge a \$16 per month fee to households inside the City limits and an \$18 per month fee for households outside the City limits and also offer a \$2 per month discount to citizen's 65 years and older. Councilwoman Helen Robertson asked if this is a yearly contract. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley answered, yes. Councilman Perry Lunsford made the above Motion and Councilwoman Helen Robertson gave the Second. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley asked if there was any further discussion on this motion. The honorable-mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer commented that the City has been dealing with this issue a long time and no one wants costs to go up. He also stated that doing nothing would be irresponsible, however, making the service mandatory is his "catch". He also suggests decreasing the fee by \$1 and stated that a property tax increase is our only other option. Councilwoman Helen Robertson commented that she "don't see any other way". At this time the vote was cast. Councilwoman Helen Robertson voted "aye". Councilwoman Lisa Dunn voted "aye". Councilman Perry Lunsford voted "aye". Mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer voted "oppose". Majority rule, Motion passed.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley thanked the Council for making a tough decision.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley yielded the next Agenda item to our City Attorney, Mr. Scott Cole. Mr. Cole explained that the change to the City's existing Noise Ordinance was in hours only and would be changed to Sunday through Thursday, 7 pm until 7 am and on Friday and Saturday, 10 pm until 7 am. He also noted that this change was made throughout the ordinance wherever the time was mentioned. Councilwoman Lisa Dunn made the Motion to change the time in the Noise Ordinance and Councilman Perry Lunsford gave the Second. All Council voted "aye". The Motion passed.

Attorney Scott Cole also gave an update on the property at Oak St and Third Ave. He reminded that there were several notices sent constituting the structure as a nuisance. He also stated that the notices were received, as none were returned. Councilwoman Lisa Dunn made a Motion to move forward in condemning the property, which would be a hearing. Councilwoman Helen Robertson gave the Second. Councilman Perry Lunsford asked Mr. Scott Cole would this hearing be done during a regular meeting to which Mr. Cole answered it would need to be held before or after a meeting and also that the parcel owner would need to be notified first. All Council voted "aye". The Motion to move forward in the process of condemning the property located at Oak St and Third Ave passed.

The sidewalks at Hays Tractor is the next item up for a Motion. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley shared that Mrs. Sheila Massey, owner of Hays Tractor, asked to be heard at the Council Meeting regarding the sidewalk that runs along her business on Highway 213, however she was unable to attend tonight's meeting at the last minute. She indicated to Jeff that she would be willing to pay the difference in making the sidewalk twice as thick but would like to know the cost first. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley suggested putting in a curb, handicap corner and a drive at their garage door. He believes this will enhance the appearance of their business and the City. The honorable-mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer asked if a Motion should be made. Councilman Perry Lunsford made a Motion to get a bid to replace the sidewalk along Hays Tractor on Highway 213 to include the curb, etc. and so to allow Mrs. Sheila Massey to know her part of the expense. Mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer gave the Second and all Council voted "aye". The Motion passed.

New Business sub-item e. has been discussed previously during Citizen's comments and the honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley also noted again that the church is in the process of getting a survey done and dividing the land into plots.

The final item on the Agenda is the sublease of the Newton Trail. The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley brought out a map of the trail. He explained that there is 16 miles of trail in Newton County. He also explained that the City can sub-lease the mile section of trail that runs through our City for \$1 per year. This sub-lease gives the City more flexibility with the trail.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley also corrected a misrepresentation about the required width of the trail. Originally we were told the trail had to be 16’ wide, he said, the trail is actually required to be only 12’ wide. He also remarked that when the City gets ready to do something (regarding the trail) it needs to be submitted to the railroad by means of Newton Trails. He also indicated that Covington is doing the lease agreement. The honorable-mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer asked how long does the City have to take advantage of the lease? To which was answered, right away. Councilman Perry Lunsford made a Motion to sign the sub-lease with Newton Trail for 1 year. Mayor-pro-tem Chris Fulmer gave the Second and all Council voted “aye”. The Motion passed.

The honorable-mayor Jefferson Riley adjourned the July 11, 2016 Council Meeting.

Jefferson Riley, Mayor

Perry Lunsford, Post 1

Helen Robertson, Post 2

Christopher Fulmer, Mayor-Pro-Tem, Post 3

Lisa Dunn, Post 4

Post 5 - Vacant