

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR & ALDERMEN
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

February 21, 2024

The City of Newport Board of Mayor and Aldermen met in the Newport City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, February 21, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in Special Called Meeting .

Vice Mayor Connie Ball led the invocation. Alderwoman Louanna Ottinger led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

The following officials were present: Mayor Roland Dykes, III, Vice Mayor Connie Ball, Alderman Mike Hansel, Alderwoman Louanna Ottinger, Alderman Randy Ragan, Alderman Steve Smith, City Attorney Terry Hurst, and City Administrator James Finchum.

Mayor Dykes declared a Quorum.

Old Business

Resolution #2024-02 Charter Change for the City of Newport

Discussion of Resolution #2024-02 Charter Change for the City of Newport. Mayor Dykes stated he has got negative feedback from Nashville on the charter change. Mayor Dykes stated when the city first started this charter change, we didn't have all the facts on what it took for the utilities change. After reaching out to our state representative and senator then researching with similar municipalities that own their utilities, we have decided to table this resolution for the time being.

There was no action taken.

Newport Fire Department Salaries

Consideration of Newport Fire Department Salaries. Fire Chief Jeremy Shelton has asked for an annual salary increase of \$5,000 for the Fire Department firefighters excluding the Fire Chief. This consideration will eliminate the position of Assistant Chief and remove the salary for a secretary for the fire department.

Alderman Ragan asked to voice his opinion by saying he doesn't like to reduce employees by giving raises. Alderman Ragan said he would like for these positions to be put back in play as soon as possible for both departments asking for a raise. City Administrator James Finchum stated he agrees with Alderman Ragan on getting these positions back as soon as

we can. Mr. Finchum stated he gave each department the same offer. Mr. Finchum stated he wants to be as fair as he can be to each department. If approved, the raises will be in effect on Monday, February 26th.

Motion by Alderwoman Ottinger and second by Alderman Smith, to approve to eliminate the position of Assistant Chief and remove the salary for a secretary for the fire department and give an annual salary increase of \$5,000 for the firefighters excluding the Fire Chief.

Roll Call

Alderman Hansel AYE
Alderwoman Ottinger AYE
Alderman Ragan AYE
Alderman Smith AYE
Vice Mayor Ball AYE

All Ayes- Mayor Dykes declared the motion passed and approved.

Newport Police Department Salaries

Consideration of Newport Police Department Salaries. Chief of Police Scott Lamb has asked for an annual salary increase of \$5,000 for the Police Department police officers excluding the Chief of Police. This consideration will eliminate two (2) patrolman positions. Chief Lamb stated this would help with hiring and retaining officers.

Alderman Hansel said he had a conversation with someone in law enforcement who informed him the pay is at an all time high with the performance at an all time low. Alderman Hansel stated to keep the good people we have now this needs to be done. Mr. Finchum stated this would bring a patrolman’s starting pay from \$37,000 to \$42,000 annually to catch up with the sheriff’s department.

Motion by Alderman Hansel and second by Vice Mayor Ball, to approve to eliminate two patrolman positions and give an annual salary increase of \$5,000 for the police officers excluding the Chief of Police.

Roll Call

Alderman Hansel AYE
Alderwoman Ottinger AYE
Alderman Ragan AYE
Alderman Smith AYE
Vice Mayor Ball AYE

All Ayes- Mayor Dykes declared the motion passed and approved.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board of Mayor & Alderman, **motion was made by Alderwoman Ottinger and second by Vice Mayor Ball** adjourned the meeting.

Mayor Roland Dykes, III

James Finchum, City Administrator

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