

**MINUTES
CITY OF AMES, TEXAS
304 MARTIN DR. – AMES, TEXAS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2022
6:00 p.m.**

The City Council for the City of Ames, Texas met in a regular meeting in council chambers at the Ames City Hall at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Cornelius Gilmore called the meeting to order at that time. Mayor Gilmore led the prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mayor Gilmore did the roll call, at that time the members of the City Council who were present were: Mayor Cornelius Gilmore, Michael Trahan, Liz Hardy, Eddie White, Audrey Harrison, and Alfred Freeman.

MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 14, 2022

The minutes from November 14, 2022, was approved by the Council.

Motion was made by: Councilwoman Audrey Harrsion

Seconded by: Councilman Eddie White

All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

CITIZEN APPREARANCE

Mayor Gilmore thanked the citizens for being here and to please silence their phones. A list of attending citizens is attached.

SHIVONNE W. TRAHAN – WANTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL REGARDING PROPERTY ON MAIN STREET AND CORMIER ST AND FORMAL COMPLAINT.

Mrs. Trahan wanted to know what needed to be done so she could put utility services on her property. She expressed that she was given several reasons why she could not get utility services on her property and one of the reasons being that her property sits on Ames's right-of-way. Councilman Trahan let Mrs. Trahan know that Ames's right-of-way is from Wickliff Street all the way to Highway 90, as shown on Ames's City map. Mrs. Trahan wanted to know if the City could let her know where their easement is so she can go around it and Councilman Trahan let her know that a decision could not be made tonight. Mayor Gilmore informed Mrs. Trahan about the City's Ordinance about Mobile Homes/Manufactured Homes. Citizen Rudy Cole let the Council know that her trailer was already in the City limits and all she did was move it to Mrs. Trahan's property so she felt it should have been grandfathered in. City Attorney Marevious Allen said he would do more research on the matter.

Agenda Items

1. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER ENGAGING IN AN AGREEMENT WITH NEWGEN STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, LLC TO ASSIST THE CITY WITH REVEIHING AND REVISING THE CITY'S WASTEWATER BILLING RATES.

Andy McCartney, Principal Consultant, with NewGen Strategies and Solutions informed everyone that a letter agreement was sent to Mayor Gilmore for execution for their service to develop wastewater rates for a period of five (5) years using available information from the City of Ames such as financial utility information, a capital improvement program plan for the City's wastewater collection system, a five (5) year financial plan, if available information exist, regional bill comparison of wastewater rates that citizens currently pay along with proposed wastewater rates they project and compare those rates with neighboring wastewater utilities around the Ames area such as Liberty and other surrounding areas. NewGen Strategies and Solutions will also prepare presentation material for the Mayor and City Council in order to get the rates adopted. Mayor Gilmore let Mr. McCartney know that the City Attorney will look over their documents and will get back with him. Mayor Gilmore also informed the citizens that the City is looking to use NewGen Strategies and Solutions so the City can retrieve accurate rates for everyone.

Motioned was made by: No Motion Made

Seconded by: No Motion Made

All in favor: Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

2. DISCUSS AND APPROVE PAVING ROADS WITHIN THE CITY OF AMES. THEY ARE AS FOLLOW: SYLPHEME LN, TEBO ST., ORGAN RD., BERNARD ST., FRIEND ST., GANTS ST., AND SEARLES ST.) MOST OF THESE STREETS AND CAN BE PAVED WITH CHIP SEAL (TO BE PAID OUT OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS).

Mayor Gilmore informed the Council that this matter was brought back up because of citizens' complaints about their streets needing to be paved. Councilwoman Harrison thought the grant would cover Organ Street, but Mayor Gilmore informed her that the grant only covers Donatto Street and Martin Street and does not cover Organ Street. Councilwoman Harrison suggest that they find better bids that can include Organ Street. Councilwoman Hardy let the citizens know that they will have to check on the City's finances before making a decision on getting the roads paved. Mayor Gilmore let everyone know that he spoke to the County and the County said they can do the job. Councilwoman Hardy expressed that the City has not had an audit in two (2) years and that the City should wait until the books are audited before making this decision. Mayor Gilmore informed everyone that their new accountant is working on everything now. Mayor Gilmore informed everyone that the City has no debt. Councilman Trahan asked Mayor Gilmore about what was owed in the lawsuit with City of Liberty and Mayor Gilmore responded by saying \$925,000 and Councilman Trahan expressed that it is considered a debt. City Attorney Marevious Allen stepped in to diffuse the argument about the streets being paved and reminded everyone about how the meetings are supposed to be conducted. The Council agreed to discuss the matter further at a later date. No motion was made.

Motioned was made by: No Motion Made
Seconded by: No Motion Made
All in favor: 0 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

3. CONSIDER AND APPROVE TO REPAIR THE AIR CONDITION UNITS INSTEAD OF BUYING NEW UNITS. (TO BE PAID OUT OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS).

Mayor Gilmore informed everyone that he has gotten six (6) bids with three (3) bids being to repair and service the air conditioning units (A/C units) and he said the cheapest choice was his brother who would be doing the City a favor by offering to come back in six (6) months and service the units which would save the City \$14,000. Councilwoman Hardy expressed that Mayor Gilmore's brother cannot be used for the service because it is considered a conflict of interest. Councilwoman Harrison brought up when Mr. Payne suggested that the City replace their air conditioning (A/C units). Mayor Gilmore felt that replacement suggestions were made so those companies could make a profit when his brother could repair the issues with the units for a cheaper rate. City Secretary Jennifer Purnell brought to the Council's attention that Mr. Lockett disconnected a few things that caused the air conditioning to stop working in the chambers and that it was working before. The Council decided to use Henscey Electric and Air Conditioning to replace the air conditioning units (A/C units).

Motioned was made by: Councilman Michael Trahan
Seconded by: Councilman Alfred Freeman, Jr.
All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

4. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING REGULATION OF GAME ROOMS OPERATING WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF AMES, TEXAS BOTH PRESENTLY AND IN THE FUTURE.

Councilwoman Harrison informed the Council that she has received several phone calls regarding the new game room located here in Ames on Highway 90. Mayor Gilmore told everyone that the City of Ames does not have an Ordinance against game rooms at the moment. Citizen Eric Morris asked the Council what was wrong with the City having game rooms and Councilwoman Hardy informed him that it would be considered illegal if the game room is giving out money instead of prizes. Councilwoman Harrison suggested to a citizen that complained about the game room that every time a car is seen at the game room that the police department should be called. Councilman Trahan suggest the Council should pursue an Ordinance against having game rooms within the City. The Council agreed to postpone this matter to deal with at a later date.

Motioned was made by: Councilman Eddie White
Seconded by: Councilwoman Liz Hardy
All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

5. APPROVE ADOPTING THE LIBERTY COUNTY 2023 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR THE CITY OF AMES.

Mayor Gilmore informed the Council that this is the same type of Holiday Schedule that we adopted last year from the County. The council agreed to adopt the 2023 Liberty County Holiday Schedule.

Motioned was made by: Councilman Michael Trahan

Seconded by: Councilman Eddie White

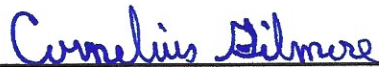
All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

9. MAYOR'S REPORT.

Mayor Gilmore thanked all the citizens for attending the Council Meeting and for voicing their concerns.

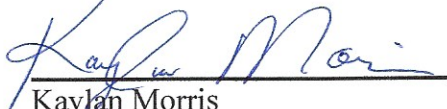
10. DISCUSSION/REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.

11. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.



Cornelius Gilmore

Mayor



Kaylan Morris

City Clerk