MINUTES

The Pine Bluff City Council met for a regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. April 6, 2009 in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Mayor Redus called the meeting to order.

The Invocation was given by Rev. Brian Kesterson, Pastor of Oak Park Free Will Baptist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Redus.

Roll Call – Answering present were, Alderwoman Holcomb, Aldermen Brumett and Easterly, Alderwoman Roberts, Alderman Stepps, Alderwoman Walker and Aldermen Boyd and Brown.

Approval of Minutes – Alderwoman Roberts moved for approval of the minutes from the March 16, 2009 meeting, seconded by Alderman Brumett and the motion carried 8-0.

Alderwoman Holcomb, Chairperson of the Ordinances and Resolutions Committee reported: the committee met prior to the Pine Bluff City Council meeting and recommended taking the following actions on the agenda:

Item No. 1 up for the 2nd reading

Items No. 2 and 3 will be heard and completed.

Item No. 4 has been tabled by the sponsors.

ADD TO AGENDA Alderwoman Holcomb stated that there are two items to add to the agenda that were recommended by the committee and it requires unanimous consent of the council to do so. The first item is "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CHIEF OF POLICE TO EXECUTE A LEASE AGREEMENT(S) FOR ACQUISITION OF POLICE UNITS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY". Alderwoman Holcomb moved to add this ordinance to tonight's agenda, seconded by Alderman Easterly and after a roll call the vote was 8-0. Alderwoman Holcomb stated that this item will be Item 1A on the agenda.

The second item to be added is "A RESOLUTION TO REMOVE HOUSES FROM CONDEMNATION LISTS". Alderwoman Holcomb moved to add this item to tonight's agenda, seconded by Alderman Easterly and after a roll call the vote was 8-0. Alderwoman Holcomb stated this item will be Item #4, replacing the resolution which was tabled by the sponsors.

Alderman Brumett, Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee reported: the committee met prior to the meeting tonight and we have

three budget adjustments that were in the packet. The **first one** is from the Community Development Department for $547,206 from various accounts. The reason required is to transfer money left over in the Community Development Fund from the previous year and no method of financing is required because no additional funds are required. Alderman Brumett moved for approval of the budget adjustment, seconded by Alderwoman Roberts and the motion carried 8-0.

The **second budget adjustment** is from the Police Department for $18,792.48; the reason required is due to Katye Ayers' retirement with 90 days accumulated sick time and 4 days of unused vacation. There is no adjustment to the General Fund and no financing is required. Alderman Brumett moved for approval of the budget adjustment, seconded by Alderwoman Holcomb and the motion carried 8-0.

The **third budget adjustment** is from the Inspection Department for $11,300.00; reason required is for purchase price of three 2006 Chevy Mailbus. Total purchase price at the end of 3-year lease $16,785.81 versus $5500.00 included in 2009 budget based on information from dealer. The contract did not include a buyout clause. Method of financing, none required and $0.00 adjustment in the General Fund. Alderman Brumett

moved for approval of the budget adjustment; seconded by Alderwoman Roberts and the motion carried 8-0.

Alderman Brumett moved to **pay the bills** owed by the city, seconded by Alderwoman Holcomb and the motion carried 8-0.

Alderwoman Roberts, Chairperson of Community Development Committee reported: There is no update for the Pine Bluff Downtown Entertainment District, however the Brownsfield representatives were in and the City of Pine Bluff did receive Brownsfield technical assistance and a copy of the lengthy report will be on file with the City Clerk's office and each council member should have a copy.

Mayor Redus asked Donald Sampson, Director of the Economic & Community Development Department to provide an update on the work that is being done on the Stimulus Package. Mr. Sampson stated that when the City was first notified of the Stimulus in February, 2009 they immediately began working to determine what it means for our community and they put together some projects that they thought would be eligible and the media reported on those. Since that time a much clearer definition of what the stimulus money can and can't be used for has been received. They have met with some of the applicable department heads to ascertain what projects they would like to see, as well as the Economic Development

District, the school district, the Arkansas River Coop and some non-profit organizations. A matrix has been put together relating to how the City and other entities can collaborate and some funding approval has already been received for the Police Department, Airport and Community Development. A plan will be submitted to the council, beginning with the Administration Committee on tomorrow. Mrs. Holcomb asked at what point the council would have any input. Alderwoman Roberts also stated that the council represents the citizens of Pine Bluff and all wards of the City should be considered in the projects. Council members should have been included from the outset rather than being told what projects are being considered; and at least have some input into the process. Mayor Redus stated that the projects being considered are not ward specific, they are projects that have been identified through the Arkansas Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 that the city can possibly compete for through competitive grants, and if any council member has any input they are welcome to submit them. There are web sites where information is available about the stimulus: arkansasrecovery.gov or rossrecovery.gov.

Alderman Boyd, Chairman of Public Health & Welfare Committee reported: no report

Alderwoman Walker, Chairperson for Public Works Committee reported: no report

Alderman Stepps, Chairman of Development and Planning Committee reported: no report but he requested that Mr. Robert Tucker of the Inspection and Zoning Department provide an update on the progress with the J. D. Smith Wrecking Yard issue. Mr. Tucker reported that he, Jerre George and Alderman Stepps met with Mr. Smith two weeks ago and went over the agreement. They will work with Mr. Smith to continue enforcement of the agreement. Alderwoman Roberts suggested that the Planning & Development Committee prepare a written amendment or an extension to the agreement. Alderman Stepps will confer with the City Attorney on the terms of the extension.

