

CITY OF WILBURTON  
REGULAR MEETING

January 12, 2023

Public Notice posted January 11, 2023, 12:00pm, for City Council Meeting.  
Front Entrance Door, Wilburton City Hall

The Wilburton City Council convened in a **Regular Meeting** held on the **12<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023** at **5:30pm** with President Terry Haynes presiding: Mayor Stephen Brinlee is ill. Rev Ken Harris, Sonshine Baptist Church, led the group in prayer after which President Haynes led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by the Roll Call conducted by the City Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

City Clerk Cindee Blankenship conducted the Roll Call with members responding:

LITTLEJOHN	PRESENT	GOAD	PRESENT
HAYNE	PRESENT	KENDALL	PRESENT
SIMS	ABSENT		

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

There were no sign-ins on the Citizen Comment Sign-In Sheet.

President Haynes stated that Ms. Lori Long, Jeep Invasion, would like to update the Council on the event scheduled for 28-30 April. Ms. Long informed the Council of the move from RCSP to the City of the event; the number of jeep entries with approximate attendance from nine states; the current scheduled of events; and the invitation for them to attend. She stated the participants voted to have the event at Wilburton because the residents were so friendly and welcoming.

President Haynes declared a quorum present and proceeded with the City Council business.

- 1. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 8, 2022.
- 2. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER 2022 CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT.
- 3. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF PAYROLLS JANUARY 13 THROUGH FEBRUARY 9, 2023.

MOTION BY LITTLEJOHN, SECOND BY GOAD, TO COMBINE AND APPROVE FIRST THREE ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Upon roll call, members voted as follows:

LITTLEJOHN	Yes	GOAD	Yes
HAYNES	Yes	KENDALL	Yes
SIMS	Absent		

- 4. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE ARLEDGE FY 2021-2022 AUDIT. Jake Winkler, Arledge, presented the Audit via telephone. President Haynes introduced himself and suggested Mr. Winkler Review the high spots of the Audit Report which each member had before them. Mr. Winkler initiated the report by stating on page 5, the Independent Auditor’s Report indicates a “Clear Opinion, literally the best you can do; we do not have any findings.” He said that it shows the City was “making good financial decisions through the year.” Mr. Winkler continued to review specific pages referring to the five bullets his firm is required to address. He concluded with page 49, Internal Control, stating there were no findings: “You can’t do better.” President Haynes asked, “At the end of the audit, how do you rate the City?” Mr. Winkler replied: In looking at your financial statement, what stands out are your cash and assets and the balance of the General Fund. “Most cities are not doing as well.”

President Haynes asked the Council if there were any questions. There being none, he thanked Mr. Winkler for the report. He then stated that both the Mayor and the City Clerk are to be commended for all the hard work it takes to get the budget and to then keep the budget and the City in good financial shape.

MOTION BY LITTLEJOHN, SECOND BY KENDALL, TO APPROVE THE ARLEDGE FY 2021-2022 AUDIT.

Upon roll call, members voted as follows:

LITTLEJOHN	Yes	GOAD	Yes
HAYNES	Yes	KENDALL	Yes
SIMS	Absent		



5. **DISCUSS THE CITY LAKE DAM PROJECT AND IMPACT ON MERIT ENERGY COMPANY'S GAS WELLS PRODUCTION.** **Mr. John Newman, Merit Energy Company Presenting.**

President Haynes stated the issue being addressed with Merit Energy Company was looking at the location of the road, but it has now turned into something else needing discussion. He turned the floor over to City Attorney Richard Lerblance who has been working with Merit Energy. Attorney Lerblance introduced Mr. Newman who first introduced the group with him as the owners of several gas wells affected by the project. He then stated that most of the Merit Company people are from here and support the City Lake Project. Many of the pipelines would be affected by being under the lake, once the project is complete. Now, everything is fluid, so this is the time to discuss moving the pipeline. He then reviewed the distributed map and described the moves required and the need for compensation from the City for the lines being moved. A discussion followed concerning the many years this \$12 Million Project has been discussed and the many definite steps involved. Merit Energy is working with NRCS, as is the City. He concluded by saying he hoped with this discussion that, "we are all on the same page: everything is still fluid with the routes. We are looking for the framework to know how best for Merit Energy to proceed."

Attorney Lerblance asked what is the estimate of the amount needed to move the pipelines. Mr. Newman stated the amount is still very fluid, and covers 3 areas for an estimate of \$230,000. Councilman Littlejohn asked if that included the right of way and was told yes. He then asked how much gas is produced and was told 500 RPMs per day. President Haynes asked the amount of time was needed for moving the pipelines, to which Mr. Newman replied approximately 1 month.

