

July 13, 2015

The Sopchoppy City Council met in regular session for July, 2015. In attendance: Mayor, Martha Evans; Councilpersons; Laura Edwards, Nathan Lewis, Glenn Rudd and Becton Roddenberry.

The meeting was opened with prayer and salute to the flag.

The minutes from the June 2015 meeting were approved in written form on a motion from Lara Edwards, seconded by Becton Roddenberry and passed 5/0 by the Council.

Citizens:

Jennifer Anderson spoke to the council regarding the problems that unsupervised youth in town are causing the community. She stated that they are trespassing on neighbor properties and all hours of the night. She reported that she has called the Sheriff's department numerous times. Keith Anderson and Fred Nichols were also present to speak to the Council regarding this situation. Ms. Anderson requested that the City Council consider hiring off-duty police officers to patrol the town at night. Fred Nichols, a former deputy, informed the Council that if the Council hires an off duty officer, we can request a copy of a zone book to be kept informed. The Council discussed several options including issuing civil citations, adopting the state ordinance regarding curfew, issuing trespass citations and hiring off duty officers or security officers to patrol. After a lengthy discussion the decision was made to have Councilmember Becton Roddenberry meet with Sheriff Creel to determine what the best options are for the City to help the Sheriff Dept. solve the problems of the youthful offenders. Attorney Dan Cox advised the Council that they could adopt the State Ordinance regarding curfews on minors and set the times as the Council sees the need. Under the curfew ordinance the offender would be charged \$50 for the first offence and the parent would also be charged \$50, the parent would also be required to pick the child up from the jail or the child could be sent to a detention cent. Some members of the Council stated that they would like for a curfew to be the last resort and to hire an off-duty officer 3 random days per week from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. A decision was delayed until after Commissioner Roddenberry meets with the Sheriff.

Sopchoppy Depot Park – **The Council voted to approve the 06.11.15 Conceptual Design Plan for the Sopchoppy Depot Park** on a motion by Lara Edwards seconded by Becton Roddenberry, passed 5/0. Genesis Group will return to the City with a price for park design, and probable cost broken into manageable bites. Staff will begin talking to the County regarding installing a culvert at the intersection of the Municipal Avenue and Dickson Street.

The Council discussed a time-line for advertising and hiring a clerk/administrator upon the retirement of the current clerk. Clerk Lawhon distributed a copy of a hiring ad and job description to the council for their review. December was set as a time line for advertising the position with interviews occurring in

January, hiring in February and beginning work in March. Suggestions were made to advertise with the League of Cities, Association of Counties, Tallahassee Democrat and other publications.

Dan Cox informed the Council that he had attended a Florida Municipal Attorney's Conference and from the information gained at the conference the City will need to do some minor changes to the Sign Ordinance. He also stated that the City needs to adopt a Resolution of Support towards the Service persons re-employment Act and that he will bringing the resolution to the August meeting.

The council approved the **financial and adjustment reports** and submitted by the Clerk.

Leonard Tartt informed the Council that Maxie Lawhon is retiring at the end of July and that he will be advertising the position. The Council was presented with changes for the job description of the maintenance coordinator for consideration. **The changes were reviewed as the first reading of an Ordinance Amendment, second hearing will be held in August.**

The meeting was continued to 6:30 p.m., Monday, August 20, 2015.

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The meeting resumed with Mayor Evans and Councilpersons Edwards and Lewis present.

The Clerk presented the results of a meeting between Sheriff Creel and Councilperson Roddenberry regarding the sheriff's help with control of the minors that are giving causing problems to the residents and in the park. 1. Sheriff Creel requested that the City furnish him with the names of the each youth that has been identified and he will send a deputy to speak with the parents. 2. The Sheriff has agreed to request volunteers both from the Sheriff's Service Officers and the Back-up Reserve Officers to perform random patrols at no cost to the City. 3. He quoted \$30 per hour for regular deputy patrol from 8 p.m. – 2 a.m., randomly three times per week. He stated that they would be giving civil citations which include a \$50 fine for both the offender and the parents and encouraged the city to issue trespass warrants as needed. **The council requested that the Clerk follow thru with the Sheriff requesting that he commit to a time frame for visiting parents and a time frame for patrol. The Council also instructed the Clerk to give their permission to the deputies to issue trespass warnings and citations with reason.**

