

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL

November 18, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Newton City Council was held on Tuesday, November 18, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at Newton City Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor Anne P. Stedman, Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing, Tom Rowe, Wayne Dellinger, Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., and John Stiver

ABSENT: Council Member Wes Weaver

STAFF: City Manager Todd Clark, City Clerk Amy S. Falowski, Assistant City Manager Sean Hovis, City Attorney John Cilley, City Department Heads and members of the management team

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Anne P. Stedman

Mayor Anne P. Stedman welcomed every one and called the meeting to order.

ITEM 2: OPENING – Council Member John Stiver

Council Member John Stiver led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE November 4, 2014 REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing stated that Item 2, the Opening needed to be corrected to read Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing, in place of Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr.

Upon motion duly made by Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing, seconded by Council Member John Stiver, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Regular Minutes of the November 4, 2014 City Council Meeting be – APPROVED with above correction

ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That Consent Agenda be – APPROVED

A. Consideration to Designate Council Member Mary Bess Lawing as Voting Delegate at the Advocacy Goals Conference

B. Consideration of Budget Ordinance Amendment for Energy Efficiency

(Ordinances, Resolutions and Proclamations are hereby referenced and on file in the office of the City Clerk)

ITEM 5: **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: (PERSONS WANTING TO MAKE A PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN IN WITH THE CITY CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING).**

Mayor Anne P. Stedman asked if anyone present would like to make any comments concerning non-agenda items.

Mr. Jeremy Petty stated that he realizes that the fire siren holds nostalgia to some in the community, but that it is sounding with more frequency now that the fire department is running medical calls. Mr. Petty stated that he believes that it is an outdated practice and he would like to recommend it be disconnected. Mr. Petty read from Chapter 58 of the City of Newton Ordinances entitled Noise. City Manager Todd Clark stated that Ordinance 58-3 (d) lists the exemptions of the noise ordinance which includes (1) Public safety personnel, when responding to an emergency call or engaged in other official business.

Mayor Pro Tem asked if the siren sounds for all calls. Chief Yoder stated that it does. Council Member Wayne Dellinger stated that he is for the siren sounding at 12:00 p.m. and for fire calls. He stated that the siren should not sound between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Mayor Stedman stated that this matter should be brought to City Council for a vote at a future meeting.

Mr. Petty mentioned that his building did not have power for many months when it was purchased by him and that the siren must not have worked then. Chief Yoder stated that the siren does not get its power from that building. Mr. Petty asked what the process would be to make a decision on the siren because he realizes City Council meets out of public at times. Council Member Robert Abernethy stated that City Council never meets out of public, and that all meetings are public and advertised. Mr. Clark stated that the Mayor sets the agenda and will decide when this matter will be heard.

ITEM 6: **New Business**

A. Presentation of Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Audit

Marcie Spivey of Martin-Starnes & Associates presented the City Council with the 2013 Audited Financial Statement. Ms. Spivey stated that the financial statements of the City of Newton present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position which results in an unqualified opinion. Ms. Spivey stated that this opinion basically means the auditors feel the City followed all accounting rules appropriately and that the financial statements are an accurate reflection of the financial position of the City with no material misstatements.

Ms. Spivey stated that the Finance Staff was very cooperative, and that her staff was very appreciative of this.

Finance Director Serina Hinson gave a brief summary of the 2013-2014 Audit including an explanation of a note from the Local Government Commission.

City Manager Todd Clark thanked Ms. Spivey and also Serina Hinson, Finance Director, and her staff for the great job that they do for the City, and stated that the audit is available to the public on the City's website.

B. Consideration of a Strategic Plan

City Manager Todd Clark stated that a Strategic Plan for the City of Newton has been mentioned to City Council several times in the recent past. He stated that the Western Piedmont Council of Governments has given him an estimate for data analysis and GIS services for the proposed Strategic Plan. He stated that the quote from the WPCOG was \$17,000 to gather this information. Mr. Clark explained that the project would start in December and be completed in the April-May time frame with public input

meetings being held in March. Mr. Clark stated that he and the staff would like approval from City Council to move forward with this project.

Mayor Stedman stated that she would like to see the project started. Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing agreed.

Upon motion duly made by Council Member John Stiver, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Strategic Plan proposed by the City Manager be – APPROVED.

ITEM 7: **City Manager’s Report**

- November 25th WPCOG Policy Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. at the Newton Expo
- December 2nd – City Council Mtg. (only one in December)
- December 5th – Annual Employee Luncheon
- December 11th Advocacy Goals Conference in Raleigh
- December 19th Retirement Luncheon for Wilce Martin and Rick Sims at 11:30 downstairs at Rec Center
- First Presbyterian will be hosting the Room In The Inn Shelter this year with Monday, November 24th being the anticipated first operable night

Mayor Stedman congratulated Newton Conover High School Men’s Soccer Team on winning the State 2A Championship.

Mayor Stedman introduced foreign exchange student Marie Messeant who is here from France for the school year.

ITEM 8: **Questions and Comments from Mayor and Council**

Mayor Stedman asked the City Council if they had any comments. There were none.

ITEM 9: **Adjournment**

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing the meeting was ADJOURNED.

Amy S. Falowski, City Clerk



Anne P. Stedman, Mayor