At the conclusion of a discussion concerning the project costs, the Merit Energy pipeline movement procedure and costs, and the costs to the City/PWA, Mr. Newman asked who does Merit Energy submit plans to for an agreement in writing. He stated that by bringing this up now, discussions can be had and a written plan formulated that will satisfy all parties. President Haynes stated that NRCS will be the one who must see and agree with plans before they can go forward..

President Haynes asked the Council if they had any questions. There being none, he thanked Mr. Newman for coming and stated he appreciated the discussion and the opportunity for everyone to have their questions answered. Mr. Newman thanked the Council for the opportunity and encouraged them to call him anytime with questions.

**NO ACTION. DISCUSSION ONLY**

6. **DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP WITH LCTTA FOR \$50,000 FOR TWO OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) TRAILS GRANTS, CONTINGENT UPON AWARD OF EACH GRANT.** **Earl Shero, CH LCTTA**

President Haynes introduced Magi Van Eps, Secretary of LCTTA Board and Grant Writer. Ms. Van Eps discussed her background qualifications, then gave an overview of the two grants. The Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grant application for \$125,000 with 20% matching funds was submitted in November. The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) reimbursable grant application will be submitted by end of January. We are requesting an economic partnership, not a donation, as this partnership continues and City will have far greater dividends with increased number of visitors; therefore, increased sales tax. This will have a huge economic impact. President Haynes asked where the trails start to which Ms. Van Eps replied at the former Ranger headquarters which now belongs to LCTTA via a lease from EOSC. A discussion followed concerning the new sidewalks on Hwy 2 North and extension connecting to the Tourism Office. The trail will link Wilburton with RCSP and vice versa and will run past the new Choctaw Community Center and within a half mile of the new Choctaw housing.

The proposed partnership has also been accepted by several Wilburton entities so this is a community project. The application requires the funds are available for the grant. Obviously, if the grant is not awarded to LCTTA, the partnership is voided.

President Haynes asked the City Attorney his opinion of the grant partnership to which Attorney Lerblance replied it appears to be a feel-good project that would benefit the whole community. But the City funds can only be applied to direct costs within the City limits. Councilman Littlejohn asked if the \$50,000 is available. Dir Elder stated that he believed so by using available CCPF and ARPA funds.

Ms. Van Eps then discussed the desire to have the City receive and administer funds received as the Choctaw contribution. They are required to only disburse money to county or municipalities. She stated that a contract is currently being written to accommodate that arrangement and once the contract has been reviewed by both legal departments, they will bring it back for Council approval. The Choctaw process takes 12 weeks, but that still gives time for all arrangements to be in place prior to the grant being awarded.

President Haynes stated the plan appears to be well thought out and asked if there were any questions.

**MOTION BY LITTLEJOHN, SECOND BY GOAD, TO APPROVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP WITH LCTTA FOR \$50,000 FOR TWO ODOT TRAILS GRANTS, CONTINGENT UPON AWARD OF EACH GRANT**

Upon roll call, members voted as follows:

LITTLEJOHN	Yes	GOAD	Yes
HAYNES	Yes	KENDALL	Yes
SIMS	<i>Absent</i>		

Ms. Van Eps thanked the Council for the approval stated they will see a huge economic impact for the City.

7. NEW BUSINESS.

There was no New Business to be discussed.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- A. City Attorney Lerblance discussed the Built Right Contract. He stated that in April 2022, ISG President Dale Burke forwarded a letter stating there was \$42,210.45 left on the Built Right Contract and suggested paying Built Right \$16,710.35. In December he received a call from the Built Right lawyer stating that arrangement is agreeable. He will get the documents ready and will contact City Clerk Blankenship to write the check so this issue will be completely closed.
- Dir Elder gave a status on the lagoon's closing stating they have a contractor lined up to complete the job within the month.

- B. Dir Elder gave an update on Councilman Sim's health stating he is currently at a rehab place in Colorado. According to his mother, he is making great strides toward improvement and is expected to be released in March. She sent a couple of pictures for everyone to see for themselves.

8. ADJOURN.

MOTION BY LITTLEJOHN, SECOND BY KENDALL, TO ADJOURN AT 6:33pm.

Upon roll call, members voted as follows:

LITTLEJOHN	Yes	GOAD	Yes
HAYNES	Yes	KENDALL	Yes
SIM	Absent		

//ABSENT//

CINDEE BLANKENSHIP, City Clerk

STEPHEN BRINLEE, Mayor

  
ALLEN LITTLEJOHN, Ward 1

  
TERRY HAYNES, Ward 2

//ABSENT//

DOUG SIMS, Ward 3

  
JAYME GOAD, Ward 4

  
JULIA KENDALL, Ward 5