The City of Benton Utility Commissioners met in regular session Monday, March 6th, at the Electric Utility Building, 1827 Dale Avenue.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commission Chairman Ferrell.

The invocation was given by Commission Member Ponder.

Commission Chairman Ferrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

When the roll was called, three Commissioners were present:

Gary Ferrell, Commission Chairman

Jerry Ponder, Commission Member

Skylyr Stott, Commission Member

A quorum was declared with 3 members present.

Commission Member Johnston came in at 6:19 p.m.

Commission Chairman Ferrell asked if everyone had read the February 21st minutes, and if so, if there was a motion. Commission Member Ponder made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and be filed for future reference. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Stott. Commission Chairman Ferrell called for a voice vote. All commission members present voted in the affirmative. The minutes were approved with two affirmative votes.

Departmental Reports

1. January Financials

Mr. Jimmy Garrett, CFO, went through the financials and said expenditures were over revenues $771,594.33. He then went through the rest of the financials and explained each page. Both water and wastewater were in the red. Commission Member Ponder made a motion to approve the financials as submitted. Commission Member Stott seconded the motion. The financials were approved with two affirmative votes.

 Commission Chairman Ferrell updated everyone and said they had met with the Mayor to go over the rate increases and they had something on the table to take to the Committee on Commissions next Thursday, March 16th. Then there is talk about a special Council meeting after the Committee on Commissions meeting to approve the rates.

1. Frendall Tank Painting Update

Mr. Dewayne Hood, the Water Distribution Manager, said the painting is complete and they are cleaning up the area and doing bac T samples. They should have the tank in service next week. They have done a great job on it.

1. Personnel/Loss Time Incident Report

Mrs. Terrie Sossamon gave a presentation on the loss time incidents as well as personnel updates.

Old Business

New Business

Commission Chairman Ferrell explained along with the rate structure they talked about today they want to update Ordinance 29 of 2022, the Customer Service Rules and Regulations regarding shared meters. They need to decide when they are two separate households on one meter, each dwelling/business is going to start getting charged the base rate as well as the dividing the usage. The service rates also need to be reviewed and probably changed a little bit. They need to get to the City Attorney and get it completed by next Thursday. Commission Member Ponder made a motion to for the General Manager and City Attorney to work on Ordinance 29 of 2022 and get the shared meter language corrected and work on the service charges. Commission Member Stott seconded the motion. Commission Chairman Ferrell called for a voice vote. The motion passed with 3 affirmative votes.

Commission Chairman Ferrell said they also need to address Ordinance 68 of 2005 which is the ordinance that allows the charge of 1.75 on wastewater outside the city limits and give the General Manager the authority to include water outside the city limits at the 1.75 multiplier also and work with the City Attorney to get that included in a new ordinance. Commission Member Ponder made a motion to authorize the General Manager to work with the City Attorney to prefect the language amending Ordinance 68 of 2005 to include water outside the city at the 1.75 multiplier as well. Commission Member Johnston seconded the motion. Commission Chairman Ferrell called for a voice vote. The motion passed with 3 affirmative votes.

Commission Member Ponder made a motion to act in accordance with the Mayor if the mayor wishes to create a public authority rate for all city/utility buildings. Commission Member Stott seconded the motion. Commission Chairman Ferrell called for a voice vote. The motion passed with 3 affirmative votes.

1. Commissioner Opening

Commission Chairman Ferrell asked that the ad continue to run for the Commission opening.

Announcements

Commission Chairman Ferrell stated the next regular meeting date would be March 20, 2023.

Commission Chairman Ferrell asked if there was any further input from the commission, public or staff.

Commission Member Stott made a motion to adjourn with a second by Commission Member Johnston . The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

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Gary Ferrell, Commission Chairman Madeline Wilson, Recording Secretary