Alderwoman Holcomb requested that the Development & Planning Committee look into an application for a small business for Mr. McKnight that has been denied by the Planning Commission. Mr. Stepps stated that the Development and Planning Committee will meet on April 15, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room. The Zoning Department will provide a recommendation at that meeting regarding the application.

Alderman Brown, Chairman of the Traffic and Aviation Committee reported: the committee met on March 26, 2009; Alderman Brown was

unable to attend and did not have the minutes but he will provide a report on the March 26th meeting at the next council meeting.

Alderman Easterly, Chairman of the Administration Committee reported: no report but the committee will meet on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the Mayor's Conference room.

Alderwoman Holcomb, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee reported: the committee met at 4:00 p.m. today with all members present.

- The Police Department reported on some suggested activities for stimulus money, submitted their monthly report and discussed a personnel issue.
- The Fire Department reported on suggested activities for stimulus money and submitted their monthly report.
- District Court Division I did not have a representative.
- District Court Division II discussed the new court facility. Judge Kearney is a proponent of the new court building which is in conflict with the resolution that is being presented tonight, however, the council has voted not to participate in the new court facility.
- Animal Control asked to present some projected activities for stimulus money.

- Weed & Seed director, Rev. Turner stated that he would like to see inspections of houses in the Weed & Seed area beefed up.
- During the public comments session, Rev. and Mrs. Pitts reported on their ministry of violence prevention education and they are asking cooperation from the city regarding their efforts.

Alderwoman Roberts questioned why District Court Division II is being asked to vacate the Library building. She stated that since the city had paid $24,000 for a surety bond to maintain residence there until trial, the court should not have to move. She read a letter relating to the surety bond that states that the bond was 'in order that the City of Pine Bluff may retain possession of property in dispute until such time as the matter can be tried to a jury on the merits of this case'. Mayor Redus stated that the attorney that represents the city suggested that we move and any further questions should be taken up with the attorney.

(1) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A PORTION OF 45TH AVENUE IN THE CITY OF PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS, AS A ONE-WAY STREET AND PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY (up for the 2nd reading) was read by the City Attorney and placed on the calendar.

(2) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CHIEF OF POLICE TO EXECUTE A LEASE AGREEMENT(S) FOR ACQUISITION OF POLICE UNITS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY (up for the 1st reading) was read by the City Attorney. Alderwoman Holcomb moved to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on second reading, seconded by Alderman Stepps and after a roll call the vote was 8-0. Alderwoman Holcomb moved to further suspend the rule and place the ordinance on third and final reading, seconded by Alderman Stepps and after a roll call the vote was 8-0. Alderwoman Holcomb moved for adoption, seconded by Alderman Stepps and the motion carried 8-0. Alderwoman Holcomb moved for the emergency clause seconded by Alderman Brumett and after the roll call the vote was 8-0.

(3) A RESOLUTION ASSIGNING SPACE IN THE JOE THOMAS PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY TO THE PINE BLUFF DISTRICT COURT, DIVISION II, WHEN THE SPACE IS VACATED BY DIVISION I OF THE COURT was heard. Deputy Chief Susie Powell and Steve Miller, Finance Director were asked by the Mayor to provide some positive points

supporting the move to the new facility. After extensive discussion, Alderwoman Holcomb moved for adoption of the resolution, seconded by Alderman Stepps and the motion carried 5-2-1 with Aldermen Brumett and Brown voting no and Alderman Easterly abstaining.

(4) A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE TRANSFER OF THE OLD LIFE SAFETY FIRE SMOKE HOUSE TO THE CITY OF TUCKER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT was heard. Alderwoman Holcomb moved for adoption, seconded by Alderman Easterly and the motion carried 8-0.

(5) A RESOLUTION TO REMOVE HOUSES FROM CONDEMNATION LISTS was heard. Alderwoman Holcomb moved for adoption, seconded by Alderman Stepps and the motion carried 8-0.

Announcements

The following announcements were made:

- The Pine Bluff Police Department will hold an Easter Egg Hunt on April 10, 2009 at the corner of 8th Avenue and State Street from noon to 2 p.m. Friday. There will be refreshments and a visit by the Easter Bunny for children 2 to 12 years old.

- The Pine Bluff Rotary Club will meet at noon Tuesday at the Pine Bluff Country Club. The speaker will be Dan Daugherty, communications manager for Entergy Arkansas.
- The West Pine Bluff Rotary Club will meet at noon Thursday at the Pine Bluff Country Club. The speaker will be Dr. David Lipschitz, a well-known geriatrician.
- The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff will sponsor a spring musical, "Gospel at Colonus" in the Hathaway-Howard Fine Arts Center. Tickets are $10. Performances are scheduled for April 16-18 at 7:30 p.m. and April 18 at 3:00 p.m.

Alderman Brumett moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderwoman Holcomb and the motion carried 8-0.

Meeting adjourned

No further business

All other comments